US Official News

May 15, 2015 Friday

New Mexico: Congressman Ben Ray Luján: 134,000 New Mexicans with Student Loans Would Benefit from Bill to Allow Refinancing

LENGTH: 452 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Democratic Party has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted the impact of legislation that would allow New Mexican's with student loan debt to refinance their loans to take advantage of low interest rates. **Luján** is a cosponsor of the Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act, which according to the Department of Education, would help 134,000 New Mexicans with student loan debt.

"Whether it's buying that first home, raising a child, or saving for a dignified retirement, student loan debt is making it difficult for hard-working New Mexico families to get ahead," Congressman **Luján** said. "During this period of historically low interest rates, consumers have had the opportunity to refinance loans on homes, cars and more, locking in rates that will save them money in the years to come. Unfortunately, student loan borrowers have been left out, unable to refinance their loans and cut their bills. This legislation takes a commonsense step to help address the growing burden of student loan debt faced by so many New Mexicans."

The Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act enables student loan borrowers, including those with graduate and parent loans, to refinance their loans at a lower interest rate, providing an opportunity for borrowers to reduce their payments and put thousands of dollars back in their pockets. According to the Department of Education, borrowers in the U.S. are carrying $1.3 trillion in student loan debt, including $6.1 billion from borrowers in New Mexico. The national average debt load for a bachelor's degree recipient is approximately $30,000. Refinancing loans at today's lower interest rates would save families an estimated $50 billion nationwide, which they could reinvest in their local economy.

This legislation stands in stark contrast to the Republican budget recently passed by the House, which will make college more expensive by cutting Pell Grants by $90 billion and freezing funding for 10 years. It also eliminates a provision that prevents low-income students with need-based loans from accruing interest while they are still in school, adding $34.8 billion to the indebtedness of America's students.

"A college education is one of the most valuable investments a family can make, but the irresponsible Republican budget leaves everyday New Mexicans behind and makes a quality education more expensive," added **Luján**. "Instead, Congress should stand with New Mexico families by giving relief to student loan borrowers that will also provide a boost to our economy."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

May 15, 2015 Friday

New Mexico: Congressman Ben Ray Luján Announces $4.2 Million for Health Clinics in Northern New Mexico

LENGTH: 238 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Democratic Party has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced yesterday that El Centro Family Health has received a nearly $4.2 million grant to support its efforts to provide health care to rural communities across Northern New Mexico. The grant through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will help El Centro Family Health reach families at its 13 medical clinics, 11 school-based clinics, and three dental clinics.

"Community health centers provide vital health services in many rural communities throughout Northern New Mexico, ensuring that our families, friends and neighbors have access to quality, affordable care," Congressman **Luján** said. "This important federal grant will enhance El Centro Family Health's efforts to support the health and well-being of all those in New Mexico who rely on its vital services."

The grant of $4,188,292 will assist the network of clinics that spans 22,000 square miles and serves more than 18,800 patients a year. Congressman **Luján** has been a strong supporter of community health centers, voting recently for legislation to fund the Community Health Center Fund through 2017 and sending a letter to the leadership of the House Appropriations Committee calling for robust funding for health centers.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

3 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

May 15, 2015 Friday

New Mexico: Congressional Delegation Meets with HHS Secretary to Discuss NM Behavioral Health Disruptions

LENGTH: 648 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Democratic Party has issued the following news release:

Yesterday, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, and U.S. Representatives **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham with U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell to discuss their concerns about the continuing disruptions of behavioral health services in New Mexico.

In 2013, the New Mexico Human Services Department suspended Medicaid payments to 15 nonprofit behavioral health providers claiming "credible allegations of fraud." This led to the closure and eventual replacement of 12 behavioral health providers with Arizona-based providers. Two of these replacement providers are now pulling out of the state, leaving gaps in access for critical behavioral health services under Medicaid for many New Mexicans with serious mental illness and substance abuse disorders. Udall, Heinrich, **Luján** and **Lujan** Grisham have previously pressed Burwell to increase oversight to assure transparency and predictability for quality services, particularly for vulnerable Medicaid participants.

Members of the New Mexico delegation released the following statements after meeting with Burwell:

"New Mexico's behavioral health services are in crisis, devastating patients across the state, including many children," Udall said. "While Medicaid is a state program and it will take strong state leadership to get these services back on track, I'm glad Secretary Burwell committed to using every tool in her toolbox to help New Mexico restore our behavioral health system. Thousands of New Mexicans depend on these services, including some with serious mental illness and substance abuse disorders. This disruption threatens their livelihoods and families, and we need a long-term, transparent solution."

"Much of New Mexico's behavioral health system was turned upside down overnight when the state suspended Medicaid payments to providers," Heinrich said. "Our meeting with Secretary Burwell was productive and an important opportunity to reiterate our concerns about problems with continuity of

care and continued service disruptions. Moving forward, the Department of Health and Human Services has committed to supporting efforts to rebuild the state's behavioral health safety net and to ensuring that those in need get the quality care they deserve."

"Our meeting was an important opportunity to make clear to Secretary Burwell that New Mexicans continue to be impacted by the upheaval in the state's behavioral health system," **Luján** said. "The voices of constituents in our communities tell a story of patients slipping through the cracks and unacceptable disruptions and gaps in care, while providers are pulling out of New Mexico. From the beginning, the process of replacing New Mexico providers was not transparent and entities that were brought in have now left, leaving New Mexicans without service. This process is clearly flawed and needs to be fixed. I am encouraged by our conversation with the Secretary and hope that we can work together to ensure that some of New Mexico's most vulnerable citizens have access to the care that they desperately need."

"Members of the New Mexico delegation finally got the opportunity to share their frustration with the deterioration of New Mexico's behavioral health system with the Secretary of Health and Human Services," **Lujan** Grisham said. "We made it very clear to the Secretary that we have been disappointed with the lack of oversight by an agency that has a responsibility to ensure credible access to services through a federal health program. We also made it clear that we expect the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to take a more active role in working with providers and holding the state accountable to get services to vulnerable New Mexicans."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

May 14, 2015

LUJAN STATEMENT ON BILL ENSURING CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 143 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting in support of legislation that provides Congress with 30 days to review a final international agreement on Iran's nuclear program.

"With the House's action today, Congress will send the President a bill that he has agreed to sign, and that will ensure Congress has a role in the critical effort to prevent a nuclear armed Iran. It is vital that we use every diplomatic tool available to achieve this goal, and this bipartisan compromise will enable the Administration to continue to pursue diplomacy toward a robust agreement that puts a verifiable stop to Iran's nuclear weapons program."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan.**house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-bill-ensuring-congressional-review-of-iran-nuclear-deal/

LOAD-DATE: May 15, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

5 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

May 14, 2015

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS $6.5 MILLION USDA INVESTMENT IN OGALLALA AQUIFER REGION;
Funding to Support Water Conservation in Eastern New Mexico; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 279 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted today a $6.5 million investment by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in the Ogallala Aquifer region to support water conservation and improve water quality. As part of the effort, USDA has identified seven priority areas, including Eastern New Mexico.

"These federal funds come at an important time as Eastern New Mexico is feeling the impact of severe drought conditions over the past few years," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Investing in projects to promote water conservation will ensure that we are making the most of our scarce water resources and stretch them farther to support communities in Eastern New Mexico."

Through the Ogallala Aquifer Initiative, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will work with producers in Eastern New Mexico to convert irrigated cropland to dryland cropping systems and restore grasslands. NRCS will also work with producers to reduce pumping on 1,190 acres a year for four years, conserving 1.56 billion gallons of water during that time - water that will be used for agriculture lands, cities like Clovis and Portales, and Cannon Air Force Base.

The Ogallala Aquifer supports nearly one-fifth of the wheat, corn, cotton, and cattle produced in the United States and is the main water supply for the High Plains population. The reservoir covers about 174,000 square miles mainly in Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, while also covering part of New Mexico, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Colorado.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-highlights-65-million-usda-investment-in-ogallala-aquifer-region/

LOAD-DATE: May 15, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

6 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

May 14, 2015 Thursday

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS $6.5 MILLION USDA INVESTMENT IN OGALLALA AQUIFER REGION

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 268 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted today a $6.5 million investment by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in the Ogallala Aquifer region to support water conservation and improve water quality. As part of the effort, USDA has identified seven priority areas, including Eastern New Mexico.

"These federal funds come at an important time as Eastern New Mexico is feeling the impact of severe drought conditions over the past few years," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Investing in projects to promote water conservation will ensure that we are making the most of our scarce water resources and stretch them farther to support communities in Eastern New Mexico."

Through the Ogallala Aquifer Initiative, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will work with producers in Eastern New Mexico to convert irrigated cropland to dryland cropping systems and restore grasslands. NRCS will also work with producers to reduce pumping on 1,190 acres a year for four years, conserving 1.56 billion gallons of water during that time - water that will be used for agriculture lands, cities like Clovis and Portales, and Cannon Air Force Base.

The Ogallala Aquifer supports nearly one-fifth of the wheat, corn, cotton, and cattle produced in the United States and is the main water supply for the High Plains population. The reservoir covers about 174,000 square miles mainly in Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, while also covering part of New Mexico, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Colorado.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: May 14, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

May 14, 2015 Thursday 10:57 PM EST

Lujan Highlights $6.5 Million USDA Investment in Ogallala Aquifer Region

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 276 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted today a $6.5 million investment by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in the Ogallala Aquifer region to support water conservation and improve water quality. As part of the effort, USDA has identified seven priority areas, including Eastern New Mexico.

"These federal funds come at an important time as Eastern New Mexico is feeling the impact of severe drought conditions over the past few years," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Investing in projects to promote water conservation will ensure that we are making the most of our scarce water resources and stretch them farther to support communities in Eastern New Mexico."

Through the Ogallala Aquifer Initiative, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will work with producers in Eastern New Mexico to convert irrigated cropland to dryland cropping systems and restore grasslands. NRCS will also work with producers to reduce pumping on 1,190 acres a year for four years, conserving 1.56 billion gallons of water during that time - water that will be used for agriculture lands, cities like Clovis and Portales, and Cannon Air Force Base.

The Ogallala Aquifer supports nearly one-fifth of the wheat, corn, cotton, and cattle produced in the United States and is the main water supply for the High Plains population. The reservoir covers about 174,000 square miles mainly in Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, while also covering part of New Mexico, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Colorado.

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150515-5140105 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: May 15, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

May 14, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: Lujan Highlights $6.5 Million USDA Investment in Ogallala Aquifer Region

LENGTH: 286 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted today a $6.5 million investment by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in the Ogallala Aquifer region to support water conservation and improve water quality. As part of the effort, USDA has identified seven priority areas, including Eastern New Mexico.

"These federal funds come at an important time as Eastern New Mexico is feeling the impact of severe drought conditions over the past few years," Congressman **Luján** said. "Investing in projects to promote water conservation will ensure that we are making the most of our scarce water resources and stretch them farther to support communities in Eastern New Mexico."

Through the Ogallala Aquifer Initiative, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will work with producers in Eastern New Mexico to convert irrigated cropland to dryland cropping systems and restore grasslands. NRCS will also work with producers to reduce pumping on 1,190 acres a year for four years, conserving 1.56 billion gallons of water during that time - water that will be used for agriculture lands, cities like Clovis and Portales, and Cannon Air Force Base.

The Ogallala Aquifer supports nearly one-fifth of the wheat, corn, cotton, and cattle produced in the United States and is the main water supply for the High Plains population. The reservoir covers about 174,000 square miles mainly in Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, while also covering part of New Mexico, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Colorado.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact:
editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 15, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

9 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

May 13, 2015 Wednesday

NM senators miss chance to tilt trade toward U.S.

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. A8

LENGTH: 538 words

If you make items out of iron or steel in New Mexico and try to sell them to folks in Vietnam, you face a 15 percent tariff. Plastics and auto parts get at least a 20 percent tariff in Malaysia, and cheese products are assessed almost 30 percent in Japan. In addition to that cost, which you likely tack on to your product, you face mandatory trips to these Trans-Pacific Partnership countries, long delays in customs and mountains of paperwork to get your product to those markets.

And yet, all of these items are in the state's top 20 list of exports, according to the U.S. Census. All are part of the reason New Mexico is No. 1 in export-related job growth - 16,500 total jobs last year. In fact, one out of every two New Mexico exports goes to a TPP country, according to the U.S. Trade Representative Office.

Imagine what the export totals could be if the tariffs and red tape were cut.

So why would the Democrats in the state's congressional delegation be so vehemently opposed to leveling the playing field for their constituents?

To hear them, it has to do with not "see(ing) the details of the TPP" (Sen. Martin Heinrich). With "limit(ing) the Senate's ability to review trade agreements and represent our constituents' interests." (Sen. Tom Udall). With "limit(ing) Congress' ability to ensure that any trade agreement addresses critical concerns that impact hard-working families in New Mexico" (Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**). And with "cutt(ing) Congress out of the details, mak(ing) it impossible to know whether there are adequate worker protections in a prospective trade deal." (Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham).

Yet detailed summaries of the White House's negotiating priorities for TPP are on the U.S. Trade Representative website, the full negotiating texts are available for congressional review, and to date there have been no fewer than 1,700 congressional briefings on TPP, according to the administration.

The TPP is a proposed trade agreement involving 12 countries throughout the Asia-Pacific region, including Latin America and Mexico. Why any deal with that many moving parts should be subjected to the machinations of 100 senators and 435 representatives - no matter how well-intentioned - defies logic. Thomas J. Donohue, president and CEO of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, says as much, explaining that the potential for that much tinkering would make the country's allies say "forget it" rather than go through lengthy, delicate negotiations that could be summarily revised.

The fast-track mechanism, aka Trade Promotion Authority, would simply remove the potential for interminable revisions but still give the Senate and House final say on any agreement with up or down votes. On Tuesday the Senate voted 52-45 against it. And that sends a signal to countries including China to step in, fill the void and set the rules.

New Mexico's senators missed an opportunity Tuesday to tilt things in the favor of New Mexico and the nation. Constituents can only hope the opportunity presents itself again, because isolationism doesn't work. As the Trade Representative Office says, "the question isn't should we trade; it's how. ... There is a cost to doing nothing."

And New Mexicans and Americans shouldn't have to pay that price.

LOAD-DATE: May 13, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Albuquerque Journal

10 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

May 7, 2015

LUJAN: 134,000 NEW MEXICANS WITH STUDENT LOANS WOULD BENEFIT FROM BILL TO ALLOW REFINANCING; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 451 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted the impact of legislation that would allow New Mexican's with student loan debt to refinance their loans to take advantage of low interest rates. **Lujan** is a cosponsor of the Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act, which according to the Department of Education, would help 134,000 New Mexicans with student loan debt.

"Whether it's buying that first home, raising a child, or saving for a dignified retirement, student loan debt is making it difficult for hard-working New Mexico families to get ahead,"
Congressman **Lujan** said. "During this period of historically low interest rates, consumers have had the opportunity to refinance loans on homes, cars and more, locking in rates that will save them money in the years to come. Unfortunately, student loan borrowers have been left out, unable to

refinance their loans and cut their bills. This legislation takes a commonsense step to help address the growing burden of student loan debt faced by so many New Mexicans."

The Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act enables student loan borrowers, including those with graduate and parent loans, to refinance their loans at a lower interest rate, providing an opportunity for borrowers to reduce their payments and put thousands of dollars back in their pockets. According to the Department of Education, borrowers in the U.S. are carrying $1.3 trillion in student loan debt, including $6.1 billion from borrowers in New Mexico. The national average debt load for a bachelor's degree recipient is approximately $30,000. Refinancing loans at today's lower interest rates would save families an estimated $50 billion nationwide, which they could reinvest in their local economy.

This legislation stands in stark contrast to the Republican budget recently passed by the House, which will make college more expensive by cutting Pell Grants by $90 billion and freezing funding for 10 years. It also eliminates a provision that prevents low-income students with need-based loans from accruing interest while they are still in school, adding $34.8 billion to the indebtedness of America's students.

"A college education is one of the most valuable investments a family can make, but the irresponsible Republican budget leaves everyday New Mexicans behind and makes a quality education more expensive," added **Lujan**. "Instead, Congress should stand with New Mexico families by giving relief to student loan borrowers that will also provide a boost to our economy."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-134000-new-mexicans-with-student-loans-would-benefit-from-bill-to-allow-refinancing/

LOAD-DATE: May 8, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

May 7, 2015 Thursday

Behavioral health woes targeted; Federal, local officials work to rebuild treatment program

BYLINE: Richard Reyes Staff writer city@gallupindependent.com

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1

LENGTH: 690 words

DATELINE: GALLUP

GALLUP -- New Mexico's congressional delegates are dedicated to addressing the disruptions of behavioral health services in the state caused by allegations of fraud, according to a news release, but they also have Gallup's unique problems in mind.

U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, and a representative for Rep. Steve Pearce met with U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell April 30 to discuss behavioral health issues in New Mexico, according to a news release.

Although Gallup didn't come up in that discussion with Burwell, **Luján**'s office is aware of the issues surrounding Gallup Detox Center, which replaced the treatment facility Na'nizhoozhi Center Inc.

"The Gallup Detox Center was created and sustained through congressional earmarks, which have since been banned by Republicans in Congress," **Lujan**'s Communications Director Andrew Stoddard said. "Because that is no longer a possible source of funding, the office would like to work with Indian Health Services, Health and Human Services, the city of Gallup, and the Navajo Nation to discuss other options to support the detox center and find a path forward."

Local officials -- including Mayor Jackie McKinney and Navajo Nation Behavioral Health Services administrator Theresa Galvan -- have admitted that Gallup Detox does not provide adequate treatment, but they've been seeking new funding sources and working on rebuilding the treatment program.

Payments suspended

In 2013, the New Mexico Human Services Department suspended Medicaid payments to 15 nonprofit behavioral health providers claiming "credible allegations of fraud," according to a news release. This led to the closure and eventual replacement of 12 behavioral health providers with Arizona-based providers.

Two of those replacement providers are now pulling out of the state, leaving gaps in access for behavioral health services under Medicaid for many New Mexicans with mental illness and substance abuse disorders.

Udall, Heinrich, **Luján** and **Lujan** Grisham have previously pressed Burwell to increase oversight to assure transparency and predictability for quality services, particularly for vulnerable Medicaid participants.

"New Mexico's behavioral health services are in crisis, devastating patients across the state, including many children," Udall said.

He said it will take strong state leadership to get services back on track, and he's glad that Burwell has committed to helping the state. He stressed that thousands of New Mexicans depend on behavioral health services.

"This disruption threatens their livelihoods and families, and we need a long-term, transparent solution," he said.

Heinrich said the behavioral health system was turned upside down overnight, but he felt the meeting with Burwell was productive and an important opportunity to re-emphasize state concerns.

"Moving forward, the Department of Health and Human Services has committed to supporting efforts to rebuild the state's behavioral health safety net and to ensuring that those in need get the quality care they deserve," Heinrich said.

Lujan Grisham said the meeting was also a chance to finally share their frustration.

"We made it very clear to the Secretary that we have been disappointed with the lack of oversight by an agency that has a responsibility to ensure credible access to services through a federal health program," she said. "We also made it clear that we expect the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to take a more active role in working with providers and holding the state accountable to get services to vulnerable New Mexicans."

Slipping through the cracks

Luján said patients are slipping through the cracks as a result of the disruptions and gaps in services.

"From the beginning, the process of replacing New Mexico providers was not transparent and entities that were brought in have now left, leaving New Mexicans without service," he said. "This process is clearly flawed and needs to be fixed."

However, he feels encouraged after the conversation with Burwell and he hopes they can all work together to correct the situation.

LOAD-DATE: May 12, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

12 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

May 7, 2015 Thursday

134,000 NEW MEXICANS WITH STUDENT LOANS WOULD BENEFIT FROM BILL TO ALLOW REFINANCING

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 437 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted the impact of legislation that would allow New Mexican's with student loan debt to refinance their loans to take advantage of low interest rates. **Lujan** is a cosponsor of the Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act, which according to the Department of Education, would help 134,000 New Mexicans with student loan debt.

"Whether it's buying that first home, raising a child, or saving for a dignified retirement, student loan debt is making it difficult for hard-working New Mexico families to get ahead,"
Congressman **Lujan** said. "During this period of historically low interest rates, consumers have had

the opportunity to refinance loans on homes, cars and more, locking in rates that will save them money in the years to come. Unfortunately, student loan borrowers have been left out, unable to refinance their loans and cut their bills. This legislation takes a commonsense step to help address the growing burden of student loan debt faced by so many New Mexicans."

The Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act enables student loan borrowers, including those with graduate and parent loans, to refinance their loans at a lower interest rate, providing an opportunity for borrowers to reduce their payments and put thousands of dollars back in their pockets. According to the Department of Education, borrowers in the U.S. are carrying $1.3 trillion in student loan debt, including $6.1 billion from borrowers in New Mexico. The national average debt load for a bachelor's degree recipient is approximately $30,000. Refinancing loans at today's lower interest rates would save families an estimated $50 billion nationwide, which they could reinvest in their local economy.

This legislation stands in stark contrast to the Republican budget recently passed by the House, which will make college more expensive by cutting Pell Grants by $90 billion and freezing funding for 10 years. It also eliminates a provision that prevents low-income students with need-based loans from accruing interest while they are still in school, adding $34.8 billion to the indebtedness of America's students.

"A college education is one of the most valuable investments a family can make, but the irresponsible Republican budget leaves everyday New Mexicans behind and makes a quality education more expensive," added **Lujan**. "Instead, Congress should stand with New Mexico families by giving relief to student loan borrowers that will also provide a boost to our economy."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: May 8, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

May 7, 2015 Thursday 8:07 PM EST

Lujan: 134,000 New Mexicans with Student Loans Would Benefit from Bill to Allow Refinancing

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 445 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted the impact of legislation that would allow New Mexican's with student loan debt to refinance their loans to take advantage of low interest rates. **Lujan** is a cosponsor of the Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act, which according to the Department of Education, would help 134,000 New Mexicans with student loan debt.

"Whether it's buying that first home, raising a child, or saving for a dignified retirement, student loan debt is making it difficult for hard-working New Mexico families to get ahead," Congressman **Lujan** said. "During this period of historically low interest rates, consumers have had the opportunity to refinance loans on homes, cars and more, locking in rates that will save them money in the years to come. Unfortunately, student loan borrowers have been left out, unable to refinance their loans and cut their bills. This legislation takes a commonsense step to help address the growing burden of student loan debt faced by so many New Mexicans."

The Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act enables student loan borrowers, including those with graduate and parent loans, to refinance their loans at a lower interest rate, providing an opportunity for borrowers to reduce their payments and put thousands of dollars back in their pockets. According to the Department of Education, borrowers in the U.S. are carrying $1.3 trillion in student loan debt, including $6.1 billion from borrowers in New Mexico. The national average debt load for a bachelor's degree recipient is approximately $30,000. Refinancing loans at today's lower interest rates would save families an estimated $50 billion nationwide, which they could reinvest in their local economy.

This legislation stands in stark contrast to the Republican budget recently passed by the House, which will make college more expensive by cutting Pell Grants by $90 billion and freezing funding for 10 years. It also eliminates a provision that prevents low-income students with need-based loans from accruing interest while they are still in school, adding $34.8 billion to the indebtedness of America's students.

"A college education is one of the most valuable investments a family can make, but the irresponsible Republican budget leaves everyday New Mexicans behind and makes a quality education more expensive," added **Lujan**. "Instead, Congress should stand with New Mexico families by giving relief to student loan borrowers that will also provide a boost to our economy."

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150509-5132455 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: May 8, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

May 7, 2015 Thursday

Udall, Heinrich, Luján and Pearce Introduce Bipartisan Bill to Promote Preservation of Native American Languages

LENGTH: 791 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Martin Heinrich, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representatives **Ben Ray Luján** and Steve Pearce announced they have introduced the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act, a bill to provide grants to Native American language educational organizations to preserve disappearing Native languages in Indian Country. The bill reauthorizes the Native American Languages Program until 2020, and includes improvements to expand the program's eligibility to smaller-sized classes and allow for longer grant periods.

The bill reauthorizes legislation that first passed in 2006 with Udall's leadership, named for the Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo master storyteller Esther Martinez. The Esther Martinez Native American Preservation Act amends the Native American Languages Act of 1990 to strengthen Native language education by creating and funding Native language nests, Native language survival schools, and Native American language restoration programs. The program's current authorization expired in 2012, but annual appropriations have continued during the lapse.

"Esther Martinez was one of New Mexico's strongest advocates for preserving Native heritage and language, and I'm proud to introduce this legislation to honor and continue her work. Grants through the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act help families and communities keep their languages alive, preserving the deep history and culture behind them," Udall said. "Language education is about more than tradition; it fosters pride and an interconnectedness between generations and has been linked to higher academic achievement among Native youth. I'm proud to support the continuation and expansion of these important grants in New Mexico and across the country."

"Preserving Native language is central to cultural identity, and that's what Esther Martinez fought for. Languages like Keres, Tewa, Tiwa, Towa, Zuni, Diné, Eastern Apache and Western Apache, make us a stronger, more culturally rich and historically grounded nation," Heinrich said. "Simultaneously, the preservation and instruction of these languages raises high school graduation rates and college enrollment for tribal students. Teaching and preserving these languages should be a central educational priority. This bill helps to achieve that goal."

"Preserving language is essential to ensuring the preservation of the rich history and culture of tribal communities in New Mexico and across the country," **Luján** said. "Without urgent and sustained intervention many Native languages risk extinction in the coming decades. This legislation will support language immersion programs that expand fluency in Native languages and strengthen valuable connections between Native students and their culture and communities. It will help carry on the proud traditions that Esther Martinez worked so hard to protect and pass down from generation to generation."

"The preservation of Native American languages is essential in retaining the rich culture and history of the various tribes in New Mexico," said Pearce. "The grant money provided through the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act is critical to accomplishing this goal. I am proud to support the reauthorization of this program as it will allow Native languages in New Mexico and across the country to be passed on to future generations.

Based on recommendations from tribes and the administration, the New Mexico members included improvements to the program in this bill to reduce the class size eligibility for the grants and allow

longer grant periods of up to five years. The bill reduces the number of students required for eligibility from 10 to five for Native American language nests, which provide childcare and instruction for children up to age seven and their parents. The bill also reduces the class size required for eligibility from 15 to 10 students for Native language survival schools, which aim for their students to achieve Native language fluency, and provide teacher training and development to support successful language learning. The urgent need to protect and preserve Native American languages is clear and applications for grants through the program roughly doubled from fiscal year 2013 to 2014, according to the Department of Health and Human Services.

This bill is cosponsored by U.S. Sens. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), Heidi Heitkamp (D-N.D.), Jon Tester (D-Mont.), Al Franken (D-Minn.), and Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii) and has the bipartisan support of eight cosponsors in House.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 8, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Santa Fe Reporter (California)

May 6, 2015 - May 12, 2015

NM Behavioral Health Shakeup Goes Federal

BYLINE: Horwath, Justin

SECTION: SFR BRIEFS; Pg. 11 Vol. 42 No. 18 ISSN: 0744-477X

LENGTH: 439 words

ABSTRACT

"New Mexico's behavioral health services are in crisis, devastating patients across the state, including many children," Sen. Tom Udall said in a prepared statement. "While Medicaid is a state program, and it will take strong state leadership to get these services back on track, I'm glad Secretary [Sylvia Burwell] committed to using every tool in her toolbox to help New Mexico restore our behavioral health system. Thousands of New Mexicans depend on these services, including some with serious mental illness and substance abuse disorders. This disruption threatens their livelihoods and families, and we need a long-term, transparent solution."

FULL TEXT

Members or representatives of the state's entire congressional delegation say they met on April 30 with US Health and Human Services Department Secretary Sylvia Burwell to express concerns about a service shakeup here.

"New Mexico's behavioral health services are in crisis, devastating patients across the state, including many children," Sen. Tom Udall said in a prepared statement. "While Medicaid is a state program, and it will take strong state leadership to get these services back on track, I'm glad Secretary Burwell committed to using every tool in her toolbox to help New Mexico restore our behavioral health system. Thousands of New Mexicans depend on these services, including some with serious mental illness and substance abuse disorders. This disruption threatens their livelihoods and families, and we need a long-term, transparent solution."

Sen. Martin Heinrich, Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and **Ben Ray Lujan**, all Democrats along with Udall, and a staff member for Republican Rep. Steve Pearce reportedly attended the meeting.

In 2013, Republican Gov. Susana Martinez' Human Services Department froze Medicaid payments to providers accused of fraudulently receiving federal money, pending the results of criminal probes into them by the attorney general, whose office already cleared two of the providers. Other investigations remain ongoing.

State officials refute the narrative that the shakeup has resulted in disruptions in care to the vulnerable patient population. Asked to respond to the congressional Democrats' statements, HSD spokesman Matt Kennicott calls them "false."

"In fact, since changing providers, we are now serving more consumers than ever before," he says, referring to the five Arizona agencies the state shipped in to provide services in place of the accused providers. "Last year, we saw a 30.8 percent increase in the number of consumers served, and we are continuing our commitment to serve New Mexicans in need." (Justin Horwath)

LOAD-DATE: May 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 58679

GRAPHIC: Photographs

DOCUMENT-TYPE: News

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SFRR

Copyright 2015 ProQuest Information and Learning
All Rights Reserved
Copyright 2015 Santa Fe Reporter

US Official News

May 5, 2015 Tuesday

Delegation Meets with HHS Secretary to Discuss NM Behavioral Health Disruptions

LENGTH: 662 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, and a representative for U.S. Rep. Steve Pearce met with U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell to discuss their concerns about the continuing disruptions of behavioral health services in New Mexico.

In 2013, the New Mexico Human Services Department suspended Medicaid payments to 15 nonprofit behavioral health providers claiming "credible allegations of fraud." This led to the closure and eventual replacement of 12 behavioral health providers with Arizona-based providers. Two of these replacement providers are now pulling out of the state, leaving gaps in access for critical behavioral health services under Medicaid for many New Mexicans with serious mental illness and substance abuse disorders. Udall, Heinrich, **Luján** and **Lujan** Grisham have previously pressed Burwell to increase oversight to assure transparency and predictability for quality services, particularly for vulnerable Medicaid participants.

Members of the New Mexico delegation released the following statements after meeting with Burwell:

"New Mexico's behavioral health services are in crisis, devastating patients across the state, including many children," Udall said. "While Medicaid is a state program and it will take strong state leadership to get these services back on track, I'm glad Secretary Burwell committed to using every tool in her toolbox to help New Mexico restore our behavioral health system. Thousands of New Mexicans depend on these services, including some with serious mental illness and substance abuse disorders. This disruption threatens their livelihoods and families, and we need a long-term, transparent solution."

"Much of New Mexico's behavioral health system was turned upside down overnight when the state suspended Medicaid payments to providers," Heinrich said. "Our meeting with Secretary Burwell was productive and an important opportunity to reiterate our concerns about problems with continuity of care and continued service disruptions. Moving forward, the Department of Health and Human Services has committed to supporting efforts to rebuild the state's behavioral health safety net and to ensuring that those in need get the quality care they deserve."

"Our meeting was an important opportunity to make clear to Secretary Burwell that New Mexicans continue to be impacted by the upheaval in the state's behavioral health system," **Luján** said. "The voices of constituents in our communities tell a story of patients slipping through the cracks and unacceptable disruptions and gaps in care, while providers are pulling out of New Mexico. From the beginning, the process of replacing New Mexico providers was not transparent and entities that were brought in have now left, leaving New Mexicans without service. This process is clearly flawed and needs to be fixed. I am encouraged by our conversation with the Secretary and hope that we can work together to ensure that some of New Mexico's most vulnerable citizens have access to the care that they desperately need."

"Members of the New Mexico delegation finally got the opportunity to share their frustration with the deterioration of New Mexico's behavioral health system with the Secretary of Health and Human Services," **Lujan** Grisham said. "We made it very clear to the Secretary that we have been disappointed with the lack of oversight by an agency that has a responsibility to ensure credible

access to services through a federal health program. We also made it clear that we expect the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to take a more active role in working with providers and holding the state accountable to get services to vulnerable New Mexicans."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

17 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

May 5, 2015 Tuesday

Lujan Announces Nearly $4.2 Million for Health Clinics in Northern New Mexico

LENGTH: 246 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that El Centro Family Health has received a nearly $4.2 million grant to support its efforts to provide health care to rural communities across Northern New Mexico. The grant through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will help El Centro Family Health reach families at its 13 medical clinics, 11 school-based clinics, and three dental clinics.

"Community health centers provide vital health services in many rural communities throughout Northern New Mexico, ensuring that our families, friends and neighbors have access to quality, affordable care," Congressman **Luján** said. "This important federal grant will enhance El Centro Family Health's efforts to support the health and well-being of all those in New Mexico who rely on its vital services."

The grant of $4,188,292 will assist the network of clinics that spans 22,000 square miles and serves more than 18,800 patients a year. Congressman **Luján** has been a strong supporter of community health centers, voting recently for legislation to fund the Community Health Center Fund through 2017 and sending a letter to the leadership of the House Appropriations Committee calling for robust funding for health centers.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

May 5, 2015 Tuesday

Lujan Votes Against Republican Spending Bill that Locks in Sequester Cuts

LENGTH: 332 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District voted today against the Energy and Water Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2016 that locks in the spending cuts of the sequester that have negatively impacted New Mexico. The legislation also shortchanges investments in renewable energy that are important to New Mexico's growing clean energy sector.

"Over the past few years, New Mexico's economy has felt the impact of the sequester's arbitrary cuts. It led to cutbacks and reductions at Los Alamos National Lab that weakened our economy and took a toll on New Mexico families," Congressman **Luján** said. "The sequester is bad for New Mexico and we must eliminate it. However, today's spending bill locks in the sequester, paving the way for future spending cuts at New Mexico's national labs. In addition, it includes a cut for environmental cleanup at a time when this must remain a top priority. Funding scientific research and development at the labs is critical to our nation's economic competitiveness and I will continue to fight for the investments we need to ensure our labs remain on the cutting edge."

The Republican spending bill includes $1.1 billion in cuts below the President's request for renewable energy and energy efficiency as well an $82 million cut to efforts to modernize the nation's electricity grid.

"New Mexico's renewable energy sector has the potential to grow our economy and create good jobs in our community that can't be shipped overseas," **Luján** added. "We have seen important growth in solar and wind energy across New Mexico, and it is vital that we continue to support efforts to

strengthen this industry that is good for our economy. Unfortunately, this spending bill takes New Mexico and our nation in the wrong direction."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

19 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

May 5, 2015 Tuesday

Lujan and VFW Agree: VA Spending Bill a Bad Bill for Veterans

LENGTH: 233 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District voted against the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies appropriations bill today over serious concerns that the funding bill is inadequate to meet the needs of New Mexico's veterans. The legislation is opposed by Veterans Service Organizations, including the Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and American Legion, and includes spending reductions they have called "unconscionable."

"The VFW has called this 'a bad bill for veterans' and I agree. The Republican spending bill does not provide the necessary resources to fully address the challenges facing the VA and fails to honor the commitment made to our veterans. VA Secretary McDonald has said that cuts in this bill are the equivalent of 70,000 fewer veterans receiving VA medical care," Congressman **Luján** said. "Sadly, we have heard too many stories of veterans in New Mexico who have faced long delays when seeking care through the VA. Our veterans deserve better. They deserve the care and benefits they have earned due to their brave service to our nation, and this legislation fails to deliver on that promise."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

May 5, 2015 Tuesday

Lujan Statement on Republican Budget

LENGTH: 268 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting against the Budget Committee Conference Report.

"Congressional Republicans have passed a budget that will make it tougher for hard-working Americans to get ahead. Instead of offering a blueprint will help families grow their paychecks, afford a quality college education, and save for a dignified retirement, Congressional Republicans have put special interests first.

"This irresponsible budget protects tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas instead of making the needed investments in education and job training so that New Mexicans can continue to gain the skills they need to compete in this global economy. It shortchanges investments in infrastructure that are critical to creating jobs and strengthening our economic competitiveness. And it continues Congressional Republicans' assault on the Affordable Care Act, threatening to take away health care coverage for millions of Americans and allowing health insurance companies to once again discriminate against 860,000 New Mexicans with pre-existing conditions.

"House Democrats have offered a budget that builds an economy that works for every day Americans. It rewards hard work, invests in the next generation, and protects our seniors to ensure a brighter future for the people of New Mexico and our nation."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

May 5, 2015 Tuesday

Lujan Cosponsors Raise the Wage Act

LENGTH: 221 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he is cosponsoring legislation to raise the minimum wage and put more money in the pocket of hard-working New Mexicans. The Raise the Wage Act would increase the national minimum wage from $7.25 to $12 by 2020.

"New Mexico's workers want to receive a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. They want to work hard so they can send their children to college and save for a dignified retirement," Congressman **Luján** said. "Yet at today's minimum wage, many full-time workers and their families have to work two or three jobs just to get by. Raising the minimum wage will reward hard work, grow opportunities, and strengthen our economy."

In addition to increasing the minimum wage, the legislation also indexes it to the median wage in 2021 in order to make sure that the minimum wage keeps pace with the growth in wages. It eliminates the tipped minimum wage gradually by raising it from $2.13 per hour to match the regular minimum wage. Setting the minimum wage at $12 in 2020 would give almost 38 million American workers a raise.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

May 5, 2015 Tuesday

New Mexico: Congressman Ben Ray Luján Announces $4.2 Million for Health Clinics in Northern New Mexico

LENGTH: 238 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Democratic Party has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced yesterday that El Centro Family Health has received a nearly $4.2 million grant to support its efforts to provide health care to rural communities across Northern New Mexico. The grant through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will help El Centro Family Health reach families at its 13 medical clinics, 11 school-based clinics, and three dental clinics.

"Community health centers provide vital health services in many rural communities throughout Northern New Mexico, ensuring that our families, friends and neighbors have access to quality, affordable care," Congressman **Luján** said. "This important federal grant will enhance El Centro Family Health's efforts to support the health and well-being of all those in New Mexico who rely on its vital services."

The grant of $4,188,292 will assist the network of clinics that spans 22,000 square miles and serves more than 18,800 patients a year. Congressman **Luján** has been a strong supporter of community health centers, voting recently for legislation to fund the Community Health Center Fund through 2017 and sending a letter to the leadership of the House Appropriations Committee calling for robust funding for health centers.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

May 4, 2015

LUJAN ANNOUNCES NEARLY $4.2 MILLION FOR HEALTH CLINICS IN NORTHERN NEW MEXICO;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 236 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that El Centro Family Health has received a nearly $4.2 million grant to support its efforts to provide health care to rural communities across Northern New Mexico. The grant through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will help El Centro Family Health reach families at its 13 medical clinics, 11 school-based clinics, and three dental clinics.

"Community health centers provide vital health services in many rural communities throughout Northern New Mexico, ensuring that our families, friends and neighbors have access to quality, affordable care," Congressman **Lujan** said. "This important federal grant will enhance El Centro Family Health's efforts to support the health and well-being of all those in New Mexico who rely on its vital services."

The grant of $4,188,292 will assist the network of clinics that spans 22,000 square miles and serves more than 18,800 patients a year. Congressman **Lujan** has been a strong supporter of community health centers, voting recently for legislation to fund the Community Health Center Fund through 2017 and sending a letter to the leadership of the House Appropriations Committee calling for robust funding for health centers.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-announces-nearly-42-million-for-health-clinics-in-northern-new-mexico/

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

24 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

May 4, 2015 Monday

LUJAN ANNOUNCES NEARLY $4.2 MILLION FOR HEALTH CLINICS IN NORTHERN NEW MEXICO

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 223 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that El Centro Family Health has received a nearly $4.2 million grant to support its efforts to provide health care to rural communities across Northern New Mexico. The grant through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will help El Centro Family Health reach families at its 13 medical clinics, 11 school-based clinics, and three dental clinics.

"Community health centers provide vital health services in many rural communities throughout Northern New Mexico, ensuring that our families, friends and neighbors have access to quality, affordable care," Congressman **Lujan** said. "This important federal grant will enhance El Centro Family Health's efforts to support the health and well-being of all those in New Mexico who rely on its vital services."

The grant of $4,188,292 will assist the network of clinics that spans 22,000 square miles and serves more than 18,800 patients a year. Congressman **Lujan** has been a strong supporter of community health centers, voting recently for legislation to fund the Community Health Center Fund through 2017 and sending a letter to the leadership of the House Appropriations Committee calling for robust funding for health centers.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: May 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

25 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

May 4, 2015 Monday 3:36 AM EST

Lujan Announces Nearly $4.2 Million for Health Clinics in Northern New Mexico

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 232 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that El Centro Family Health has received a nearly $4.2 million grant to support its efforts to provide health care to rural communities across Northern New Mexico. The grant through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will help El Centro Family Health reach families at its 13 medical clinics, 11 school-based clinics, and three dental clinics.

"Community health centers provide vital health services in many rural communities throughout Northern New Mexico, ensuring that our families, friends and neighbors have access to quality, affordable care," Congressman **Lujan** said. "This important federal grant will enhance El Centro Family Health's efforts to support the health and well-being of all those in New Mexico who rely on its vital services."

The grant of $4,188,292 will assist the network of clinics that spans 22,000 square miles and serves more than 18,800 patients a year. Congressman **Lujan** has been a strong supporter of community health centers, voting recently for legislation to fund the Community Health Center Fund through 2017 and sending a letter to the leadership of the House Appropriations Committee calling for robust funding for health centers.

Copyright Targeted News Services

30FurigayJane150505-5126649 30FurigayJane

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

May 3, 2015 Sunday 8:09 PM EST

Rep. Green Introduces Resolution to Support National Minority Health Month

BYLINE: by AILE DAYANDANTE, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 181 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, May 3 -- Rep. Al Green, D-Texas, has introduced a resolution (H. Res. 238) "promoting minority health awareness and supporting the goals and ideals of National Minority Health Month in April 2015, which includes bringing attention to the health disparities faced by minority populations

of the United States such as American Indians, Alaska Natives, Asian Americans, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders."

The resolution was introduced on April 30 and has eight co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., Tony Cardenas, D-Calif., Judy Chu, D-Calif., Robin Kelly, D-Ill., Yvette D. Clarke, D-N.Y., G.K. Butterfield, D-N.C., Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., and Barbara Lee, D-Calif.

The resolution was referred to the House Committee.

The full text of the resolution is available from https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-resolution/238/text.

Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://www.targetednews.com

22DayanAile 150502-1203511

LOAD-DATE: May 3, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

27 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

May 1, 2015

LUJAN CELEBRATES ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH;
Rep. Ben R. **Lujan** (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 194 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, which is celebrated in May.

"For generations, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have forged a proud legacy through enduring contributions to our nation. From the immigrants who came through Angel and Ellis Islands to those who continue to immigrate here today, this community has persevered in pursuit of the American Dream.

"The Asian Pacific American community is an invaluable part of the fabric of our nation, having come here to build better lives for their families, and in so doing enriching our society in every facet - as leaders, entrepreneurs, teachers, members of our armed services, and more. As the fastest growing

community in America, Asian Pacific Americans will continue to play an integral role in the future of our nation. This month we proudly recognize and reflect on all that the Asian Pacific American community has contributed to the greatness of America."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan.**house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-celebrates-asian-pacific-american-heritage-month/

LOAD-DATE: May 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

May 1, 2015

NEW MEXICO DELEGATION MEETS WITH HHS SECRETARY TO DISCUSS NM BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DISRUPTIONS; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 654 words

WASHINGTON - Yesterday, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, and a representative for U.S. Rep. Steve Pearce met with U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell to discuss their concerns about the continuing disruptions of behavioral health services in New Mexico.

In 2013, the New Mexico Human Services Department suspended Medicaid payments to 15 nonprofit behavioral health providers claiming "credible allegations of fraud." This led to the closure and eventual replacement of 12 behavioral health providers with Arizona-based providers. Two of these replacement providers are now pulling out of the state, leaving gaps in access for critical behavioral health services under Medicaid for many New Mexicans with serious mental illness and substance abuse disorders. Udall, Heinrich, **Lujan** and **Lujan** Grisham have previously pressed Burwell to increase oversight to assure transparency and predictability for quality services, particularly for vulnerable Medicaid participants.

Members of the New Mexico delegation released the following statements after meeting with Burwell:

"New Mexico's behavioral health services are in crisis, devastating patients across the state, including many children," Udall said. "While Medicaid is a state program and it will take strong state leadership to get these services back on track, I'm glad Secretary Burwell committed to using every

tool in her toolbox to help New Mexico restore our behavioral health system. Thousands of New Mexicans depend on these services, including some with serious mental illness and substance abuse disorders. This disruption threatens their livelihoods and families, and we need a long-term, transparent solution."

"Much of New Mexico's behavioral health system was turned upside down overnight when the state suspended Medicaid payments to providers," Heinrich said. "Our meeting with Secretary Burwell was productive and an important opportunity to reiterate our concerns about problems with continuity of care and continued service disruptions. Moving forward, the Department of Health and Human Services has committed to supporting efforts to rebuild the state's behavioral health safety net and to ensuring that those in need get the quality care they deserve."

"Our meeting was an important opportunity to make clear to Secretary Burwell that New Mexicans continue to be impacted by the upheaval in the state's behavioral health system," **Lujan** said. "The voices of constituents in our communities tell a story of patients slipping through the cracks and unacceptable disruptions and gaps in care, while providers are pulling out of New Mexico. From the beginning, the process of replacing New Mexico providers was not transparent and entities that were brought in have now left, leaving New Mexicans without service. This process is clearly flawed and needs to be fixed. I am encouraged by our conversation with the Secretary and hope that we can work together to ensure that some of New Mexico's most vulnerable citizens have access to the care that they desperately need."

"Members of the New Mexico delegation finally got the opportunity to share their frustration with the deterioration of New Mexico's behavioral health system with the Secretary of Health and Human Services," **Lujan** Grisham said. "We made it very clear to the Secretary that we have been disappointed with the lack of oversight by an agency that has a responsibility to ensure credible access to services through a federal health program. We also made it clear that we expect the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to take a more active role in working with providers and holding the state accountable to get services to vulnerable New Mexicans."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/new-mexico-delegation-meets-with-hhs-secretary-to-discuss-nm-behavioral-health-disruptions/

LOAD-DATE: May 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

May 1, 2015

LUJAN VOTES AGAINST REPUBLICAN SPENDING BILL THAT LOCKS IN SEQUESTER CUTS;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 321 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted today against the Energy and Water Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2016 that locks in the spending cuts of the sequester that have negatively impacted New Mexico. The legislation also shortchanges investments in renewable energy that are important to New Mexico's growing clean energy sector.

"Over the past few years, New Mexico's economy has felt the impact of the sequester's arbitrary cuts. It led to cutbacks and reductions at Los Alamos National Lab that weakened our economy and took a toll on New Mexico families," Congressman **Lujan** said. "The sequester is bad for New Mexico and we must eliminate it. However, today's spending bill locks in the sequester, paving the way for future spending cuts at New Mexico's national labs. In addition, it includes a cut for environmental cleanup at a time when this must remain a top priority. Funding scientific research and development at the labs is critical to our nation's economic competitiveness and I will continue to fight for the investments we need to ensure our labs remain on the cutting edge."

The Republican spending bill includes $1.1 billion in cuts below the President's request for renewable energy and energy efficiency as well an $82 million cut to efforts to modernize the nation's electricity grid.

"New Mexico's renewable energy sector has the potential to grow our economy and create good jobs in our community that can't be shipped overseas," **Lujan** added. "We have seen important growth in solar and wind energy across New Mexico, and it is vital that we continue to support efforts to strengthen this industry that is good for our economy. Unfortunately, this spending bill takes New Mexico and our nation in the wrong direction."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-votes-against-republican-spending-bill-that-locks-in-sequester-cuts/

LOAD-DATE: May 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

May 1, 2015 Friday

LUJAN VOTES AGAINST REPUBLICAN SPENDING BILL THAT LOCKS IN SEQUESTER CUTS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 309 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted today against the Energy and Water Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2016 that locks in the spending cuts of the sequester that have negatively impacted New Mexico. The legislation also shortchanges investments in renewable energy that are important to New Mexico's growing clean energy sector.

"Over the past few years, New Mexico's economy has felt the impact of the sequester's arbitrary cuts. It led to cutbacks and reductions at Los Alamos National Lab that weakened our economy and took a toll on New Mexico families," Congressman **Lujan** said. "The sequester is bad for New Mexico and we must eliminate it. However, today's spending bill locks in the sequester, paving the way for future spending cuts at New Mexico's national labs. In addition, it includes a cut for environmental cleanup at a time when this must remain a top priority. Funding scientific research and development at the labs is critical to our nation's economic competitiveness and I will continue to fight for the investments we need to ensure our labs remain on the cutting edge."

The Republican spending bill includes $1.1 billion in cuts below the President's request for renewable energy and energy efficiency as well an $82 million cut to efforts to modernize the nation's electricity grid.

"New Mexico's renewable energy sector has the potential to grow our economy and create good jobs in our community that can't be shipped overseas," **Lujan** added. "We have seen important growth in solar and wind energy across New Mexico, and it is vital that we continue to support efforts to strengthen this industry that is good for our economy. Unfortunately, this spending bill takes New Mexico and our nation in the wrong direction."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: May 2, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

May 1, 2015 Friday 3:10 AM EST

Lujan Votes Against Republican Spending Bill that Locks in Sequester Cuts

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 317 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted today against the Energy and Water Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2016 that locks in the spending cuts of the sequester that have negatively impacted New Mexico. The legislation also shortchanges investments in renewable energy that are important to New Mexico's growing clean energy sector.

"Over the past few years, New Mexico's economy has felt the impact of the sequester's arbitrary cuts. It led to cutbacks and reductions at Los Alamos National Lab that weakened our economy and took a toll on New Mexico families," Congressman **Lujan** said. "The sequester is bad for New Mexico and we must eliminate it. However, today's spending bill locks in the sequester, paving the way for future spending cuts at New Mexico's national labs. In addition, it includes a cut for environmental cleanup at a time when this must remain a top priority. Funding scientific research and development at the labs is critical to our nation's economic competitiveness and I will continue to fight for the investments we need to ensure our labs remain on the cutting edge."

The Republican spending bill includes $1.1 billion in cuts below the President's request for renewable energy and energy efficiency as well an $82 million cut to efforts to modernize the nation's electricity grid.

"New Mexico's renewable energy sector has the potential to grow our economy and create good jobs in our community that can't be shipped overseas," **Lujan** added. "We have seen important growth in solar and wind energy across New Mexico, and it is vital that we continue to support efforts to strengthen this industry that is good for our economy. Unfortunately, this spending bill takes New Mexico and our nation in the wrong direction."

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150502-5124804 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: May 2, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

May 1, 2015 Friday

New Mexico: Lujan and VFW Agree: VA Spending Bill a Bad Bill for Veterans

LENGTH: 242 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District voted against the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies appropriations bill today over serious concerns that the funding bill is inadequate to meet the needs of New Mexico's veterans. The legislation is opposed by Veterans Service Organizations, including the Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and American Legion, and includes spending reductions they have called "unconscionable."

"The VFW has called this 'a bad bill for veterans' and I agree. The Republican spending bill does not provide the necessary resources to fully address the challenges facing the VA and fails to honor the commitment made to our veterans. VA Secretary McDonald has said that cuts in this bill are the equivalent of 70,000 fewer veterans receiving VA medical care," Congressman **Luján** said. "Sadly, we have heard too many stories of veterans in New Mexico who have faced long delays when seeking care through the VA. Our veterans deserve better. They deserve the care and benefits they have earned due to their brave service to our nation, and this legislation fails to deliver on that promise."

This legislation funds the VA at $1.2 billion below the President's request.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 2, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

33 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

May 1, 2015 Friday

New Mexico: **Lujan** Statement on Republican Budget

LENGTH: 264 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting against the Budget Committee Conference Report.

"Congressional Republicans have passed a budget that will make it tougher for hard-working Americans to get ahead. Instead of offering a blueprint will help families grow their paychecks, afford a quality college education, and save for a dignified retirement, Congressional Republicans have put special interests first.

"This irresponsible budget protects tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas instead of making the needed investments in education and job training so that New Mexicans can continue to gain the skills they need to compete in this global economy. It shortchanges investments in infrastructure that are critical to creating jobs and strengthening our economic competitiveness. And it continues Congressional Republicans' assault on the Affordable Care Act, threatening to take away health care coverage for millions of Americans and allowing health insurance companies to once again discriminate against 860,000 New Mexicans with pre-existing conditions.

"House Democrats have offered a budget that builds an economy that works for every day Americans. It rewards hard work, invests in the next generation, and protects our seniors to ensure a brighter future for the people of New Mexico and our nation."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 2, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 30, 2015

LUJAN COSPONSORS RAISE THE WAGE ACT; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 204 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he is cosponsoring legislation to raise the minimum wage and put more money in the pocket of hard-working New Mexicans. The Raise the Wage Act would increase the national minimum wage from $7.25 to $12 by 2020.

"New Mexico's workers want to receive a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. They want to work hard so they can send their children to college and save for a dignified retirement," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Yet at today's minimum wage, many full-time workers and their families have to work two or three jobs just to get by. Raising the minimum wage will reward hard work, grow opportunities, and strengthen our economy."

In addition to increasing the minimum wage, the legislation also indexes it to the median wage in 2021 in order to make sure that the minimum wage keeps pace with the growth in wages. It eliminates the tipped minimum wage gradually by raising it from $2.13 per hour to match the regular minimum wage. Setting the minimum wage at $12 in 2020 would give almost 38 million American workers a raise.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-cosponsors-raise-the-wage-act/

LOAD-DATE: May 1, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

35 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

April 30, 2015 Thursday

Quick fix elusive for road troubles; County, federal officials to hold joint meeting

BYLINE: Dan Parsons, SPECIAL TO THE INDEPENDENT

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1

LENGTH: 467 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON -- McKinley County commissioners were unable to find a quick fix to their road-access issues during a two-day trip to the nation's capital, but secured promises from federal officials that light will be shed on the problem.

"The door is no longer locked," McKinley County Attorney Doug Decker, said after the group's final meeting of the trip. "It may be stuck for while, but I feel like we are going to get in."

The commissioners' two-day trip to Washington culminated April 29 with a multi-agency meeting in Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**'s office. In attendance were **Lujan**, Bureau of Indian Affairs Director Michael

Black and representatives of both the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Federal Highway Administration.

At issue is the often-cumbersome requirement that the county contact at least 50 percent of the ownership of a property before gaining legal access to repair existing damaged two-tracks. At least $5 million in state and federal money is at risk of disappearing if the county cannot bypass that requirement and break ground on certain projects, says Dimas.

Decker was pleased with the suggestion that the county could tackle projects piecemeal by working on short sections of road within single Native allotments, rather than taking on entire roads at once.

"If we can do these things piecemeal, then we can get there," Decker said. "That becomes manageable for the chapters."

Navajo Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie also attended the meeting and said he and the Nation are amenable to finding a workaround for the county to repair existing roads.

To avoid a quorum, Commissioner Genevieve Jackson was the only commission member to attend the meeting with County Manager Bill Lee, County Attorney Douglas Decker and Emergency Management Director Anthony Dimas. Commissioners Tony Tanner and Carol Bowman-Muskett remained outside while the meeting was held.

Lujan promised that he and federal-level representatives of the BIA and FEMA would travel to McKinley County within the month, if not sooner, to meet with local officials.

"We have asked for a follow-up meeting down in New Mexico within the next month," **Lujan** said. "The BIA and other agencies involved with this issue will provide technical support."

Lee was optimistic that the commissioners' shoe-leather lobbying had "moved the needle" toward a solution.

"We need a solution that says 'if you are using public money to improve an existing road ... that becomes an exception to the current legislation.' Congressman **Lujan** put the onus on the BIA to find a solution."

Jackson, who attended the meeting in person, was more cautious in her assessment of the meeting.

"This has been an issue for years," she said. "I feel like we didn't make much progress here other than to get the people out to New Mexico to see the roads."

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

States News Service

April 30, 2015 Thursday

LUJAN COSPONSORS RAISE THE WAGE ACT

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 199 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he is cosponsoring legislation to raise the minimum wage and put more money in the pocket of hard-working New Mexicans. The Raise the Wage Act would increase the national minimum wage from $7.25 to $12 by 2020.

"New Mexico's workers want to receive a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. They want to work hard so they can send their children to college and save for a dignified retirement," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Yet at today's minimum wage, many full-time workers and their families have to work two or three jobs just to get by. Raising the minimum wage will reward hard work, grow opportunities, and strengthen our economy."

In addition to increasing the minimum wage, the legislation also indexes it to the median wage in 2021 in order to make sure that the minimum wage keeps pace with the growth in wages. It eliminates the tipped minimum wage gradually by raising it from $2.13 per hour to match the regular minimum wage. Setting the minimum wage at $12 in 2020 would give almost 38 million American workers a raise.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: May 1, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

April 30, 2015 Thursday 3:30 AM EST

Congressman Al Green Introduces Resolution to Promote Minority Health Awareness

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 288 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. Al Green, D-Texas (9th CD), issued the following news release:

On April 30, 2015, Congressman Al Green introduced a resolution to promote minority health awareness as well as support the goals and ideals of National Minority Health Month in April 2015. The resolution specifically seeks to bring attention to the health disparities faced by minority populations in the U.S.

The resolution highlights several sobering facts about the inequality in health outcomes experienced by minorities: African-American women are twice as likely to die from cervical cancer compared to Caucasian women. According to national examination surveys, Hispanics are almost twice as likely as non-Hispanic whites to be diagnosed with diabetes by a physician.

Additionally, the Department of Health and Human Services has identified six main categories in which racial and ethnic minorities experience disparate access to health care: infant mortality, cancer screening and management, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, and immunizations.

"All Americans regardless of race should have equal access to quality health care," Congressman Al Green said. "These troubling statistics about the state of health care and health outcomes for minority communities should be a clarion call to action for all. It is evident now more than ever, we must redouble our efforts legislatively and through community-based health care initiatives to eliminate the unhealthy circumstances that persist in our communities."

The resolution was cosponsored by Reps. G.K. Butterfield, Tony Cardenas, Judy Chu, Yvette Clarke, Robin Kelly, Barbara Lee, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, and **Ben Ray Lujan**.

Copyright Targeted News Services

30TacordaCheng 150502-5124871 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: May 2, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

April 30, 2015 Thursday 3:06 AM EST

Lujan Statement on Republican Budget

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 254 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting against the Budget Committee Conference Report.

"Congressional Republicans have passed a budget that will make it tougher for hard-working Americans to get ahead. Instead of offering a blueprint will help families grow their paychecks, afford a quality college education, and save for a dignified retirement, Congressional Republicans have put special interests first.

"This irresponsible budget protects tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas instead of making the needed investments in education and job training so that New Mexicans can continue to gain the skills they need to compete in this global economy. It shortchanges investments in infrastructure that are critical to creating jobs and strengthening our economic competitiveness. And it continues Congressional Republicans' assault on the Affordable Care Act, threatening to take away health care coverage for millions of Americans and allowing health insurance companies to once again discriminate against 860,000 New Mexicans with pre-existing conditions.

"House Democrats have offered a budget that builds an economy that works for every day Americans. It rewards hard work, invests in the next generation, and protects our seniors to ensure a brighter future for the people of New Mexico and our nation."

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150502-5124794 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: May 2, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

April 30, 2015 Thursday 3:06 AM EST

Lujan and VFW Agree: VA Spending Bill a Bad Bill for Veterans

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 231 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted against the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies appropriations bill today over serious concerns that the funding bill is inadequate to meet the needs of New Mexico's veterans. The legislation is opposed by Veterans Service Organizations, including the Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and American Legion, and includes spending reductions they have called "unconscionable."

"The VFW has called this 'a bad bill for veterans' and I agree. The Republican spending bill does not provide the necessary resources to fully address the challenges facing the VA and fails to honor the commitment made to our veterans. VA Secretary McDonald has said that cuts in this bill are the equivalent of 70,000 fewer veterans receiving VA medical care," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Sadly, we have heard too many stories of veterans in New Mexico who have faced long delays when seeking care through the VA. Our veterans deserve better. They deserve the care and benefits they have earned due to their brave service to our nation, and this legislation fails to deliver on that promise."

This legislation funds the VA at $1.2 billion below the President's request.

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150502-5124795 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: May 2, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

April 30, 2015 Thursday 1:24 AM EST

Lujan Cosponsors Raise the Wage Act

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 207 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he is cosponsoring legislation to raise the minimum wage and put more money in the pocket of hard-working New Mexicans. The Raise the Wage Act would increase the national minimum wage from $7.25 to $12 by 2020.

"New Mexico's workers want to receive a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. They want to work hard so they can send their children to college and save for a dignified retirement," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Yet at today's minimum wage, many full-time workers and their families have to work two or three jobs just to get by. Raising the minimum wage will reward hard work, grow opportunities, and strengthen our economy."

In addition to increasing the minimum wage, the legislation also indexes it to the median wage in 2021 in order to make sure that the minimum wage keeps pace with the growth in wages. It eliminates the tipped minimum wage gradually by raising it from $2.13 per hour to match the regular minimum wage. Setting the minimum wage at $12 in 2020 would give almost 38 million American workers a raise.

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150501-5122307 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: May 1, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

April 23, 2015 Thursday 7:19 PM EST

Rep. Veasey Introduces Bill to Help Students With Parents Without SSNs to Apply for Federal Aid

BYLINE: by KAREN NARAG, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 247 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, April 23 -- Rep. Marc Veasey, D-Texas, has introduced legislation (H.R. 1833) to "amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to include guidance on how dependent students with parents without SSNs may obtain Federal student assistance."

The bill was introduced on April 16 and has 31 co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. Alma S. Adams, D-N.C., Tony Cardenas, D-Calif., Joaquin Castro, D-Texas, Keith Ellison, D-Minn., Marcia L. Fudge, D-Ohio, Raul M. Grijalva, D-Ariz., Luis V. Gutierrez, D-Ill., Alcee L Hastings, D-Fla., Ruben Hinojosa, D-Texas, Brenda Lawrence, D-Mich., Barbara Lee, D-Calif., Zoe Lofgren, D-Calif., Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., Gregory W. Meeks, D-N.Y., Charles B. Rangel, D-N.Y., Linda T. Sanchez, D-Calif., Juan C. Vargas, D-Calif., Bonnie Watson Coleman, D-N.J., John Conyers Jr., D-Mich., Lois Capps, D-Calif., Adam Smith, D-Wash., Frederica S. Wilson, D-Fla., Al Green, D-Texas, Joyce Beatty, D-Ohio, Terri A. Sewell, D-Ala., Bobby L. Rush, D-Ill., **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., Danny K. Davis,

D-Ill., and Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-Texas; Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton, D-D.C.; and Res. Comm. Pedro Pierluisi, D-P.R.

The legislation was referred to the House Education and the Workforce Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/1833/text.

Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://www.targetednews.com

23NaragK 150424-1200886

LOAD-DATE: April 24, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 23, 2015 Thursday

Lujan Statement on Earth Day

LENGTH: 292 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement in celebration of Earth Day.

"For 45 years, Earth Day has brought together communities and individuals from around the world to advocate for a cleaner, healthier and sustainable future. Since the first Earth Day in 1970, we have seen important progress - making our air and water cleaner, combating acid raid, and growing our use of renewable energy. We must continue to build on these successes, and to address the pressing issue of climate change that is impacting communities across New Mexico.

"This year's theme, 'It's Our Turn to Lead,' is a reminder that we all have a role to play in preserving our precious water resources, protecting our majestic lands, and using energy responsibly and efficiently. Even the small steps we can take in our own lives can have a significant impact when we work together toward a common goal.

"As we celebrate Earth Day, I have introduced legislation to support efforts to grow a clean energy economy by preparing workers for jobs in the renewable energy sector. The Community College Energy Training Act will help train students and retrain workers with the skills needed to compete in this growing field and make the next technological innovations that will further unleash the promise of a clean energy economy.

"This Earth Day, as we recognize the contributions and progress made over the past 45 years, we reaffirm our commitment to protecting and preserving our land, water, and natural resources."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 24, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 22, 2015

LUJAN STATEMENT ON EARTH DAY; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 275 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement in celebration of Earth Day.

"For 45 years, Earth Day has brought together communities and individuals from around the world to advocate for a cleaner, healthier and sustainable future. Since the first Earth Day in 1970, we have seen important progress - making our air and water cleaner, combating acid raid, and growing our use of renewable energy. We must continue to build on these successes, and to address the pressing issue of climate change that is impacting communities across New Mexico.

"This year's theme, 'It's Our Turn to Lead,' is a reminder that we all have a role to play in preserving our precious water resources, protecting our majestic lands, and using energy responsibly and efficiently. Even the small steps we can take in our own lives can have a significant impact when we work together toward a common goal.

"As we celebrate Earth Day, I have introduced legislation to support efforts to grow a clean energy economy by preparing workers for jobs in the renewable energy sector. The Community College Energy Training Act will help train students and retrain workers with the skills needed to compete in

this growing field and make the next technological innovations that will further unleash the promise of a clean energy economy.

"This Earth Day, as we recognize the contributions and progress made over the past 45 years, we reaffirm our commitment to protecting and preserving our land, water, and natural resources."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-earth-day1/

LOAD-DATE: April 23, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

April 22, 2015 Wednesday

County officials offer details on Washington trip

BYLINE: Richard Reyes Staff writer city@gallupindependent.com

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 568 words

DATELINE: GALLUP

GALLUP -- McKinley County Manager Bill Lee confirmed that the Board of Commissioners will only have work sessions with congressional delegates about disaster funding, which is at risk of reverting back to the state, and will take no action during their April 27-30 trip to Washington.

During a regular commission meeting Tuesday morning, Lee provided the commissioners' itinerary as well as information about the Open Meetings Act to address concerns about the trip. The discussion was for informational purposes only. County Attorney Doug Decker was absent, but Lee read notes that Decker prepared.

"The trip to D.C. is to discuss public business; however, it is held as a work session and no action is to be taken," Lee said. "If there are actions you wish you take, we can bring those back and put them on the agenda, then take action on them."

The Washington meetings are meant to address concerns over Federal Emergency Management Agency funding and difficulties the county has experienced, Lee said.

Lee said the county was initially denied funding for the Manuelito Bridge, which was closed after it was deemed unsound in 2013. The county established a bypass road, but it gets washed out during the monsoon season every year.

The county currently has $3 million in funding that is at risk because the county is unable to settle right of way issues with the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

"I think there is more scrutiny at the state level of projects not getting completed and money not being spent down," Lee said. "It's critical that we save this money. Our legislative body worked diligently to improve our roads. All that money is in dire jeopardy of being clawed back."

In February, county officials attended the National Association of Counties Legislative Conference and talked with the state's congressional delegation about the issues the county has experienced. Lee said the delegates were interested in attacking the problem.

He said Emergency Management Director Anthony Dimas and Commissioner Genevieve Jackson went back to Washington recently to revisit the issue. Delegates expressed their interest in meeting with all of the commissioners and some department heads to have a roundtable discussion and find a resolution to protect the funding.

Jackson, Lee, Decker and Dimas along with Commissioners Carol Bowman-Muskett and Tony Tanner will fly to Washington April 27.

On April 28, they will meet with U.S. Rep. Steve Pearce at 2 p.m.; Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich at 3:30 p.m.; and Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** at 5 p.m. On April 29, they will meet with Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham at 10 a.m.

Also on April 29, county officials will meet with the BIA about restoring a contract with the McKinley County Adult Detention Center for housing inmates.

There is also a multi-agency meeting scheduled that day, but Lee said there's a chance that it could coincide with the BIA meeting. If that were to happen, Lee suggested that he and Jackson could break off from the rest of the group to discuss the jail contract so the rest of the county officials could attend the multi-agency meeting.

Then everybody is scheduled to fly back and drive home April 30.

Decker has previously said the trip may cost anywhere from $10,000 to $12,000. The actual expenses will be determined when they return from the trip. The commission approved unbudgeted out-of-state travel for the trip during its April 7 meeting.

LOAD-DATE: April 29, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

45 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

April 22, 2015 Wednesday 10:23 PM EST

Rep. Carson Introduces Equality for All Resolution of 2015

BYLINE: by AILE DAYANDANTE, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 642 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, April 22 -- Rep. Andre Carson, D-Ind., has introduced (H. Res. 208), the Equality for All Resolution of 2015, "expressing the sense of the Congress that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals should be protected from discrimination under the law."

The resolution was introduced on April 16 and has 129 co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. Alma S. Adams, D-N.C., Al Green, D-Texas, Karen Bass, D-Calif., Xavier Becerra, D-Calif., Joyce Beatty, D-Ohio, Ami Bera, D-Calif., Don S. Beyer, D-Va., Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., Julia Brownley, D-Calif., Cheri Bustos, D-Ill., Lois Capps, D-Calif., Michael E. Capuano, D-Mass., Tony Cardenas, D-Calif., Matthew Cartwright, D-Pa., Kathy Castor, D-Fla., Joaquin Castro, D-Texas, Judy Chu, D-Calif., David N. Cicilline, D-R.I., Katherine M. Clark, D-Mass., Yvette D. Clarke, D-N.Y., James E. Clyburn, D-S.C., Steve Cohen, D-Tenn., Gerald E. Connolly, D-Va., John Conyers Jr., D-Mich., Joe Courtney, D-Conn., Joseph Crowley, D-N.Y., Elijah E. Cummings, D-Md., Susan A. Davis, D-Calif., Diana DeGette, D-Colo., John Delaney, D-Md., Rosa L. DeLauro, D-Conn., Suzan DelBene, D-Wash., Mark DeSaulnier, D-Calif., Ted Deutch, D-Fla., Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill., Donna F. Edwards, D-Md., Keith Ellison, D-Minn., Eliot L. Engel, D-N.Y., Elizabeth Esty, D-Conn., Sam Farr, D-Calif., Bill Foster, D-Ill., Lois Frankel, D-Fla., Marcia L. Fudge, D-Ohio, Tulsi Gabbard, D-Hawaii, Ruben Gallego, D-Ariz., Alan Grayson, D-Fla., Raul M. Grijalva, D-Ariz., Luis V. Gutierrez, D-Ill., Janice Hahn, D-Calif., Alcee L. Hastings, D-Fla., Denny Heck, D-Wash., Brian Higgins, D-N.Y., Jim Himes, D-Conn., Mike Honda, D-Calif., Steny H. Hoyer, D-Md., Steve Israel, D-N.Y., Sheila Jackson Lee, D-Texas, Henry C. Johnson, D-Ga., William R. Keating, D-Mass., Joseph P. Kennedy III, D-Mass., Daniel Kildee, D-Mich., Derek Kilmer, D-Wash., Ann Kirkpatrick, D-Ariz., Ann McLane Kuster, D-N.H., Jim Langevin, D-R.I., Rick Larsen, D-Wash., John B. Larson, D-Conn., Brenda Lawrence, D-Mich., Barbara Lee, D-Calif., John Lewis, D-Ga., Ted Lieu, D-Calif., Zoe Lofgren, D-Calif., Alan Lowenthal, D-Calif., **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., Carolyn B. Maloney, D-N.Y., Sean Patrick Maloney, D-N.Y., Doris O. Matsui, D-Calif., Betty McCollum, D-Minn., Jim McDermott, D-Wash., James McGovern, D-Mass., Gregory W. Meeks, D-N.Y., Gwen Moore, D-Wis., Seth Moulton, D-Mass., Patrick Murphy, D-Fla., Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., Grace F. Napolitano, D-Calif., Richard E. Neal, D-Mass., Donald W. Norcross, D-N.J., Beto O'Rourke, D-Texas, Frank Pallone Jr., D-N.J., Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., Scott Peters, D-Calif., Chellie Pingree, D-Maine, Mark Pocan, D-Wis., Jared Polis, D-Colo., Mike Quigley, D-Ill., Charles B. Rangel, D-N.Y., Lucille Roybal-Allard, D-Calif., Raul Ruiz, D-Calif., Bobby L. Rush, D-Ill., Tim Ryan, D-Ohio, Linda T. Sanchez, D-Calif., Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill., Adam B. Schiff, D-Calif., Robert C. Scott, D-Va., Brad Sherman, D-Calif., Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz., Louise Slaughter, D-N.Y., Adam Smith, D-Wash., Jackie Speier, D-Calif., Mark Takai, D-Hawaii, Mark Takano, D-Calif., Mike Thompson, D-Calif., Dina Titus, D-Nev., Paul Tonko, D-N.Y., Niki Tsongas, D-Mass., Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., Nydia M. Velazquez, D-N.Y., Peter J. Visclosky, D-Ind., Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., Bonnie Watson Coleman, D-N.J., Peter Welch, D-Vt., Frederica S. Wilson, D-Fla., John A. Yarmuth, D-Ky., Ed Perlmutter, D-Colo., and Jerry McNerney, D-Calif.; and Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton, D-D.C.

The resolution was referred to the House Judiciary Committee.

The full text of the resolution is available from https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-resolution/208/text.

Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://www.targetednews.com

22DayanAile 150422-1200947

LOAD-DATE: April 22, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

46 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

April 22, 2015 Wednesday 10:12 PM EST

Rep. Lujan Grisham Introduces Bill to Take Four Parcels of Federal Land for Indian Pueblos in New Mexico

BYLINE: by AILE DAYANDANTE, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 111 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, April 22 -- Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., has introduced legislation (H.R. 1880) to "require the Secretary of the Interior to take into trust 4 parcels of Federal land for the benefit of certain Indian Pueblos in the State of New Mexico."

The bill was introduced on April 16 and was co-sponsored by Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. It was referred to the House Natural Resources Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/1880/text.

Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://www.targetednews.com

22DayanAile 150422-1200933

LOAD-DATE: April 23, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

47 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

April 22, 2015 Wednesday 3:56 AM EST

Lujan Statement on Earth Day

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 278 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement in celebration of Earth Day.

"For 45 years, Earth Day has brought together communities and individuals from around the world to advocate for a cleaner, healthier and sustainable future. Since the first Earth Day in 1970, we have seen important progress - making our air and water cleaner, combating acid raid, and growing our use of renewable energy. We must continue to build on these successes, and to address the pressing issue of climate change that is impacting communities across New Mexico.

"This year's theme, 'It's Our Turn to Lead,' is a reminder that we all have a role to play in preserving our precious water resources, protecting our majestic lands, and using energy responsibly and efficiently. Even the small steps we can take in our own lives can have a significant impact when we work together toward a common goal.

"As we celebrate Earth Day, I have introduced legislation to support efforts to grow a clean energy economy by preparing workers for jobs in the renewable energy sector. The Community College Energy Training Act will help train students and retrain workers with the skills needed to compete in this growing field and make the next technological innovations that will further unleash the promise of a clean energy economy.

"This Earth Day, as we recognize the contributions and progress made over the past 45 years, we reaffirm our commitment to protecting and preserving our land, water, and natural resources."

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150423-5111365 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: April 23, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 21, 2015

Serrano, Crowley, Lujan Introduce Legislation to Expand Access to STEM Fields for Hispanic Students; Rep. Jose E. Serrano (D-NY) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 558 words

Washington, D.C.--Today, Congressmen Jose E. Serrano, Joe Crowley, and **Ben Ray Lujan** introduced the Hispanic Opportunity Program in Education and Science Act (HOPES Act), which would require the National Science Foundation (NSF) to establish a grant program to support undergraduate science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education at Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs).

In 2007, Congressman Crowley inserted language in the America COMPETES Act to allow the NSF to establish a program focused on HSIs. Despite having this authority, the NSF has yet to establish such a program. The HOPES Act will require the agency to establish a dedicated stream of funding for students attending HSIs.

"STEM education is crucial for the United States in order to maintain the lead in cutting-edge technology and competitiveness, to create well-paid jobs, and to provide opportunities for all. Unfortunately, we are not doing enough to attract Americans from all walks of life to these important and vital fields of study. The HOPES Act will increase the number of Hispanic students pursuing STEM degrees by creating dedicated funding to help students attending HSIs succeed in these fields of study. This bill will help expand opportunities for all students, and will help ensure that our workforce in the STEM fields is as diverse as our nation as a whole," said Congressman Jose E. Serrano.

"There is no question, STEM skills are critical for our country to compete in a global economy. Unfortunately, Hispanic students are severely underrepresented in these fields of tomorrow," said Congressman Joe Crowley. "Our HOPES Act builds upon efforts I have made over the past 8 years to urge the NSF to establish a separate STEM education grant for Hispanic Serving Institutions of higher education. By creating a dedicated grants program, we can help Hispanic students reach their rightful place in the STEM fields."

"The STEM fields offer a world of opportunities in growing sectors that create good jobs, and it is important that we engage students from every community. Young people need access to quality STEM education that will prepare them with the skills and knowledge they need to get ahead," said Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan**. "Attracting a diverse workforce will enhance our ability to out-innovate the rest of the world, and the HOPES Act will help encourage Hispanic students to engage in areas that are vital to maintaining our economic competitiveness and growing our economy."

Hispanic students are currently greatly underrepresented in the STEM fields. According to NSF data, Hispanic students comprise 10.3 percent of all students in STEM 4 year undergraduate degree programs and 14.6 percent of STEM 2 year degree programs. These numbers are well below Hispanics share of the nation's population as a whole- 17.3 percent. This legislation will increase the likelihood of Hispanic students seeking a STEM education and provide HSIs with the necessary resources in order to enhance the quality of STEM offerings at HSIs and increase retention and graduation rates of students pursuing STEM degrees. The bill is supported by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU).

Read this original document at: http://serrano.house.gov/press-release/serrano-crowley-luj%C3%A1n-introduce-legislation-expand-access-stem-fields-hispanic

LOAD-DATE: April 22, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

US Official News

April 21, 2015 Tuesday

Serrano, Crowley, Luján Introduce Legislation to Expand Access to STEM Fields for Hispanic Students

LENGTH: 450 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the House of Representative Jose Serrano, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Today, Congressmen José E. Serrano, Joe Crowley, and **Ben Ray Luján** introduced the Hispanic Opportunity Program in Education and Science Act (HOPES Act), which would require the National Science Foundation (NSF) to establish a grant program to support undergraduate science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education at Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs).

In 2007, Congressman Crowley inserted language in the America COMPETES Act to allow the NSF to establish a program focused on HSIs. Despite having this authority, the NSF has yet to establish such a program. The HOPES Act will require the agency to establish a dedicated stream of funding for students attending HSIs.

"STEM education is crucial for the United States in order to maintain the lead in cutting-edge technology and competitiveness, to create well-paid jobs, and to provide opportunities for all. Unfortunately, we are not doing enough to attract Americans from all walks of life to these important and vital fields of study. The HOPES Act will increase the number of Hispanic students pursuing STEM degrees by creating dedicated funding to help students attending HSIs succeed in these fields of study. This bill will help expand opportunities for all students, and will help ensure that our workforce in the STEM fields is as diverse as our nation as a whole," said Congressman José E. Serrano.

"There is no question, STEM skills are critical for our country to compete in a global economy. Unfortunately, Hispanic students are severely underrepresented in these fields of tomorrow," said Congressman Joe Crowley. "Our HOPES Act builds upon efforts I have made over the past 8 years to

urge the NSF to establish a separate STEM education grant for Hispanic Serving Institutions of higher education. By creating a dedicated grants program, we can help Hispanic students reach their rightful place in the STEM fields."

"The STEM fields offer a world of opportunities in growing sectors that create good jobs, and it is important that we engage students from every community. Young people need access to quality STEM education that will prepare them with the skills and knowledge they need to get ahead," said Congressman **Ben Ray Luján**. "Attracting a diverse workforce will enhance our ability to out-innovate the rest of the world, and the HOPES Act will help encourage Hispanic students to engage in areas that are vital to maintaining our economic competitiveness and growing our economy."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 22, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

50 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by Tribune Content Agency

April 19, 2015 Sunday

Key state Democratic party leaders line up behind Clinton

BYLINE: Steve Terrell, The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 1341 words

April 19--Hillary Rodham Clinton officially entered the 2016 presidential race last week but she already seems to have a lock on New Mexico's Democratic Party establishment, already lining up key endorsements from key party leaders.

Indeed, many indicators look good here for Clinton in 2016. Democrats have carried the state in five of the last six presidential elections, including two wins in the 1990s by Clinton's husband, former President Bill Clinton. And, Democrats seem unified, so far at least, with no serious competition for the nomination seeming to loom on the horizon for Clinton.

But New Mexico's Republicans -- still riding high after running roughshod over Democrats last year, re-electing Gov. Susana Martinez in a landslide and capturing the state House -- aren't about to concede the state's five electoral votes.

The state GOP has promised to vigorously dish the dirt on Clinton over the next year and a half. And a leading New Mexico pollster says even though Clinton's chances in the state look very good at this early stage, if Republicans nominate a candidate who can make a strong showing with Hispanics, they could give Clinton a run for the money.

The first well-known New Mexico Democrat to hop on the Hillary train was former Albuquerque Mayor Martin Chavez, who joined the Ready for Hillary organization in 2013. In an interview Friday, Chavez said his main function was getting support from Democratic mayors and Hispanics throughout the country.

"The main function was building volunteer lists and donor lists and basic [campaign] infrastructure in the field,' he said. "Now she's got more donors and more volunteers than she did in 2008."

Chavez, who these days splits his time between Albuquerque and Washington, D.C., working as a consultant, also organized three Ready for Hillary fundraisers in New Mexico, he said.

He noted he backed Hillary Clinton for president eight years ago and Bill Clinton during his two runs for president in the '90s. "I've got Clinton tattoos all over me," Chavez joked. He said Bill Clinton also has come to New Mexico to campaign and fundraise for Chavez, who served three terms as mayor and ran for governor in 1998.

Two Democrats in New Mexico's congressional delegation have been backing Clinton openly for months. U.S. Sen. Martin Heinrich and U.S. Rep. Michelle **Luján**-Grisham of Albuquerque, co-hosted a fundraiser for Clinton in July, according to a story in Politico.

On the day after Clinton's announcement, Sen. Tom Udallposted on his political Twitter account, "I'm ready for Hillary! @HillaryClinton has the experience to be our next President. Join her team here ..." giving a link to Clinton's campaign website. Udall made a similar post on his Facebook page that day.

The other Democrat in the delegation, U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, didn't outright endorse Clinton. But through the Democratic Congressional Committee, which he heads, **Luján** issued a news release that said, "If chosen as our presidential nominee, Hillary Clinton will bring experience and energy to the campaign trail that will turn out hard-working families in New Mexico and across the country, and excite a new generation of Democrats."

Several prominent Democrats were listed on an invitation to a Ready for Hillary event in Albuquerque a few days before Clinton announced. Those included **Luján**-Grisham, former Lt. Gov. Diane Denish, former state House Speaker Kenny Martinez, several Albuquerque-area legislators, Debra Haaland, who is running for state Democratic Party Chairwoman and Santa Fe Mayor Javier Gonzales.

Gonzales, in an interview last week, said he's "100 percent" behind Clinton. "I believe in her," he said. "She will be a great president for the United States and for New Mexico." He said Clinton could be counted on to implement President Obama's plans to establish free community colleges and "closing the inequality gap" for incomes

"New Mexicans don't want their votes taken for granted," Gonzales said. "I hope she comes to Santa Fe and Northern New Mexico during the campaign.

Chavez said while he's certain Clinton will carry the state, he's worried if her lead in the polls is too wide and New Mexico isn't considered a "battleground" state, she probably wouldn't campaign here next year.

Clinton campaigned here in 2008, speaking at an Albuquerque rally right before the Democratic caucus that year, which she narrowly won. Later that year, after she'd conceded the nomination to Barack Obama, she appeared at an Española rally in support of her former rival.

Clinton also has received some high-profile support from a well-known Santa Fe couple, former Ambassador Joe Wilson and ex- CIA agent Valerie Plame. The two recently published op-eds in USA

Today and The Huffington Post praising Clinton as "by far the most qualified and trustworthy person to protect our national security interests and to create a better American future."

In an interview last week, Wilson told The New Mexican that he and his wife also backed Clinton in 2008. "The last time we spoke around the country for her," he said. And they might do the same in this election cycle. "We'll do what we can for her."

Part of Wilson and Plame's support is personal.

In 2003, Bush administration officials leaked the identity of Plame as an undercover CIA operative after Wilson criticized President George W. Bush in print for claiming that Iraq was seeking to buy nuclear material in Niger -- a claim Bush used to argue for going to war with Iraq. It was a time when "we were subjected to a vicious character assassination campaign orchestrated by senior White House officials and championed by their allies in the right-wing echo chamber ... ," the couple wrote in an op-ed.

"Both she and Bill [Clinton] reached out to us," Wilson said last week. "Bill put it in perspective, reassuring us that we had a lot of support. He said that if we left the public square, it would make it more difficult for others like us to come forward."

Of course, Democrats in the state were not the only ones who took notice of Clinton's announcement last week. On the same afternoon Clinton officially announced her candidacy, the state Republican Party emailed a news release under the subject line "Hillary Clinton Cannot Be Trusted." In it, party Chairwoman Debbie Maestas said, "American voters should be concerned with Hillary's tenure of scandal -- 20 years in the public eye running with a questionable record that has accomplished very little to move America forward, we don't want -- or need -- a leader like that."

The state GOP promised that over the next 18 months, it plans to "highlight her record of scandal and lack of accomplishments."

Albuquerque pollster Brian Sanderoff said last week that Clinton has a "very good opportunity" to carry New Mexico next year.

The state went "with gusto" for Obama in 2008 and 2012, Sanderoff said, giving him wider margins of victory than he got in other nearby states that voted for him. Despite the Republican victories last year, in national elections the state has been trending Democrat in recent years, Sanderoff said.

"But if she stumbles, if there's some big scandal, you can't discount the possibility of a Republican winning the state," Sanderoff said.

He noted George W. Bush in 2004 carried the state, winning about 40 percent of New Mexico's Hispanic vote. "Part of Bush's success here is he was from a neighboring state and he related well to Hispanics."

Though not from a neighboring state, both Jeb Bush, who speaks fluent Spanish and has a Mexican-born wife, and Sen. Marco Rubio, who is Cuban American, could do well with New Mexico Hispanics, Sanderoff said. Another GOP contender, Sen. Ted Cruz, is from the neighboring state of Texas. "But he's probably too polarizing to win here," Sanderoff said.

"It's way too early, but if you had to bet now, Hillary would be the odds-on favorite," Sanderoff said.

___ (c)2015 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC

LOAD-DATE: April 19, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20150419-SF-Key-state-Democratic-party-leaders-line-up-behind-Clinton-0419-20150419

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2015 The Santa Fe New Mexican

Targeted News Service

April 17, 2015 Friday 6:17 PM EST

Rep. Lujan Honors National Service Recognition Day

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 268 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, April 17 -- Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., has issued a statement honoring volunteers doing national service for their communities in celebration of the National Service Recognition Day.

Mr. **BEN RAY LUJAN** of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor National Service Recognition Day, which was held on April, 7th. Service to our community and our country is an enduring feature of the American spirit, and today we recognize those who have made a commitment to volunteerism.

America's cities and communities are at their best when citizens are engaged and take an active role in developing solutions. The Corporation for National and Community Service operates programs that activate and empower communities to tackle some of their most pressing issues such as education, health care, national disaster recovery, and the environment.

AmeriCorps and Senior Corps operate in more than 60,000 locations across the country, bolstering both private and non-profit organizations that do vital work in their communities. These programs mobilize millions of volunteers, building skills and educating leaders nationwide. In New Mexico alone, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps involve over 5,000 individuals at more than 640 locations.

In honor of National Service Recognition Day I encourage citizens to join me in recognizing the positive impact of national service, to thank those that serve, and to find ways to become involved in their cities and communities.

Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://www.targetednews.com

22DayanAile 150417-1200633

LOAD-DATE: April 17, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

52 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 16, 2015

LUJAN STATEMENT ON HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 150 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today in honor of Holocaust Remembrance Day.

"More than 70 years ago, millions of Jews were persecuted, imprisoned, and millions more were murdered because of their faith, heritage, and identity. To this very day, the terrible atrocities perpetrated by the Nazis shock the conscience of humanity. Today we remember all those who lost their lives and the survivors, whose stories and perseverance help provide us with the strength to combat hatred and intolerance.

"On Holocaust Remembrance Day let us recommit to standing up against anti-Semitism and all forms of bigotry. Let us not stand silent in the face of prejudice, and instead ensure we act out of respect for all people."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan.**house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-holocaust-remembrance-day/

LOAD-DATE: April 17, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

53 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 16, 2015

NM DELEGATION RESPONDS TO WIPP ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BOARD REPORT; Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 250 words

WASHINGTON - Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce and **Ben Ray Lujan** issued the following joint statement on the report by the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Accident Investigation Board, analyzing the direct cause of the of the Feb. 14, 2014, radiological incident at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP):

"According to today's report, a series of critical failures of leadership at every level led to the very serious accident and release that put numerous New Mexicans at risk, shuttered WIPP for over a year, and have already cost taxpayers tens of millions of dollars.

"New Mexico is unique in the nation as the only state that houses an underground repository for transuranic waste. New Mexicans understand the incredible value of the contributions that Los Alamos National Laboratory and WIPP make to science, national security and our state's economy. But with our unique acceptance of such facilities, we also have high expectations of the Department of Energy and its contractors that they will go above and beyond to ensure our communities are not endangered. This report makes clear that the DOE and its contractors failed to keep faith with the people of New Mexico.

"We will continue doing everything we can to ensure resources are available to complete the cleanup work at Los Alamos and safely reopen WIPP."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/nm-delegation-responds-to-wipp-accident-investigation-board-report/

LOAD-DATE: April 17, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

April 16, 2015 Thursday

TITLE: LUJAN STATEMENT ON HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY DATE: (THU, APRIL 16, 2015 01:36:PM ET)

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 175 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today in honor of Holocaust Remembrance Day.

"More than 70 years ago, millions of Jews were persecuted, imprisoned, and millions more were murdered because of their faith, heritage, and identity. To this very day, the terrible atrocities perpetrated by the Nazis shock the conscience of humanity. Today we remember all those who lost their lives and the survivors, whose stories and perseverance help provide us with the strength to combat hatred and intolerance.

"On Holocaust Remembrance Day let us recommit to standing up against anti-Semitism and all forms of bigotry. Let us not stand silent in the face of prejudice, and instead ensure we act out of respect for all people."

# # #

This entry passed through the Full-Text RSS service - if this is your content and you're reading it on someone else's site, please read the FAQ at fivefilters.org/content-only/faq.php#publishers.

LOAD-DATE: April 17, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

US Official News

April 16, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: LUJAN: 100 DAYS INTO CONGRESS, REPUBLICANS PUTTING SPECIAL INTERESTS AHEAD OF HARD-WORKING FAMILIES

LENGTH: 197 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today marking the 100th day of the Republican-controlled Congress that is putting the needs of special interests ahead of hard-working families. "From day one, House Republicans have pursued an agenda that looks out for the special interests instead of addressing the pressing needs of hard-working Americans in New Mexico and across the nation. They have governed from one manufactured crisis to the next, brought the Department of Homeland Security to the brink of a shutdown, and voted time and again to strip health care coverage from millions of Americans." "Democrats instead are focused on growing paychecks for hard-working Americans, rebuilding our crumbling infrastructure, and making it easier to send a kid to college. The people of New Mexico deserve better than House Republicans' dismal record over the past 100 days, and Democrats have a plan to put working families first."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 17, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

56 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

April 16, 2015 Thursday

Lujan Statement on Holocaust Remembrance Day

LENGTH: 165 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today in honor of Holocaust Remembrance Day.

"More than 70 years ago, millions of Jews were persecuted, imprisoned, and millions more were murdered because of their faith, heritage, and identity. To this very day, the terrible atrocities

perpetrated by the Nazis shock the conscience of humanity. Today we remember all those who lost their lives and the survivors, whose stories and perseverance help provide us with the strength to combat hatred and intolerance.

"On Holocaust Remembrance Day let us recommit to standing up against anti-Semitism and all forms of bigotry. Let us not stand silent in the face of prejudice, and instead ensure we act out of respect for all people."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 22, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 16, 2015 Thursday

Lujan: 100 Days into Congress, Republicans Putting Special Interests Ahead of Hard-Working Families

LENGTH: 200 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today marking the 100th day of the Republican-controlled Congress that is putting the needs of special interests ahead of hard-working families.

"From day one, House Republicans have pursued an agenda that looks out for the special interests instead of addressing the pressing needs of hard-working Americans in New Mexico and across the nation. They have governed from one manufactured crisis to the next, brought the Department of Homeland Security to the brink of a shutdown, and voted time and again to strip health care coverage from millions of Americans."

"Democrats instead are focused on growing paychecks for hard-working Americans, rebuilding our crumbling infrastructure, and making it easier to send a kid to college. The people of New Mexico deserve better than House Republicans' dismal record over the past 100 days, and Democrats have a plan to put working families first."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 22, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 16, 2015 Thursday

Lujan: Equal Pay Day Reminds Us of Importance of Paycheck Fairness Act

LENGTH: 397 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District marked Equal Pay Day today, which symbolizes when, more than three months into 2015, women's wages will finally catch up to what men earned last year. On average, women earn 78 cents for every dollar that a man earns. **Luján** has co-sponsored the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would provide effective solutions and protections for women who are not being paid equal wages for doing equal work.

"The pay gap between men and women doesn't just impact hard-working women - it impacts their families and their ability to put food on the table, send a child to college, or buy a home," Congressman **Luján** said. "At the current rate that the gap has been closing, women won't reach pay equity with men until 2058. That's why women and their families need the Paycheck Fairness Act. As long as hard-working women are making less for the same work, we must fight to pass this important legislation. Because when women succeed, America succeeds."

In New Mexico, women earn 82 cents for every dollar that a man does. While this is slightly higher than the national average, it still represents a gap of more than $7,700 every year. For Latinas and African American women, the wage gap is even worse. Latinas make 56 cents for every dollar earned by a white, non-Hispanic man and African American women make 64 cents. A study by the National Women's Law Center found that in 108 of 111 occupations analyzed, the earnings of women were less than the earnings of men.

Equal pay has been a top priority of Congressional Democrats, who passed the Paycheck Fairness Act in the House in 2008, but it was blocked by Senate Republicans. Since then, Congressional

Republicans have repeatedly stood in the way of its passage. Among its many provisions, the bill requires employers to show that pay disparity is truly related to job performance, not gender; strengthens remedies for women experiencing pay discrimination; prohibits employer retaliation for sharing salary information with coworkers; and empowers women in the workplace through a grant program to strengthen salary negotiation and other workplace skills.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 22, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 15, 2015

LUJAN: 100 DAYS INTO CONGRESS, REPUBLICANS PUTTING SPECIAL INTERESTS AHEAD OF HARD-WORKING FAMILIES; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 194 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today marking the 100th day of the Republican-controlled Congress that is putting the needs of special interests ahead of hard-working families.

"From day one, House Republicans have pursued an agenda that looks out for the special interests instead of addressing the pressing needs of hard-working Americans in New Mexico and across the nation. They have governed from one manufactured crisis to the next, brought the Department of Homeland Security to the brink of a shutdown, and voted time and again to strip health care coverage from millions of Americans."

"Democrats instead are focused on growing paychecks for hard-working Americans, rebuilding our crumbling infrastructure, and making it easier to send a kid to college. The people of New Mexico deserve better than House Republicans' dismal record over the past 100 days, and Democrats have a plan to put working families first."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan.**house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-100-days-into-congress-republicans-putting-special-interests-ahead-of-hardworking-families/

LOAD-DATE: April 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 15, 2015

REP. GUTIERREZ: RUNNING OUT THE CLOCK ON IMMIGRATION LAWSUIT IS A BIG MISTAKE;
"Just like the decision not to allow a vote on immigration reform over the past two years will be seen as one of the biggest political mistakes of all time.";
Rep. Luis Gutierrez (D-IL) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 1238 words

Washington, DC - Today (at approximately 10:00 a.m. ET), Rep. Luis V. Gutierrez (D-IL) spoke on the floor of the House of Representatives about the lawsuit filed to block the implementation of the President's executive actions on immigration. Standing before a picture of Judge Andrew Hanen of the Southern District of Texas, Rep. Gutierrez warned his Republican colleagues that their strategy to block the President's executive actions could have consequences in 2016.

The Congressman said: "It might turn into a drawn out series of rulings and appeals that wind up in the Supreme Court, which could take us well into 2016...an election year, where Latino U.S. citizens - not the immigrants we are discussing, but their neighbors, cousins, spouses and co-workers who are citizens - are not likely to vote for the Party that is making sure their neighbors, cousins, spouses or co-workers are still a top priority for deportation. I have a feeling the citizens will support the candidates and the parties that support their communities."

The text of the Congressman's remarks is pasted below and a video clip is here: http://youtu.be/gMpNOYleAgw

Congressman Gutierrez speaks later today at a rally and community education event in Langley Park, Maryland where he will be joined by Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer and Maryland Democrats Chris Van Hollen and Donna Edwards, among others. Flyer (English): http://1.usa.gov/1FRRev3 (Spanish): http://1.usa.gov/1cw5T2F.

On Friday (4/17), Rep. Gutierrez will be in Tucson for an immigration and executive action event with Rep. Raul Grijalva (Flyer: http://1.usa.gov/1avVwtU), followed on Saturday by an event in

Albuquerque with Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham. Additional immigration and executive action events are scheduled in Washington, Oregon and Texas later in the month.

Rep. Luis V. Gutierrez represents the Fourth District of Illinois, is a Member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, is a Member of the Judiciary Committee and the Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security, and is the Co-Chair of the Immigration Task Force of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. A video of his remarks at the Tuesday hearing of the Judiciary Committee with ICE Director Sarah Saldana is here: https://youtu.be/ZPqduWuWaDs And the "Family Defender Toolkit" he developed for those preparing for the President's immigration executive action is here: http://bit.ly/ToolKitEng and http://bit.ly/ToolkitESP.

Remarks on the House floor as prepared for delivery:

Rep. Luis V. Gutierrez

April 15, 2015

The man pictured behind me will go a long way towards determining who lives in the White House for the next few years.

No, he is not a pollster or a campaign spin-doctor.

And no, he is not a potential Republican candidate.

No, this is a federal judge for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas, the honorable Judge Andrew Hanen.

The lawsuit by 26 Republican Governors and Attorneys General seeking to block the executive actions taken by the Obama Administration on immigration was filed in his court.

He has not ruled yet on the constitutionality of the case.

He ordered a preliminary injunction saying he thought the states have standing to bring the suit - or at least that the state of Texas did. And that was enough for him to stop the implementation of the plan nationwide.

And not surprisingly, just last week Judge Hanen refused the government's request to lift his injunction and allow the plan to move forward.

Here is the reality: Congress mandates that about 300,000 or 400,000 people will be deported this year out of a total of more tha 11 million undocumented.

The Secretary of Homeland Security developed a plan to choose between hardened criminals and those immigrants who have lived here at least five years, have U.S. citizen children and can pass a criminal background check at their own expense.

The plan also requires immigrants to renew their temporary status periodically to prove again that they have not committed crimes or fraudulently sought out services and benefits.

It is that plan for parents of U.S. citizens - in American families - people who have been working and staying out of trouble for years -- that the Texas Judge believes will cause irreparable damage to the State of Texas and therefore must be stopped nationally.

Just as they had hoped, Judge Hanen ruled that Texas might someday, in the future suffer irreparable harm because of driver's licenses.

In other words, people who qualify for driver's licenses, and who take the test, and pay their fees for driver's licenses -- if they live in Texas and apply for those driver's licenses in Texas -- would be doing the state irreparable damage.

I have a driver's license. It's right here. I had no idea I was causing irreparable damage to the State of Illinois just by applying for and paying for a driver's license. And learning the rules of the road, and buying car insurance, but who am I to disagree?

On Friday, the Department of Justice will argue before the 5th Circuit Court in New Orleans that the President's executive actions should move forward.

It is well-known that the 5th Circuit is among the most conservative.

But look what happened a couple of weeks ago in that very same Circuit court.

They ruled on a lawsuit related to the State of Mississippi, which, like Texas, felt it might someday in the future be dealt damage by the deferred action program announced by President Obama for DREAMers back in 2012.

The panel of judges looked at the program, the evidence, and the cost to the State of Mississippi, and the 5th Circuit judges said Mississippi is NOT harmed and thus does not have the legal standing for this lawsuit.

That bodes well for the country and the President's executive actions.

In the meantime, Judge Hanen still hasn't ruled on the case.

Maybe he is running out the clock. Trying to make immigrants in cities like Chicago and Houston lose hope or stop preparing to sign up - or maybe magically self-deport and give up on watching their children -- their U.S. citizen children - grow up.

It might turn into a drawn out series of rulings and appeals that wind up in the Supreme Court, which could take us well into 2016.

And 2016 is an election year, where Latino U.S. citizens - not the immigrants we are discussing, but their neighbors, cousins, spouses and co-workers who are citizens -- are not likely to vote for the Party that is making sure their their neighbors, cousins, spouses or co-workers are still a top priority for deportation.

I have a feeling the citizens will support the candidates and the parties that support their communities.

And I also have a feeling that the decision to drag this fight out in the courts will be one the Republican Party regrets from a political point of view.

Just like the decision not to allow a vote on immigration reform over the past two years will be seen as one of the biggest and most consequential political mistakes of all time.

How long does a vote last? 15 minutes? It might sound too much like a Geico commercial, but just 15 minutes could have saved the Republicans a great deal of heartache.

The failure to take those 15 minutes for a vote might mean that there are no Republican Presidents for a very long time who would nominate judges like this one.

Read this original document at: http://gutierrez.house.gov/press-release/rep-guti%C3%A9rrez-running-out-clock-immigration-lawsuit-big-mistake

LOAD-DATE: April 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

April 15, 2015 Wednesday

REP. GUTI[0/00]RREZ: RUNNING OUT THE CLOCK ON IMMIGRATION LAWSUIT IS A BIG MISTAKE

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 1226 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of Illinois Rep. Luis V. Gutierrez:

Today (at approximately 10:00 a.m. ET), Rep. Luis V. Gutierrez (D-IL) spoke on the floor of the House of Representatives about the lawsuit filed to block the implementation of the President's executive actions on immigration. Standing before a picture of Judge Andrew Hanen of the Southern District of Texas, Rep. Gutierrez warned his Republican colleagues that their strategy to block the President's executive actions could have consequences in 2016.

The Congressman said: "It might turn into a drawn out series of rulings and appeals that wind up in the Supreme Court, which could take us well into 2016...an election year, where Latino U.S. citizens - not the immigrants we are discussing, but their neighbors, cousins, spouses and co-workers who are citizens - are not likely to vote for the Party that is making sure their neighbors, cousins, spouses or co-workers are still a top priority for deportation. I have a feeling the citizens will support the candidates and the parties that support their communities."

The text of the Congressman's remarks is pasted below and a video clip is here: http://youtu.be/gMpNOYleAgw

Congressman Gutierrez speaks later today at a rally and community education event in Langley Park, Maryland where he will be joined by Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer and Maryland Democrats Chris Van Hollen and Donna Edwards, among others. Flyer (English): http://1.usa.gov/1FRRev3 (Spanish): http://1.usa.gov/1cw5T2F.

On Friday (4/17), Rep. Gutierrez will be in Tucson for an immigration and executive action event with Rep. Raul Grijalva (Flyer: http://1.usa.gov/1avVwtU), followed on Saturday by an event in Albuquerque with Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham. Additional immigration and executive action events are scheduled in Washington, Oregon and Texas later in the month.

Rep. Luis V. Gutierrez represents the Fourth District of Illinois, is a Member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, is a Member of the Judiciary Committee and the Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security, and is the Co-Chair of the Immigration Task Force of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. A video of his remarks at the Tuesday hearing of the Judiciary Committee with ICE Director Sarah Saldaa is here: https://youtu.be/ZPqduWuWaDs And the "Family Defender Toolkit" he developed for those preparing for the President's immigration executive action is here: http://bit.ly/ToolKitEng and http://bit.ly/ToolkitESP.

Remarks on the House floor as prepared for delivery:

Rep. Luis V. Gutierrez

April 15, 2015

The man pictured behind me will go a long way towards determining who lives in the White House for the next few years.

No, he is not a pollster or a campaign spin-doctor.

And no, he is not a potential Republican candidate.

No, this is a federal judge for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas, the honorable Judge Andrew Hanen.

The lawsuit by 26 Republican Governors and Attorneys General seeking to block the executive actions taken by the Obama Administration on immigration was filed in his court.

He has not ruled yet on the constitutionality of the case.

He ordered a preliminary injunction saying he thought the states have standing to bring the suit - or at least that the state of Texas did. And that was enough for him to stop the implementation of the plan nationwide.

And not surprisingly, just last week Judge Hanen refused the government's request to lift his injunction and allow the plan to move forward.

Here is the reality: Congress mandates that about 300,000 or 400,000 people will be deported this year out of a total of more tha 11 million undocumented.

The Secretary of Homeland Security developed a plan to choose between hardened criminals and those immigrants who have lived here at least five years, have U.S. citizen children and can pass a criminal background check at their own expense.

The plan also requires immigrants to renew their temporary status periodically to prove again that they have not committed crimes or fraudulently sought out services and benefits.

It is that plan for parents of U.S. citizens - in American families - people who have been working and staying out of trouble for years -- that the Texas Judge believes will cause irreparable damage to the State of Texas and therefore must be stopped nationally.

Just as they had hoped, Judge Hanen ruled that Texas might someday, in the future suffer irreparable harm because of driver's licenses.

In other words, people who qualify for driver's licenses, and who take the test, and pay their fees for driver's licenses -- if they live in Texas and apply for those driver's licenses in Texas -- would be doing the state irreparable damage.

I have a driver's license. It's right here. I had no idea I was causing irreparable damage to the State of Illinois just by applying for and paying for a driver's license. And learning the rules of the road, and buying car insurance, but who am I to disagree?

On Friday, the Department of Justice will argue before the 5th Circuit Court in New Orleans that the President's executive actions should move forward.

It is well-known that the 5th Circuit is among the most conservative.

But look what happened a couple of weeks ago in that very same Circuit court.

They ruled on a lawsuit related to the State of Mississippi, which, like Texas, felt it might someday in the future be dealt damage by the deferred action program announced by President Obama for DREAMers back in 2012.

The panel of judges looked at the program, the evidence, and the cost to the State of Mississippi, and the 5th Circuit judges said Mississippi is NOT harmed and thus does not have the legal standing for this lawsuit.

That bodes well for the country and the President's executive actions.

In the meantime, Judge Hanen still hasn't ruled on the case.

Maybe he is running out the clock. Trying to make immigrants in cities like Chicago and Houston lose hope or stop preparing to sign up - or maybe magically self-deport and give up on watching their children -- their U.S. citizen children - grow up.

It might turn into a drawn out series of rulings and appeals that wind up in the Supreme Court, which could take us well into 2016.

And 2016 is an election year, where Latino U.S. citizens - not the immigrants we are discussing, but their neighbors, cousins, spouses and co-workers who are citizens -- are not likely to vote for the Party that is making sure their their neighbors, cousins, spouses or co-workers are still a top priority for deportation.

I have a feeling the citizens will support the candidates and the parties that support their communities.

And I also have a feeling that the decision to drag this fight out in the courts will be one the Republican Party regrets from a political point of view.

Just like the decision not to allow a vote on immigration reform over the past two years will be seen as one of the biggest and most consequential political mistakes of all time.

How long does a vote last? 15 minutes? It might sound too much like a Geico commercial, but just 15 minutes could have saved the Republicans a great deal of heartache.

The failure to take those 15 minutes for a vote might mean that there are no Republican Presidents for a very long time who would nominate judges like this one.

LOAD-DATE: April 15, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

States News Service

April 15, 2015 Wednesday

LUJAN: 100 DAYS INTO CONGRESS, REPUBLICANS PUTTING SPECIAL INTERESTS AHEAD OF HARD-WORKING FAMILIES

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 178 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today marking the 100th day of the Republican-controlled Congress that is putting the needs of special interests ahead of hard-working families.

"From day one, House Republicans have pursued an agenda that looks out for the special interests instead of addressing the pressing needs of hard-working Americans in New Mexico and across the nation. They have governed from one manufactured crisis to the next, brought the Department of Homeland Security to the brink of a shutdown, and voted time and again to strip health care coverage from millions of Americans."

"Democrats instead are focused on growing paychecks for hard-working Americans, rebuilding our crumbling infrastructure, and making it easier to send a kid to college. The people of New Mexico deserve better than House Republicans' dismal record over the past 100 days, and Democrats have a plan to put working families first."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: April 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

April 15, 2015 Wednesday 3:51 AM EST

Lujan: 100 Days into Congress, Republicans Putting Special Interests Ahead of Hard-Working Families

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 186 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today marking the 100th day of the Republican-controlled Congress that is putting the needs of special interests ahead of hard-working families.

"From day one, House Republicans have pursued an agenda that looks out for the special interests instead of addressing the pressing needs of hard-working Americans in New Mexico and across the nation. They have governed from one manufactured crisis to the next, brought the Department of Homeland Security to the brink of a shutdown, and voted time and again to strip health care coverage from millions of Americans."

"Democrats instead are focused on growing paychecks for hard-working Americans, rebuilding our crumbling infrastructure, and making it easier to send a kid to college. The people of New Mexico deserve better than House Republicans' dismal record over the past 100 days, and Democrats have a plan to put working families first."

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150416-5101810 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: April 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

64 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

April 15, 2015 Wednesday

New Mexico: LUJAN: EQUAL PAY DAY REMINDS US OF IMPORTANCE OF PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

LENGTH: 394 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District marked Equal Pay Day today, which symbolizes when, more than three months into 2015, women's wages will finally catch up to what men earned last year. On average, women earn 78 cents for every dollar that a man earns. **Luján** has co-sponsored the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would provide effective solutions and protections for women who are not being paid equal wages for doing equal work.

"The pay gap between men and women doesn't just impact hard-working women - it impacts their families and their ability to put food on the table, send a child to college, or buy a home," Congressman **Luján** said. "At the current rate that the gap has been closing, women won't reach pay equity with men until 2058. That's why women and their families need the Paycheck Fairness Act. As long as hard-working women are making less for the same work, we must fight to pass this important legislation. Because when women succeed, America succeeds." In New Mexico, women earn 82 cents for every dollar that a man does. While this is slightly higher than the national average, it still represents a gap of more than $7,700 every year. For Latinas and African American women, the wage gap is even worse. Latinas make 56 cents for every dollar earned by a white, non-Hispanic man and African American women make 64 cents. A study by the National Women's Law Center found that in 108 of 111 occupations analyzed, the earnings of women were less than the earnings of men. Equal pay has been a top priority of Congressional Democrats, who passed the Paycheck Fairness Act in the House in 2008, but it was blocked by Senate Republicans. Since then, Congressional Republicans have repeatedly stood in the way of its passage. Among its many provisions, the bill requires employers to show that pay disparity is truly related to job performance, not gender; strengthens remedies for women experiencing pay discrimination; prohibits employer retaliation for sharing salary information with coworkers; and empowers women in the workplace through a grant program to strengthen salary negotiation and other workplace skills. #

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

April 14, 2015 Tuesday

Biden not ready to decide on presidential run

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN Politics Notebook

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C1

LENGTH: 512 words

WASHINGTON - One day after Hillary Clinton's big presidential campaign announcement, Vice President Joe Biden showed up unannounced to talk tax policy at a reporters' roundtable at the White House and said he is "not ready" to make a decision about a potential White House run of his own.

"I haven't made up my mind on that," Biden said in response to a question about his political plans during a roughly 40-minute discussion of budget and tax priorities with a dozen reporters, including this one.

"I have plenty of time to do that, in my view," the vice president said. "If I am wrong, I'm dead wrong, but there's a lot the president and I care about that has to get done in the next two, three months and when you run for president you've got to run for president - and I'm not ready to do that - if I am ever going to be ready to do that. I'm not ready to do that."

Biden, 72, made no mention of Clinton's announcement, but when initially asked whether he was prepared to announce his presidential campaign, the Democratic vice president joked: "Absolutely, I'm announcing that (Sen. Marco) Rubio and I are running together."

Rubio, a Florida Republican, announced his presidential campaign Monday.

Meanwhile, three of the four Democratic members of New Mexico's congressional delegation are backing Clinton. Sen. Martin Heinrich posted his support for the former first lady and secretary of state to his Facebook page Sunday night, and Sen. Tom Udall followed with a tweet of his own on Monday.

"I'm in with @ HillaryClinton because she's the champion everyday Americans need," Heinrich posted on his personal Facebook page (as opposed to his official Senate page on the social media site). "Someone who will fight for working people and invest in clean energy."

"I'm ready for Hillary!" Udall tweeted. "Hillary Clinton has the experience to be our next President."

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, the only woman in the delegation, is also throwing her endorsement to Clinton.

"Hillary Clinton's message will resonate with everyday New Mexicans who hear about the improving national economy but don't feel it at home." **Lujan** Grisham said. "They want a champion who will fight for families and higher wages. They want a champion who understands everyday New Mexicans should benefit from the improving economy so they can get ahead and stay ahead. I know Hillary will be that champion, and that's why I'm proud to support her."

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, is officially staying on the fence, but issued a qualified statement of support for Clinton.

"If chosen as our presidential nominee, Hillary Clinton will bring experience and energy to the campaign trail that will turn out hardworking families in New Mexico and across the country, and excite a new generation of Democrats."

For what it's worth, former Albuquerque Mayor Martin Chavez - now a D.C. resident - was a senior adviser to the "Ready for Hillary" preparatory committee and has been touting her campaign for at least a year.

Michael Coleman: mcoleman@ abqjournal.com

LOAD-DATE: April 14, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Albuquerque Journal

66 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 14, 2015

LUJAN: EQUAL PAY DAY REMINDS US OF IMPORTANCE OF PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 384 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District marked Equal Pay Day today, which symbolizes when, more than three months into 2015, women's wages will finally catch up to what men earned last year. On average, women earn 78 cents for every dollar that a man earns. **Lujan** has co-sponsored the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would provide effective solutions and protections for women who are not being paid equal wages for doing equal work.

"The pay gap between men and women doesn't just impact hard-working women - it impacts their families and their ability to put food on the table, send a child to college, or buy a home," Congressman **Lujan** said. "At the current rate that the gap has been closing, women won't reach pay equity with men until 2058. That's why women and their families need the Paycheck Fairness Act. As long as hard-working women are making less for the same work, we must fight to pass this important legislation. Because when women succeed, America succeeds."

In New Mexico, women earn 82 cents for every dollar that a man does. While this is slightly higher than the national average, it still represents a gap of more than $7,700 every year. For Latinas and African American women, the wage gap is even worse. Latinas make 56 cents for every dollar earned by a white, non-Hispanic man and African American women make 64 cents. A study by the National Women's Law Center found that in 108 of 111 occupations analyzed, the earnings of women were less than the earnings of men.

Equal pay has been a top priority of Congressional Democrats, who passed the Paycheck Fairness Act in the House in 2008, but it was blocked by Senate Republicans. Since then, Congressional Republicans have repeatedly stood in the way of its passage. Among its many provisions, the bill requires employers to show that pay disparity is truly related to job performance, not gender; strengthens remedies for women experiencing pay discrimination; prohibits employer retaliation for sharing salary information with coworkers; and empowers women in the workplace through a grant program to strengthen salary negotiation and other workplace skills.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-equal-pay-day-reminds-us-of-importance-of-paycheck-fairness-act/

LOAD-DATE: April 15, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

67 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

April 14, 2015 Tuesday

LUJAN: EQUAL PAY DAY REMINDS US OF IMPORTANCE OF PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 373 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District marked Equal Pay Day today, which symbolizes when, more than three months into 2015, women's wages will finally catch up to what men earned last year. On average, women earn 78 cents for every dollar that a man earns. **Lujan** has co-sponsored the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would provide effective solutions and protections for women who are not being paid equal wages for doing equal work.

"The pay gap between men and women doesn't just impact hard-working women - it impacts their families and their ability to put food on the table, send a child to college, or buy a home," Congressman **Lujan** said. "At the current rate that the gap has been closing, women won't reach pay equity with men until 2058. That's why women and their families need the Paycheck Fairness Act. As long as hard-working women are making less for the same work, we must fight to pass this important legislation. Because when women succeed, America succeeds."

In New Mexico, women earn 82 cents for every dollar that a man does. While this is slightly higher than the national average, it still represents a gap of more than $7,700 every year. For Latinas and African American women, the wage gap is even worse. Latinas make 56 cents for every dollar earned by a white, non-Hispanic man and African American women make 64 cents. A study by the National Women's Law Center found that in 108 of 111 occupations analyzed, the earnings of women were less than the earnings of men.

Equal pay has been a top priority of Congressional Democrats, who passed the Paycheck Fairness Act in the House in 2008, but it was blocked by Senate Republicans. Since then, Congressional Republicans have repeatedly stood in the way of its passage. Among its many provisions, the bill requires employers to show that pay disparity is truly related to job performance, not gender; strengthens remedies for women experiencing pay discrimination; prohibits employer retaliation for

sharing salary information with coworkers; and empowers women in the workplace through a grant program to strengthen salary negotiation and other workplace skills.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: April 14, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

April 14, 2015 Tuesday 11:11 PM EST

Lujan: Equal Pay Day Reminds Us of Importance of Paycheck Fairness Act

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 381 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District marked Equal Pay Day today, which symbolizes when, more than three months into 2015, women's wages will finally catch up to what men earned last year. On average, women earn 78 cents for every dollar that a man earns. **Lujan** has co-sponsored the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would provide effective solutions and protections for women who are not being paid equal wages for doing equal work.

"The pay gap between men and women doesn't just impact hard-working women - it impacts their families and their ability to put food on the table, send a child to college, or buy a home," Congressman **Lujan** said. "At the current rate that the gap has been closing, women won't reach pay equity with men until 2058. That's why women and their families need the Paycheck Fairness Act. As long as hard-working women are making less for the same work, we must fight to pass this important legislation. Because when women succeed, America succeeds."

In New Mexico, women earn 82 cents for every dollar that a man does. While this is slightly higher than the national average, it still represents a gap of more than $7,700 every year. For Latinas and African American women, the wage gap is even worse. Latinas make 56 cents for every dollar earned by a white, non-Hispanic man and African American women make 64 cents. A study by the National Women's Law Center found that in 108 of 111 occupations analyzed, the earnings of women were less than the earnings of men.

Equal pay has been a top priority of Congressional Democrats, who passed the Paycheck Fairness Act in the House in 2008, but it was blocked by Senate Republicans. Since then, Congressional

Republicans have repeatedly stood in the way of its passage. Among its many provisions, the bill requires employers to show that pay disparity is truly related to job performance, not gender; strengthens remedies for women experiencing pay discrimination; prohibits employer retaliation for sharing salary information with coworkers; and empowers women in the workplace through a grant program to strengthen salary negotiation and other workplace skills.

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150415-5099161 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: April 15, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

69 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

April 14, 2015 Tuesday

New Mexico: UDALL, HEINRICH, LUJAN ANNOUNCE $3.5 MILLION TO RESTORE NAMBE FALLS RESERVOIR, REIMBURSE FIREFIGHTING FOR TRES LAGUNAS FIRE

LENGTH: 560 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

WASHINGTON - U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Luján** today announced that more than $3.5 million in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding will be awarded to New Mexico to help San Miguel and Santa Fe counties recover from severe fires and flooding. Pojoaque Valley Irrigation District will receive $1,028,174 for emergency repairs to the Nambé Falls Reservoir to clear out debris and sediment that flowed into the reservoir during severe storms and flooding in September 2014. The reservoir provides water for irrigation purposes to nearby communities, which include the pueblos of San Ildefonso, Nambé, and Pojoaque. This funding brings the total amount FEMA has designated for recovery efforts from the September 2014 storms and flooding to more than $2.6 million.

The New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department will receive $2,478,581 to reimburse firefighting costs incurred while fighting the Tres Lagunas Fire, which threatened hundreds of homes and burned thousands of acres in San Miguel County in May and June of 2013. The funding is being awarded through FEMA's Fire Management Assistance Grant Program, and covers expenses

including field camps; equipment use, repair and replacement; tools, materials and supplies; and mobilization and demobilization activities. "I'm pleased that FEMA has provided these additional resources to help clean up the Nambé Falls Reservoir and pay for critical firefighting resources that extinguished the Tres Lagunas Fire and saved hundreds of homes," Udall said. "Fires, severe storms and flooding take a significant toll on our communities, and I'll continue to work to make sure that New Mexico has the resources needed to prevent and fight these disasters, and also mitigate the impact they have on our water resources." "This FEMA funding is critical to the cleanup efforts at Nambé Falls Reservoir, which provides irrigation water to local farmers," Heinrich said. "I'm also pleased federal aid will go toward reimbursing firefighting costs from the Tres Lagunas Fire. I will continue working to ensure communities across New Mexico affected by severe flooding and devastating fires receive the assistance they need to rebuild and recover." "FEMA funds provide critical support to our communities that have been hard hit by flood, fire, and other disasters," **Luján** said. "These important federal funds will contribute to the effort to restore Nambé Falls Reservoir and protect our water resources that are critical to the livelihood of these communities, particularly during these times of drought. This funding will also help provide our firefighters with the proper resources and equipment as they prepare for the next fire season. I commend our firefighters for their tremendous efforts battling the Tres Lagunas Fire, and I will continue to advocate for the necessary funding to bolster their efforts." The funding will be awarded directly to the state of New Mexico on behalf of Pojoaque Valley Irrigation District and the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, and is expected to cover 75 percent of costs for each project.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 15, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

70 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

April 14, 2015 Tuesday

New Mexico: LUJAN ANNOUNCES WINNER OF 2015 CONGRESSIONAL ART COMPETITION

LENGTH: 189 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced at a reception in Santa Fe on Saturday, April 11, that Adam Shorty, a 12th grader at Tohatchi High School, is this year's winner of the Congressional Art Competition. "Congratulations to Adam Shorty for winning this year's Congressional Art Competition, and thank you to all the high school students who competed and shared their talents and artistic creativity," Congressman **Luján** said. "These young artists have demonstrated an appreciation for the arts that are a vital part of our culture and heritage in New Mexico. I look forward to welcoming Adam to Washington, D.C. as we honor all of the nation's winners." Adam won for his entry "A Winner Will Never Give or Let Go." The water color and ink painting is of his cousin Riley, who has competed in the Indian Junior Rodeo Association. Riley is currently battling spinal meningitis and is paralyzed from the neck down.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 15, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 14, 2015 Tuesday

Lujan Announces Winner of 2015 Congressional Art Competition

LENGTH: 193 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced at a reception in Santa Fe on Saturday, April 11, that Adam Shorty, a 12th grader at Tohatchi High School, is this year's winner of the Congressional Art Competition.

"Congratulations to Adam Shorty for winning this year's Congressional Art Competition, and thank you to all the high school students who competed and shared their talents and artistic creativity," Congressman **Luján** said. "These young artists have demonstrated an appreciation for the arts that are a vital part of our culture and heritage in New Mexico. I look forward to welcoming Adam to Washington, D.C. as we honor all of the nation's winners."

Adam won for his entry "A Winner Will Never Give or Let Go." The water color and ink painting is of his cousin Riley, who has competed in the Indian Junior Rodeo Association. Riley is currently battling spinal meningitis and is paralyzed from the neck down.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 15, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

72 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 13, 2015

LUJAN ANNOUNCES WINNER OF 2015 CONGRESSIONAL ART COMPETITION;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 244 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced at a reception in Santa Fe on Saturday, April 11, that Adam Shorty, a 12th grader at Tohatchi High School, is this year's winner of the Congressional Art Competition.

"Congratulations to Adam Shorty for winning this year's Congressional Art Competition, and thank you to all the high school students who competed and shared their talents and artistic creativity," Congressman **Lujan** said. "These young artists have demonstrated an appreciation for the arts that are a vital part of our culture and heritage in New Mexico. I look forward to welcoming Adam to Washington, D.C. as we honor all of the nation's winners."

Adam won for his entry "A Winner Will Never Give or Let Go." The water color and ink painting is of his cousin Riley, who has competed in the Indian Junior Rodeo Association. Riley is currently battling spinal meningitis and is paralyzed from the neck down.

2015 Congressional Art Competition Winner

The top pieces of artwork were recognized out of a field of more than 30 entries. The winning entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year. Additional works of art will be displayed in **Lujan's** district offices across Northern New Mexico.

Rep. **Lujan** and Adam Shorty

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-announces-winner-of-2015-congressional-art-competition/

LOAD-DATE: April 14, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

73 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Silver City Daily Press & Independent (New Mexico)

April 13, 2015 Monday

Lujan says Obamacare benefiting New Mexicans

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 123 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE

SANTA FE - Third District U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** says in the five years since Congress approved the Affordable Care Act, also known as "Obamacare," the health care law has had a positive impact on New Mexicans.

Lujan, a Democrat, says that for too long New Mexico ranked high on the list of people lacking health insurance, adding the stories heard by people who lacked coverage or those denied coverage because of pre-existing conditions were "heartbreaking."

Lujan says as a result of the act, 16 million Americans who had no health insurance now do. And he says the number of uninsured New Mexicans is down by nearly 5 percent, meaning that thousands of New Mexico families are no longer one accident or illness away from financial ruin.

LOAD-DATE: April 14, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Silver City Daily Press & Independent
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

74 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

April 13, 2015 Monday

LUJAN ANNOUNCES WINNER OF 2015 CONGRESSIONAL ART COMPETITION

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 231 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced at a reception in Santa Fe on Saturday, April 11, that Adam Shorty, a 12th grader at Tohatchi High School, is this year's winner of the Congressional Art Competition.

"Congratulations to Adam Shorty for winning this year's Congressional Art Competition, and thank you to all the high school students who competed and shared their talents and artistic creativity," Congressman **Lujan** said. "These young artists have demonstrated an appreciation for the arts that are a vital part of our culture and heritage in New Mexico. I look forward to welcoming Adam to Washington, D.C. as we honor all of the nation's winners."

Adam won for his entry "A Winner Will Never Give or Let Go." The water color and ink painting is of his cousin Riley, who has competed in the Indian Junior Rodeo Association. Riley is currently battling spinal meningitis and is paralyzed from the neck down.

Adam Shorty's, "A Winner Will Never Give or Let Go."

The top pieces of artwork were recognized out of a field of more than 30 entries. The winning entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year. Additional works of art will be displayed in **Lujan's** district offices across Northern New Mexico.

LOAD-DATE: April 13, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

75 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

April 13, 2015 Monday 12:24 AM EST

Lujan Announces Winner of 2015 Congressional Art Competition

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 231 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced at a reception in Santa Fe on Saturday, April 11, that Adam Shorty, a 12th grader at Tohatchi High School, is this year's winner of the Congressional Art Competition.

"Congratulations to Adam Shorty for winning this year's Congressional Art Competition, and thank you to all the high school students who competed and shared their talents and artistic creativity," Congressman **Lujan** said. "These young artists have demonstrated an appreciation for the arts that are a vital part of our culture and heritage in New Mexico. I look forward to welcoming Adam to Washington, D.C. as we honor all of the nation's winners."

Adam won for his entry "A Winner Will Never Give or Let Go." The water color and ink painting is of his cousin Riley, who has competed in the Indian Junior Rodeo Association. Riley is currently battling spinal meningitis and is paralyzed from the neck down.

The top pieces of artwork were recognized out of a field of more than 30 entries. The winning entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year. Additional works of art will be displayed in **Lujan's** district offices across Northern New Mexico.

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150414-5097824 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: April 14, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

76 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

April 12, 2015 Sunday

Gary Johnson says Rand Paul not really Libertarian

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. A10

LENGTH: 669 words

When Kentucky Republican Rand Paul announced his campaign for president last week, one of my first thoughts was how - or if - it would affect Gary Johnson's political plans.

The former governor of New Mexico, an avid mountain climber, is preparing for another uphill climb in running for president.

Johnson campaigned for the White House in 2012, initially as a Republican. But he changed his party affiliation to Libertarian mid-campaign when he realized he couldn't get any traction with the GOP voters who tend to oppose drug legalization, abortion rights, same-sex marriage and relaxed immigration policies - all of which Johnson supports.

The party switch didn't help Johnson's campaign much. He got crushed on Election Day.

But he did manage to eke out 1 percent of the vote - a record for a Libertarian candidate.

Meanwhile, the famously tenacious Johnson is eyeing another run.

Even though Johnson hasn't held public office since 2004 and failed to make much noise with his 2012 presidential campaign, the national media still seems at least somewhat intrigued. MSNBC, Fox, the Daily Caller and other outlets also sought out his opinion on Paul's announcement and whether Johnson hopes to mount another run.

"It is something I would like to do," the former governor told me in a telephone conversation last week. "I do believe I provide a voice that is reflective of most Americans."

But what about Paul, who has a fairly libertarian philosophy of his own? How does his entrance into the presidential race affect Johnson's own calculations?

Not much, the former governor said.

"I think it's a good thing he's running and it's a good thing he's being attached to being a libertarian," Johnson said.

"People are asking me why would you run as a Libertarian candidate when you already have a Libertarian (Paul) running?" Johnson said. "No, we don't. If he was a Libertarian he would be running as a Libertarian."

There are some points on which Johnson and Paul agree, including a desire for tax cuts and a less interventionist U.S. military posture. But Johnson notes that Paul has reigned in his call for defense spending cuts, opposes same-sex marriage and is squishy on the issue of marijuana legalization.

Paul has tried to dodge the pot question to some extent, suggesting the federal government shouldn't legalize it but that states should have some leeway.

"You don't get nominated (in the Republican Party) unless you toe that line," Johnson said.

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee has called on Republicans to return campaign contributions from disgraced former Rep. Aaron Schock, an Illinois Republican who resigned last month after reporters found that he was using some sketchy accounting to account for the taxpayers' dime.

Some have obliged.

But now that Sen. Bob Menendez, a New Jersey Democrat, has been indicted on corruption charges, some Democrats are turning over now-tainted campaign cash they have received from him.

Count Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, a New Mexican who chairs the DCCC, among that group.

Luján's spokesman told me last week he would donate $2,500 he received from Menendez in 2008 to charities in Santa Fe.

"The campaign will donate the money to two local organizations that are doing great work supporting our veterans - Horses for Heroes in Santa Fe and Not Forgotten Outreach in Taos," **Luján** spokesman Andrew Stoddard said.

Horses for Heroes bills itself as a "horsemanship, wellness and skill-set restructuring program based in Santa Fe, NM free to all post 9/11 veterans and active military (both men and women) especially those who have sustained PTSD, physical injuries, or have experienced combat trauma during their time serving our country."

The Not Forgotten Association describes itself as "a unique national tri-service charity which provides entertainment, leisure and recreation for the serving wounded, injured or sick and for ex-service men and women with disabilities."

E-mail: mcoleman@abqjournal.com Go to www.abqjournal.com/letters/

new to submit a letter to the editor.

LOAD-DATE: April 13, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Albuquerque Journal

77 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 9, 2015

UDALL, HEINRICH, LUJAN ANNOUNCE $3.5 MILLION TO RESTORE NAMBE FALLS RESERVOIR, REIMBURSE FIREFIGHTING FOR TRES LAGUNAS FIRE;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 407 words

WASHINGTON - U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Lujan** today announced that more than $3.5 million in Federal Emergency Management Agency

(FEMA) funding will be awarded to New Mexico to help San Miguel and Santa Fe counties recover from severe fires and flooding.

Pojoaque Valley Irrigation District will receive $1,028,174 for emergency repairs to the Nambe Falls Reservoir to clear out debris and sediment that flowed into the reservoir during severe storms and flooding in September 2014. The reservoir provides water for irrigation purposes to nearby communities, which include the pueblos of San Ildefonso, Nambe, and Pojoaque. This funding brings the total amount FEMA has designated for recovery efforts from the September 2014 storms and flooding to more than $2.6 million.

The New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department will receive $2,478,581 to reimburse firefighting costs incurred while fighting the Tres Lagunas Fire, which threatened hundreds of homes and burned thousands of acres in San Miguel County in May and June of 2013. The funding is being awarded through FEMA's Fire Management Assistance Grant Program, and covers expenses including field camps; equipment use, repair and replacement; tools, materials and supplies; and mobilization and demobilization activities.

"I'm pleased that FEMA has provided these additional resources to help clean up the Nambe Falls Reservoir and pay for critical firefighting resources that extinguished the Tres Lagunas Fire and saved hundreds of homes," Udall said. "Fires, severe storms and flooding take a significant toll on our communities, and I'll continue to work to make sure that New Mexico has the resources needed to prevent and fight these disasters, and also mitigate the impact they have on our water resources."

"This FEMA funding is critical to the cleanup efforts at Nambe Falls Reservoir, which provides irrigation water to local farmers," Heinrich said. "I'm also pleased federal aid will go toward reimbursing firefighting costs from the Tres Lagunas Fire. I will continue working to ensure communities across New Mexico affected by severe flooding and devastating fires receive the assistance they need to rebuild and recover."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/udall-heinrich-**lujan**-announce-35-million-to-restore-nambe-falls-reservoir-reimburse-firefighting-for-tres-lagunas-fire/

LOAD-DATE: April 10, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 9, 2015

Udall, Heinrich, Lujan Announce $3.5 Million to Restore Nambe Falls Reservoir, Reimburse Firefighting for Tres Lagunas Fire; Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 558 words

U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Lujan** today announced that more than $3.5 million in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding will be awarded to New Mexico to help San Miguel and Santa Fe counties recover from severe fires and flooding.

Pojoaque Valley Irrigation District will receive $1,028,174 for emergency repairs to the Nambe Falls Reservoir to clear out debris and sediment that flowed into the reservoir during severe storms and flooding in September 2014. The reservoir provides water for irrigation purposes to nearby communities, which include the pueblos of San Ildefonso, Nambe, and Pojoaque. This funding brings the total amount FEMA has designated for recovery efforts from the September 2014 storms and flooding to more than $2.6 million.

The New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department will receive $2,478,581 to reimburse firefighting costs incurred while fighting the Tres Lagunas Fire, which threatened hundreds of homes and burned thousands of acres in San Miguel County in May and June of 2013. The funding is being awarded through FEMA's Fire Management Assistance Grant Program, and covers expenses including field camps; equipment use, repair and replacement; tools, materials and supplies; and mobilization and demobilization activities.

"I'm pleased that FEMA has provided these additional resources to help clean up the Nambe Falls Reservoir and pay for critical firefighting resources that extinguished the Tres Lagunas Fire and saved hundreds of homes," Udall said. "Fires, severe storms and flooding take a significant toll on our communities, and I'll continue to work to make sure that New Mexico has the resources needed to prevent and fight these disasters, and also mitigate the impact they have on our water resources."

"This FEMA funding is critical to the cleanup efforts at Nambe Falls Reservoir, which provides irrigation water to local farmers," Heinrich said. "I'm also pleased federal aid will go toward reimbursing firefighting costs from the Tres Lagunas Fire. I will continue working to ensure communities across New Mexico affected by severe flooding and devastating fires receive the assistance they need to rebuild and recover."

"FEMA funds provide critical support to our communities that have been hard hit by flood, fire, and other disasters," **Lujan** said. "These important federal funds will contribute to the effort to restore Nambe Falls Reservoir and protect our water resources that are critical to the livelihood of these communities, particularly during these times of drought. This funding will also help provide our firefighters with the proper resources and equipment as they prepare for the next fire season. I commend our firefighters for their tremendous efforts battling the Tres Lagunas Fire, and I will continue to advocate for the necessary funding to bolster their efforts."

The funding will be awarded directly to the state of New Mexico on behalf of Pojoaque Valley Irrigation District and the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, and is expected to cover 75 percent of costs for each project.

Read this original document at: http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/press-releases/udall-heinrich-**lujan**-announce-35-million-to-restore-nambe-falls-reservoir-reimburse-firefighting-for-tres-lagunas-fire

LOAD-DATE: April 10, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

US Official News

April 9, 2015 Thursday

Udall, Heinrich, Luján Announce $3.5 Million to Restore Nambé Falls Reservoir, Reimburse Firefighting for Tres Lagunas Fire

LENGTH: 561 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Martin Heinrich, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Luján** today announced that more than $3.5 million in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding will be awarded to New Mexico to help San Miguel and Santa Fe counties recover from severe fires and flooding.

Pojoaque Valley Irrigation District will receive $1,028,174 for emergency repairs to the Nambé Falls Reservoir to clear out debris and sediment that flowed into the reservoir during severe storms and flooding in September 2014. The reservoir provides water for irrigation purposes to nearby communities, which include the pueblos of San Ildefonso, Nambé, and Pojoaque. This funding brings the total amount FEMA has designated for recovery efforts from the September 2014 storms and flooding to more than $2.6 million.

The New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department will receive $2,478,581 to reimburse firefighting costs incurred while fighting the Tres Lagunas Fire, which threatened hundreds of homes and burned thousands of acres in San Miguel County in May and June of 2013. The funding is being awarded through FEMA's Fire Management Assistance Grant Program, and covers expenses including field camps; equipment use, repair and replacement; tools, materials and supplies; and mobilization and demobilization activities.

"I'm pleased that FEMA has provided these additional resources to help clean up the Nambé Falls Reservoir and pay for critical firefighting resources that extinguished the Tres Lagunas Fire and saved hundreds of homes," Udall said. "Fires, severe storms and flooding take a significant toll on our communities, and I'll continue to work to make sure that New Mexico has the resources needed to prevent and fight these disasters, and also mitigate the impact they have on our water resources."

"This FEMA funding is critical to the cleanup efforts at Nambé Falls Reservoir, which provides irrigation water to local farmers," Heinrich said. "I'm also pleased federal aid will go toward reimbursing firefighting costs from the Tres Lagunas Fire. I will continue working to ensure communities across New Mexico affected by severe flooding and devastating fires receive the assistance they need to rebuild and recover."

"FEMA funds provide critical support to our communities that have been hard hit by flood, fire, and other disasters," **Luján** said. "These important federal funds will contribute to the effort to restore Nambé Falls Reservoir and protect our water resources that are critical to the livelihood of these communities, particularly during these times of drought. This funding will also help provide our firefighters with the proper resources and equipment as they prepare for the next fire season. I commend our firefighters for their tremendous efforts battling the Tres Lagunas Fire, and I will continue to advocate for the necessary funding to bolster their efforts."

The funding will be awarded directly to the state of New Mexico on behalf of Pojoaque Valley Irrigation District and the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, and is expected to cover 75 percent of costs for each project.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

80 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

April 9, 2015 Thursday

Lujan Highlights $200,000 in USDA Grants for Santa Fe Organizations Addressing Hunger

LENGTH: 311 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted nearly $200,000 in USDA grants for two Santa Fe organizations to address hunger and support the purchase of fruits and vegetables for participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The Santa Fe Community Foundation is receiving $100,000 and the New Mexico Farmers Marketing Association is receiving $99,999 through the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive program for pilot projects.

"With New Mexico near the top in child hunger and with too many families struggling to put food on the table, SNAP is a critical tool to help during tough times," Congressman **Luján** said. "These federal grants will support the important efforts of these Santa Fe organizations to help SNAP recipients not only feed their families, but have access to healthy, nutritious food."

The grant awarded to the Santa Fe Community Foundation will help launch MoGro's Healthy SNAP Program, which will provide SNAP families with a 50% discount on fresh and organic produce and provide opportunities for monthly cooking and nutritional workshops. In partnership with La Familia Medical Center, community health workers will also be able to track dietary changes and health improvements.

The New Mexico Farmers Marketing Association will use its grant to help launch "Snap to Health: Double Up Food Bucks New Mexico," which will provide SNAP incentives at farmers' markets in order to increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables by low-income customers. The program will also include direct-to-consumer marketing in order to share the benefits of consuming locally grown produce.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 10, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 9, 2015 Thursday

Lujan Visits James Rodriguez Elementary School in Espanola, Meets with Students Who Attended White House Science Fair

LENGTH: 507 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District visited James Rodriguez Elementary School in Española yesterday to visit with students, teachers, and faculty and to learn about the science projects the students have been working on. Last month, three students from the school were selected to visit Washington, D.C. to participate in the White House Science Fair and present their project. Casandra Dauz, Jose Valdez, and Jaleena Rolon were joined by their teacher Jimmy Lara.

"Yesterday I had the opportunity to visit with many bright young students at James Rodriguez Elementary who have been hard at work on innovative projects that have helped spark their interest in the STEM fields," Congressman **Luján** said. "Congratulations to Jaleena, Jose, and Casandra for being selected to visit the White House and for representing New Mexico and making us proud. Their 'City of Crystal Water' illustrates their creativity and inventive spirit. I want to also commend Mr. Lara for his dedication to his students and his efforts to teach them the science and math skills that will be so important to their future."

For their project, the students were challenged to work as team over four months to imagine, design, and build a city of the future. This year's theme was Feeding Future Cities, requiring students to select one vegetable and one protein and design a way to grow enough of each within the city limits to feed its citizens; build a model of their city using recycled materials; write a brief narrative promoting the city; and present their city before a panel of judges.

The students "City of Crystal Water" included fish as a health source of protein and carrots that can be grown without soil using hydroponics. The team used hydro energy and wind turbines to provide energy to the city. They incorporated Spanish, English, American Sign Language, and Tewa into their presentation to reflect the cultural diversity of their communities and earned the Most Unique Architectural Model at the New Mexico regional competition.

Congressman **Luján** has been a strong advocate for STEM education and expressed his support for projects that encourage students to engage in the STEM fields. He has introduced legislation to strengthen STEM education and training programs to help teachers and schools better engage students in the STEM fields by providing additional professional development resources and facilitating collaboration among the business and education communities to better identify STEM skills needed in the workforce.

"The STEM fields provide opportunities for good jobs in growing sectors and it is critical that we engage students at an early age to encourage them to purse STEM education. We can show kids that instead of just using the latest app, they can be the ones creating it," added **Luján**.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 10, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 9, 2015 Thursday

Lujan Highlights $200,000 in USDA Grants for Santa Fe Organizations Addressing Hunger

LENGTH: 311 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted nearly $200,000 in USDA grants for two Santa Fe organizations to address hunger and support the purchase of fruits and vegetables for participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The Santa Fe Community Foundation is receiving $100,000 and the New Mexico Farmers Marketing Association is receiving $99,999 through the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive program for pilot projects.

"With New Mexico near the top in child hunger and with too many families struggling to put food on the table, SNAP is a critical tool to help during tough times," Congressman **Luján** said. "These federal grants will support the important efforts of these Santa Fe organizations to help SNAP recipients not only feed their families, but have access to healthy, nutritious food."

The grant awarded to the Santa Fe Community Foundation will help launch MoGro's Healthy SNAP Program, which will provide SNAP families with a 50% discount on fresh and organic produce and provide opportunities for monthly cooking and nutritional workshops. In partnership with La Familia Medical Center, community health workers will also be able to track dietary changes and health improvements.

The New Mexico Farmers Marketing Association will use its grant to help launch "Snap to Health: Double Up Food Bucks New Mexico," which will provide SNAP incentives at farmers' markets in order to increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables by low-income customers. The program will also include direct-to-consumer marketing in order to share the benefits of consuming locally grown produce.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 9, 2015 Thursday

Lujan Visits James Rodriguez Elementary School in Espanola, Meets with Students Who Attended White House Science Fair

LENGTH: 507 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District visited James Rodriguez Elementary School in Española yesterday to visit with students, teachers, and faculty and to learn about the science projects the students have been working on. Last month, three students from the school were selected to visit Washington, D.C. to participate in the White House Science Fair and present their project. Casandra Dauz, Jose Valdez, and Jaleena Rolon were joined by their teacher Jimmy Lara.

"Yesterday I had the opportunity to visit with many bright young students at James Rodriguez Elementary who have been hard at work on innovative projects that have helped spark their interest in the STEM fields," Congressman **Luján** said. "Congratulations to Jaleena, Jose, and Casandra for being selected to visit the White House and for representing New Mexico and making us proud. Their 'City of Crystal Water' illustrates their creativity and inventive spirit. I want to also commend Mr. Lara for his dedication to his students and his efforts to teach them the science and math skills that will be so important to their future."

For their project, the students were challenged to work as team over four months to imagine, design, and build a city of the future. This year's theme was Feeding Future Cities, requiring students to select one vegetable and one protein and design a way to grow enough of each within the city limits to feed its citizens; build a model of their city using recycled materials; write a brief narrative promoting the city; and present their city before a panel of judges.

The students "City of Crystal Water" included fish as a health source of protein and carrots that can be grown without soil using hydroponics. The team used hydro energy and wind turbines to provide energy to the city. They incorporated Spanish, English, American Sign Language, and Tewa into their presentation to reflect the cultural diversity of their communities and earned the Most Unique Architectural Model at the New Mexico regional competition.

Congressman **Luján** has been a strong advocate for STEM education and expressed his support for projects that encourage students to engage in the STEM fields. He has introduced legislation to strengthen STEM education and training programs to help teachers and schools better engage students in the STEM fields by providing additional professional development resources and facilitating collaboration among the business and education communities to better identify STEM skills needed in the workforce.

"The STEM fields provide opportunities for good jobs in growing sectors and it is critical that we engage students at an early age to encourage them to purse STEM education. We can show kids that instead of just using the latest app, they can be the ones creating it," added **Luján**.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 9, 2015 Thursday

Udall, Heinrich, Luján Announce $3.5 Million to Restore Nambé Falls Reservoir, Reimburse Firefighting for Tres Lagunas Fire

LENGTH: 561 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Martin Heinrich, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Luján** today announced that more than $3.5 million in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding will be awarded to New Mexico to help San Miguel and Santa Fe counties recover from severe fires and flooding.

Pojoaque Valley Irrigation District will receive $1,028,174 for emergency repairs to the Nambé Falls Reservoir to clear out debris and sediment that flowed into the reservoir during severe storms and flooding in September 2014. The reservoir provides water for irrigation purposes to nearby communities, which include the pueblos of San Ildefonso, Nambé, and Pojoaque. This funding brings the total amount FEMA has designated for recovery efforts from the September 2014 storms and flooding to more than $2.6 million.

The New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department will receive $2,478,581 to reimburse firefighting costs incurred while fighting the Tres Lagunas Fire, which threatened hundreds of homes and burned thousands of acres in San Miguel County in May and June of 2013. The funding is being awarded through FEMA's Fire Management Assistance Grant Program, and covers expenses including field camps; equipment use, repair and replacement; tools, materials and supplies; and mobilization and demobilization activities.

"I'm pleased that FEMA has provided these additional resources to help clean up the Nambé Falls Reservoir and pay for critical firefighting resources that extinguished the Tres Lagunas Fire and saved hundreds of homes," Udall said. "Fires, severe storms and flooding take a significant toll on our communities, and I'll continue to work to make sure that New Mexico has the resources needed to prevent and fight these disasters, and also mitigate the impact they have on our water resources."

"This FEMA funding is critical to the cleanup efforts at Nambé Falls Reservoir, which provides irrigation water to local farmers," Heinrich said. "I'm also pleased federal aid will go toward reimbursing firefighting costs from the Tres Lagunas Fire. I will continue working to ensure

communities across New Mexico affected by severe flooding and devastating fires receive the assistance they need to rebuild and recover."

"FEMA funds provide critical support to our communities that have been hard hit by flood, fire, and other disasters," **Luján** said. "These important federal funds will contribute to the effort to restore Nambé Falls Reservoir and protect our water resources that are critical to the livelihood of these communities, particularly during these times of drought. This funding will also help provide our firefighters with the proper resources and equipment as they prepare for the next fire season. I commend our firefighters for their tremendous efforts battling the Tres Lagunas Fire, and I will continue to advocate for the necessary funding to bolster their efforts."

The funding will be awarded directly to the state of New Mexico on behalf of Pojoaque Valley Irrigation District and the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, and is expected to cover 75 percent of costs for each project.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 10, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

85 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

April 9, 2015 Thursday

Lujan Highlights $200,000 in USDA Grants for Santa Fe Organizations Addressing Hunger

LENGTH: 311 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted nearly $200,000 in USDA grants for two Santa Fe organizations to address hunger and support the purchase of fruits and vegetables for participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The Santa Fe Community Foundation is receiving $100,000 and the New Mexico Farmers Marketing Association is receiving $99,999 through the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive program for pilot projects.

"With New Mexico near the top in child hunger and with too many families struggling to put food on the table, SNAP is a critical tool to help during tough times," Congressman **Luján** said. "These federal grants will support the important efforts of these Santa Fe organizations to help SNAP recipients not only feed their families, but have access to healthy, nutritious food."

The grant awarded to the Santa Fe Community Foundation will help launch MoGro's Healthy SNAP Program, which will provide SNAP families with a 50% discount on fresh and organic produce and provide opportunities for monthly cooking and nutritional workshops. In partnership with La Familia Medical Center, community health workers will also be able to track dietary changes and health improvements.

The New Mexico Farmers Marketing Association will use its grant to help launch "Snap to Health: Double Up Food Bucks New Mexico," which will provide SNAP incentives at farmers' markets in order to increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables by low-income customers. The program will also include direct-to-consumer marketing in order to share the benefits of consuming locally grown produce.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 10, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

86 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

April 9, 2015 Thursday

Lujan Visits James Rodriguez Elementary School in Espanola, Meets with Students Who Attended White House Science Fair

LENGTH: 507 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District visited James Rodriguez Elementary School in Española yesterday to visit with students, teachers, and faculty and to learn about the science projects the students have been working on. Last month, three students from the school were selected to visit Washington, D.C. to participate in the White House Science Fair and present their project. Casandra Dauz, Jose Valdez, and Jaleena Rolon were joined by their teacher Jimmy Lara.

"Yesterday I had the opportunity to visit with many bright young students at James Rodriguez Elementary who have been hard at work on innovative projects that have helped spark their interest in the STEM fields," Congressman **Luján** said. "Congratulations to Jaleena, Jose, and Casandra for being selected to visit the White House and for representing New Mexico and making us proud. Their 'City of Crystal Water' illustrates their creativity and inventive spirit. I want to also commend Mr. Lara for his dedication to his students and his efforts to teach them the science and math skills that will be so important to their future."

For their project, the students were challenged to work as team over four months to imagine, design, and build a city of the future. This year's theme was Feeding Future Cities, requiring students to select one vegetable and one protein and design a way to grow enough of each within the city limits to feed its citizens; build a model of their city using recycled materials; write a brief narrative promoting the city; and present their city before a panel of judges.

The students "City of Crystal Water" included fish as a health source of protein and carrots that can be grown without soil using hydroponics. The team used hydro energy and wind turbines to provide energy to the city. They incorporated Spanish, English, American Sign Language, and Tewa into their presentation to reflect the cultural diversity of their communities and earned the Most Unique Architectural Model at the New Mexico regional competition.

Congressman **Luján** has been a strong advocate for STEM education and expressed his support for projects that encourage students to engage in the STEM fields. He has introduced legislation to strengthen STEM education and training programs to help teachers and schools better engage students in the STEM fields by providing additional professional development resources and facilitating collaboration among the business and education communities to better identify STEM skills needed in the workforce.

"The STEM fields provide opportunities for good jobs in growing sectors and it is critical that we engage students at an early age to encourage them to purse STEM education. We can show kids that instead of just using the latest app, they can be the ones creating it," added **Luján**.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 10, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

87 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 8, 2015

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS $200,000 IN USDA GRANTS FOR SANTA FE ORGANIZATIONS ADDRESSING HUNGER; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 302 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted nearly $200,000 in USDA grants for two Santa Fe organizations to address hunger and support the purchase of fruits and vegetables for participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The Santa Fe Community Foundation is receiving $100,000 and the New Mexico Farmers Marketing Association is receiving $99,999 through the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive program for pilot projects.

"With New Mexico near the top in child hunger and with too many families struggling to put food on the table, SNAP is a critical tool to help during tough times," Congressman **Lujan** said. "These federal grants will support the important efforts of these Santa Fe organizations to help SNAP recipients not only feed their families, but have access to healthy, nutritious food."

The grant awarded to the Santa Fe Community Foundation will help launch MoGro's Healthy SNAP Program, which will provide SNAP families with a 50% discount on fresh and organic produce and provide opportunities for monthly cooking and nutritional workshops. In partnership with La Familia Medical Center, community health workers will also be able to track dietary changes and health improvements.

The New Mexico Farmers Marketing Association will use its grant to help launch "Snap to Health: Double Up Food Bucks New Mexico," which will provide SNAP incentives at farmers' markets in order to increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables by low-income customers. The program will also include direct-to-consumer marketing in order to share the benefits of consuming locally grown produce.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-highlights-200000-in-usda-grants-for-santa-fe-organizations-addressing-hunger/

LOAD-DATE: April 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 8, 2015

LUJAN VISITS JAMES RODRIGUEZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN ESPANOLA, MEETS WITH STUDENTS WHO ATTENDED WHITE

HOUSE SCIENCE FAIR;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 503 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District visited James Rodriguez Elementary School in Espanola yesterday to visit with students, teachers, and faculty and to learn about the science projects the students have been working on. Last month, three students from the school were selected to visit Washington, D.C. to participate in the White House Science Fair and present their project. Casandra Dauz, Jose Valdez, and Jaleena Rolon were joined by their teacher Jimmy Lara.

"Yesterday I had the opportunity to visit with many bright young students at James Rodriguez Elementary who have been hard at work on innovative projects that have helped spark their interest in the STEM fields," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Congratulations to Jaleena, Jose, and Casandra for being selected to visit the White House and for representing New Mexico and making us proud. Their 'City of Crystal Water' illustrates their creativity and inventive spirit. I want to also commend Mr. Lara for his dedication to his students and his efforts to teach them the science and math skills that will be so important to their future."

For their project, the students were challenged to work as team over four months to imagine, design, and build a city of the future. This year's theme was Feeding Future Cities, requiring students to select one vegetable and one protein and design a way to grow enough of each within the city limits to feed its citizens; build a model of their city using recycled materials; write a brief narrative promoting the city; and present their city before a panel of judges.

The students "City of Crystal Water" included fish as a health source of protein and carrots that can be grown without soil using hydroponics. The team used hydro energy and wind turbines to provide energy to the city. They incorporated Spanish, English, American Sign Language, and Tewa into their presentation to reflect the cultural diversity of their communities and earned the Most Unique Architectural Model at the New Mexico regional competition.

Congressman **Lujan** has been a strong advocate for STEM education and expressed his support for projects that encourage students to engage in the STEM fields. He has introduced legislation to strengthen STEM education and training programs to help teachers and schools better engage students in the STEM fields by providing additional professional development resources and facilitating collaboration among the business and education communities to better identify STEM skills needed in the workforce.

"The STEM fields provide opportunities for good jobs in growing sectors and it is critical that we engage students at an early age to encourage them to purse STEM education. We can show kids that instead of just using the latest app, they can be the ones creating it," added **Lujan**.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-visits-james-rodriguez-elementary-school-in-espanola-meets-with-students-who-attended-white-house-science-fair/

LOAD-DATE: April 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

April 8, 2015 Wednesday

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS $200,000 IN USDA GRANTS FOR SANTA FE ORGANIZATIONS ADDRESSING HUNGER

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 288 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted nearly $200,000 in USDA grants for two Santa Fe organizations to address hunger and support the purchase of fruits and vegetables for participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The Santa Fe Community Foundation is receiving $100,000 and the New Mexico Farmers Marketing Association is receiving $99,999 through the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive program for pilot projects.

"With New Mexico near the top in child hunger and with too many families struggling to put food on the table, SNAP is a critical tool to help during tough times," Congressman **Lujan** said. "These federal grants will support the important efforts of these Santa Fe organizations to help SNAP recipients not only feed their families, but have access to healthy, nutritious food."

The grant awarded to the Santa Fe Community Foundation will help launch MoGro's Healthy SNAP Program, which will provide SNAP families with a 50% discount on fresh and organic produce and provide opportunities for monthly cooking and nutritional workshops. In partnership with La Familia Medical Center, community health workers will also be able to track dietary changes and health improvements.

The New Mexico Farmers Marketing Association will use its grant to help launch "Snap to Health: Double Up Food Bucks New Mexico," which will provide SNAP incentives at farmers' markets in order to increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables by low-income customers. The program will also include direct-to-consumer marketing in order to share the benefits of consuming locally grown produce.

LOAD-DATE: April 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

States News Service

April 8, 2015 Wednesday

LUJAN VISITS JAMES RODRIGUEZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN ESPANOLA, MEETS WITH STUDENTS WHO ATTENDED WHITE HOUSE

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 483 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District visited James Rodriguez Elementary School in Espaola yesterday to visit with students, teachers, and faculty and to learn about the science projects the students have been working on. Last month, three students from the school were selected to visit Washington, D.C. to participate in the White House Science Fair and present their project. Casandra Dauz, Jose Valdez, and Jaleena Rolon were joined by their teacher Jimmy Lara.

"Yesterday I had the opportunity to visit with many bright young students at James Rodriguez Elementary who have been hard at work on innovative projects that have helped spark their interest in the STEM fields," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Congratulations to Jaleena, Jose, and Casandra for being selected to visit the White House and for representing New Mexico and making us proud. Their "City of Crystal Water' illustrates their creativity and inventive spirit. I want to also commend Mr. Lara for his dedication to his students and his efforts to teach them the science and math skills that will be so important to their future."

For their project, the students were challenged to work as team over four months to imagine, design, and build a city of the future. This year's theme was Feeding Future Cities, requiring students to select one vegetable and one protein and design a way to grow enough of each within the city limits to feed its citizens; build a model of their city using recycled materials; write a brief narrative promoting the city; and present their city before a panel of judges.

The students "City of Crystal Water" included fish as a health source of protein and carrots that can be grown without soil using hydroponics. The team used hydro energy and wind turbines to provide energy to the city. They incorporated Spanish, English, American Sign Language, and Tewa into their presentation to reflect the cultural diversity of their communities and earned the Most Unique Architectural Model at the New Mexico regional competition.

Congressman **Lujan** has been a strong advocate for STEM education and expressed his support for projects that encourage students to engage in the STEM fields. He has introduced legislation to strengthen STEM education and training programs to help teachers and schools better engage students in the STEM fields by providing additional professional development resources and facilitating collaboration among the business and education communities to better identify STEM skills needed in the workforce.

"The STEM fields provide opportunities for good jobs in growing sectors and it is critical that we engage students at an early age to encourage them to purse STEM education. We can show kids that instead of just using the latest app, they can be the ones creating it," added **Lujan**.

LOAD-DATE: April 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

April 8, 2015 Wednesday 2:52 AM EST

Lujan Highlights $200,000 in USDA Grants for Santa Fe Organizations Addressing Hunger

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 297 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted nearly $200,000 in USDA grants for two Santa Fe organizations to address hunger and support the purchase of fruits and vegetables for participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The Santa Fe Community Foundation is receiving $100,000 and the New Mexico Farmers Marketing Association is receiving $99,999 through the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive program for pilot projects.

"With New Mexico near the top in child hunger and with too many families struggling to put food on the table, SNAP is a critical tool to help during tough times," Congressman **Lujan** said. "These federal grants will support the important efforts of these Santa Fe organizations to help SNAP recipients not only feed their families, but have access to healthy, nutritious food."

The grant awarded to the Santa Fe Community Foundation will help launch MoGro's Healthy SNAP Program, which will provide SNAP families with a 50% discount on fresh and organic produce and provide opportunities for monthly cooking and nutritional workshops. In partnership with La Familia Medical Center, community health workers will also be able to track dietary changes and health improvements.

The New Mexico Farmers Marketing Association will use its grant to help launch "Snap to Health: Double Up Food Bucks New Mexico," which will provide SNAP incentives at farmers' markets in order to increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables by low-income customers. The program will also include direct-to-consumer marketing in order to share the benefits of consuming locally grown produce.

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150409-5093442 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: April 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

April 8, 2015 Wednesday 2:52 AM EST

Lujan Visits James Rodriguez Elementary School in Espanola, Meets with Students Who Attended White House Science Fair

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 492 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District visited James Rodriguez Elementary School in Espanola yesterday to visit with students, teachers, and faculty and to learn about the science projects the students have been working on. Last month, three students from the school were selected to visit Washington, D.C. to participate in the White House Science Fair and present their project. Casandra Dauz, Jose Valdez, and Jaleena Rolon were joined by their teacher Jimmy Lara.

"Yesterday I had the opportunity to visit with many bright young students at James Rodriguez Elementary who have been hard at work on innovative projects that have helped spark their interest in the STEM fields," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Congratulations to Jaleena, Jose, and Casandra for being selected to visit the White House and for representing New Mexico and making us proud. Their 'City of Crystal Water' illustrates their creativity and inventive spirit. I want to also commend Mr. Lara for his dedication to his students and his efforts to teach them the science and math skills that will be so important to their future."

For their project, the students were challenged to work as team over four months to imagine, design, and build a city of the future. This year's theme was Feeding Future Cities, requiring students to select one vegetable and one protein and design a way to grow enough of each within the city limits to feed its citizens; build a model of their city using recycled materials; write a brief narrative promoting the city; and present their city before a panel of judges.

The students "City of Crystal Water" included fish as a health source of protein and carrots that can be grown without soil using hydroponics. The team used hydro energy and wind turbines to provide energy to the city. They incorporated Spanish, English, American Sign Language, and Tewa into their presentation to reflect the cultural diversity of their communities and earned the Most Unique Architectural Model at the New Mexico regional competition.

Congressman **Lujan** has been a strong advocate for STEM education and expressed his support for projects that encourage students to engage in the STEM fields. He has introduced legislation to strengthen STEM education and training programs to help teachers and schools better engage students in the STEM fields by providing additional professional development resources and facilitating collaboration among the business and education communities to better identify STEM skills needed in the workforce.

"The STEM fields provide opportunities for good jobs in growing sectors and it is critical that we engage students at an early age to encourage them to purse STEM education. We can show kids that instead of just using the latest app, they can be the ones creating it," added **Lujan**.

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150409-5093444 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: April 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 8, 2015 Wednesday

New Mexico: LUJAN VISITS JAMES RODRIGUEZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN ESPANOLA, MEETS WITH STUDENTS WHO ATTENDED WHITE HOUSE SCIENCE FAIR

LENGTH: 544 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Rep. **Luján** meets with Casandra Dauz, Jose Valdez, and Jaleena Rolon, students at James Rodriguez Elementary School, to learn about their science project and their visit to Washington, D.C. to attend the White House Science Fair. Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third

District visited James Rodriguez Elementary School in Española yesterday to visit with students, teachers, and faculty and to learn about the science projects the students have been working on.

Last month, three students from the school were selected to visit Washington, D.C. to participate in the White House Science Fair and present their project. Casandra Dauz, Jose Valdez, and Jaleena Rolon were joined by their teacher Jimmy Lara. "Yesterday I had the opportunity to visit with many bright young students at James Rodriguez Elementary who have been hard at work on innovative projects that have helped spark their interest in the STEM fields," Congressman **Luján** said. "Congratulations to Jaleena, Jose, and Casandra for being selected to visit the White House and for representing New Mexico and making us proud. Their 'City of Crystal Water' illustrates their creativity and inventive spirit. I want to also commend Mr. Lara for his dedication to his students and his efforts to teach them the science and math skills that will be so important to their future." For their project, the students were challenged to work as team over four months to imagine, design, and build a city of the future. This year's theme was Feeding Future Cities, requiring students to select one vegetable and one protein and design a way to grow enough of each within the city limits to feed its citizens; build a model of their city using recycled materials; write a brief narrative promoting the city; and present their city before a panel of judges. The students "City of Crystal Water" included fish as a health source of protein and carrots that can be grown without soil using hydroponics. The team used hydro energy and wind turbines to provide energy to the city. They incorporated Spanish, English, American Sign Language, and Tewa into their presentation to reflect the cultural diversity of their communities and earned the Most Unique Architectural Model at the New Mexico regional competition. Congressman **Luján** has been a strong advocate for STEM education and expressed his support for projects that encourage students to engage in the STEM fields. He has introduced legislation to strengthen STEM education and training programs to help teachers and schools better engage students in the STEM fields by providing additional professional development resources and facilitating collaboration among the business and education communities to better identify STEM skills needed in the workforce. "The STEM fields provide opportunities for good jobs in growing sectors and it is critical that we engage students at an early age to encourage them to purse STEM education. We can show kids that instead of just using the latest app, they can be the ones creating it," added **Luján**.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 8, 2015 Wednesday

New Mexico: LUJAN STATEMENT ON CESAR CHAVEZ DAY

LENGTH: 227 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today to commemorate César Chávez Day, which is celebrated on March 31. "The United States has been built on the foundation of men and women who refused to accept injustice and who fought to improve their lives and the lives of those around them. Today, as we reflect on the legacy of César Chávez, we remember a man who dedicated his life to the cause of equality and led the effort for social justice for working men and women. "A son of migrant workers who grew up during the Great Depression, César Chávez endured in his belief that the American Dream was not exclusive. He harnessed the steadfast power of working people and defied the forces of discrimination and injustice in order to win the basic rights and protections that all workers deserve. "Today we are reminded that we are at our best when we come together united in the cause for justice, but we are also reminded that this fight is ongoing. We are compelled to take up this cause and endure, just as César Chávez did, in order to secure a future that is worthy of the dreams and aspirations of all people."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 8, 2015 Wednesday

New Mexico: LUJAN VISITS JAMES RODRIGUEZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN ESPANOLA, MEETS WITH STUDENTS WHO ATTENDED WHITE HOUSE SCIENCE FAIR

LENGTH: 544 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Rep. **Luján** meets with Casandra Dauz, Jose Valdez, and Jaleena Rolon, students at James Rodriguez Elementary School, to learn about their science project and their visit to Washington, D.C. to attend the White House Science Fair. Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District visited James Rodriguez Elementary School in Española yesterday to visit with students, teachers, and faculty and to learn about the science projects the students have been working on. Last month, three students from the school were selected to visit Washington, D.C. to participate in the White House Science Fair and present their project. Casandra Dauz, Jose Valdez, and Jaleena Rolon were joined by their teacher Jimmy Lara. "Yesterday I had the opportunity to visit with many bright young students at James Rodriguez Elementary who have been hard at work on innovative projects that have helped spark their interest in the STEM fields," Congressman **Luján** said. "Congratulations to Jaleena, Jose, and Casandra for being selected to visit the White House and for representing New Mexico and making us proud. Their 'City of Crystal Water' illustrates their creativity and inventive spirit. I want to also commend Mr. Lara for his dedication to his students and his efforts to teach them the science and math skills that will be so important to their future." For their project, the students were challenged to work as team over four months to imagine, design, and build a city of the future. This year's theme was Feeding Future Cities, requiring students to select one vegetable and one protein and design a way to grow enough of each within the city limits to feed its citizens; build a model of their city using recycled materials; write a brief narrative promoting the city; and present their city before a panel of judges. The students "City of Crystal Water" included fish as a health source of protein and carrots that can be grown without soil using hydroponics. The team used hydro energy and wind turbines to provide energy to the city. They incorporated Spanish, English, American Sign Language, and Tewa into their presentation to reflect the cultural diversity of their communities and earned the Most Unique Architectural Model at the New Mexico regional competition. Congressman **Luján** has been a strong advocate for STEM education and expressed his support for projects that encourage students to engage in the STEM fields. He has introduced legislation to strengthen STEM education and training programs to help teachers and schools better engage students in the STEM fields by providing additional professional development resources and facilitating collaboration among the business and education communities to better identify STEM skills needed in the workforce. "The STEM fields provide opportunities for good jobs in growing sectors and it is critical that we engage students at an early age to encourage them to purse STEM education. We can show kids that instead of just using the latest app, they can be the ones creating it," added **Luján**.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 10, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 8, 2015 Wednesday

New Mexico: LUJAN STATEMENT ON CESAR CHAVEZ DAY

LENGTH: 227 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today to commemorate César Chávez Day, which is celebrated on March 31. "The United States has been built on the foundation of men and women who refused to accept injustice and who fought to improve their lives and the lives of those around them. Today, as we reflect on the legacy of César Chávez, we remember a man who dedicated his life to the cause of equality and led the effort for social justice for working men and women. "A son of migrant workers who grew up during the Great Depression, César Chávez endured in his belief that the American Dream was not exclusive. He harnessed the steadfast power of working people and defied the forces of discrimination and injustice in order to win the basic rights and protections that all workers deserve. "Today we are reminded that we are at our best when we come together united in the cause for justice, but we are also reminded that this fight is ongoing. We are compelled to take up this cause and endure, just as César Chávez did, in order to secure a future that is worthy of the dreams and aspirations of all people."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 10, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: Lujan Statement on Fifth Anniversary of the Affordable Care Act

LENGTH: 247 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the fifth anniversary of the Affordable Care Act being signed into law.

"The Affordable Care Act is working, and it is having a real impact on the lives of the people of New Mexico. For too long, New Mexico has ranked high on the list of the uninsured. As a result of the Affordable Care Act, the number of uninsured New Mexicans has started to fall, decreasing by nearly 5 percent. This means that thousands of families are no longer one accident or illness away from financial ruin.

"Five years after the ACA was signed into law, more than 16 million Americans who did not have health coverage now do. In addition, 129 million Americans have the peace of mind of knowing that they will not be dropped from their plan or discriminated against because of a pre-existing condition. Seniors are saving money on their prescription medicine, women can no longer be charged more just for being a woman, and no New Mexican has to fear hitting a lifetime limit on their health coverage.

"Moving forward, Congress should work in a bipartisan effort to strengthen the law and make improvements that will further lower costs and increase access to care for New Mexicans and the American people.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

98 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: Lujan Statement on the Death of Mayor George Gonzales

LENGTH: 242 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement on the death of former Santa Fe Mayor George Gonzales, who passed away last night.

"Last night we lost a great New Mexico leader from the Santa Fe community whose contributions extended from his efforts in City Hall to his daily work on the airwaves. George Gonzales loved Santa Fe and its people and sought to build a stronger community through his passion for service and music.

"Beginning in his early years as a singer-songwriter, his deep interest in music guided him through life, leading him to own local Santa Fe radio stations. His familiar voice informed, uplifted, and enriched all those who tuned in to listen to his daily messages celebrating a birthday, an anniversary, or the memory of lost loved one.

"George Gonzales' love to help people was only exceeded by his love for his family. While we say goodbye to Mr. Gonzales, his legacy lives on in his children who have followed in his footsteps. Mr. Gonzales will be greatly missed, but their good work ensures that his memory lives on. My thoughts and prayers are with the Gonzales family during this sad time, and on behalf of the **Luján** family, I express our sincere condolences for their loss."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: N.M. Delegation Encourages Department of Defense to Support UNM's Proposal to Create National Institute of Photonics

LENGTH: 582 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Initiative will create jobs, build on N.M.'s unique expertise in optics and photonics, delegation says in letter to Defense Secretary

WASHINGTON - Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced that they are urging the Department of Defense

to select a proposal led by a team that includes the University of New Mexico in a competition to create a national photonics hub. The team, a collaboration of academic institutions from New Mexico and three other states, was named a finalist earlier this year. If selected, it will receive federal funding and support and become part of a network of regional manufacturing institutes or "hubs" across the country that help bridge the gap between applied research and product development. The hub would spur the development of cutting-edge technology and create high-tech jobs in the Albuquerque area.

The New Mexico congressional delegation has strongly supported the UNM team's application, which would establish the first such manufacturing hub west of the Mississippi as part of the Integrated Photonics Institute for Manufacturing Innovation (IP-IMI) program. Photonics technologies are used in robotics, medical imaging, next-generation displays, defense, biometric security and many other fields. The group could receive $110 million in federal grant matching funds to develop a partnership between industry, government and academia to accelerate the creation of new photonics technologies. UNM would serve as the lead sensing hub, focusing on the development of integrated phonic sensors for chem-bio sensing.

In a letter to Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter, all five members of New Mexico's congressional delegation expressed their strong support for the proposal.

"This team will bring together government, industry and academia to develop this manufacturing ecosystem here in the U.S. They have broad talents and proven track records in microelectronics and chip packaging, as well as significant expertise in world-class photonics manufacturing," the letter reads. "New Mexico's unique capabilities in Mid Infrared photonic systems have served our DOD and commercial industries for decades. UNM will stand up the New Mexico Hub on Sensing-Integrated Manufacturing for Mid-infrared Photonic Applications Technology (IMMPACT) which will work toward self-sufficiency."

"The U.S. photonics industry currently supports more than 100,000 high-paying jobs, a number that could double within the next decade as new photonic-electronic chips find their way into products and technologies across many industries," the letter continues. "The combined team's established research and development in critical areas of this technology, coupled with its electronics and photonics packaging expertise, will build a pipeline of innovation and talent for this high-tech industry."

The UNM team is led by the Information Science Institute at the University of Southern California and also includes the University of California system schools in Los Angeles, San Diego and Berkeley; Arizona State University; and Ohio State University. The team is competing against two others based in New York and Florida. Full and final applications are due by March 31, and the final selection is expected in June 2015.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: Lujan: House Republican Budget Stands in Stark Contrast to Democrats' Efforts to Support Hard-Working Families

LENGTH: 292 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting against House Republicans' budget for Fiscal Year 2016.

"A budget is a statement of values, and the contrast between the House Republican budget that puts special interests first and the House Democratic budget that invests in growing the middle class could not be clearer. House Republicans provide tax breaks to billionaires, yet shortchange investments in early education that are vital to our children's future and infrastructure that are essential to putting more New Mexicans to work. House Democrats invest in job training programs, education at every level, and clean energy - critical components for strengthening our nation's competitiveness and building a stronger economy that creates more jobs and opportunities for the people of New Mexico.

"Once again, House Republicans call for the end of Medicare as we know it by replacing it with a voucher that fails to cover the cost of health care for New Mexico's seniors, leaving them to pay higher out-of-pocket costs. At a time when New Mexico ranks near the top in child hunger, the Republican budget lays the foundation for cuts to nutrition programs that help families put food on the table during difficult times.

"While I may not agree with every provision in each alternative Democratic budget, they all stand in stark contrast to the Republican plan by supporting hard-working families through investments in infrastructure, affordable college education, and growing paychecks."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: Lujan: VA Change to 40-Mile Rule a Commonsense Step Forward to Better Meet the Needs of New Mexico Veterans

LENGTH: 280 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted a recent decision by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to modify a rule that determines eligibility for the Veterans Choice Program. Under the current version, veterans are eligible to seek care for a doctor outside the VA system if they are more than 40 miles away from a VA facility "as the crow flies." The announced change will measure driving distance, enabling more veterans to receive care closer to home.

"In rural communities across New Mexico, veterans have had to travel great distances to receive the care they have earned with their brave service. Under the Veterans Choice Program, Congress took an important step to make it easier for them to receive care closer to their own communities," Congressman **Luján** said. "As we know in New Mexico, the path between two points is not always a straight line; it's through mountain passes and valleys. The announced change to this rule is a commonsense step to reflect the realities we face in rural communities, to better meet the needs of New Mexico's veterans and to better follow the intent of the law."

The Veterans Choice Program was created as part of the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act, which passed with **Luján**'s support last July. The law provides key funding to reduce the VA backlog, hire new medical personnel at VA hospitals and clinics, and allow the VA to lease new medical facilities.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: Lujan Votes to Protect Seniors' Access to Their Doctor and Extend Health Care for Children

LENGTH: 235 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District voted today in support of the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act, bipartisan legislation to protect seniors' access to doctors through Medicare.

"Year after year for more than a decade, Congress has passed short-term fixes to a flawed system in order to prevent seniors on Medicare from losing access to the doctors they trust. Time and again, rather than enacting a stable payment system for doctors, Congress has kicked the can down the road. Finally, a bipartisan effort has led to a compromise to permanently ensure seniors' can continue to see their doctor.

"This legislation combines needed reforms in the way we reimburse doctors through Medicare to promote quality care with a vital extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program that prevents 2 million children from becoming uninsured. In addition, it provides critical funding for community health centers that play a significant role in the effort to expand access to affordable health care in New Mexico.

"While not perfect, this legislation represents a compromise that on the whole makes much-needed progress in ensuring access to health care for our children and seniors."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: Lujan Presents Medals to Navy Veteran Gus Keene in Gallup

LENGTH: 330 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** pins a medal on Gus Keene at a ceremony in Gallup this morning. **Luján** helped secure the medals Mr. Keene earned through his service in the U.S. Navy.

Gallup, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District awarded a number of medals to Navy veteran Gus Keene this morning at a ceremony in Gallup. He was joined by Commander Dave Cuellar, U.S. Navy (Ret.), founder of Veterans Helping Veterans.

A native of Acoma Pueblo, Gus Keene was drafted into the Navy in 1965 from Tuba City, Arizona. After completing boot camp in Long Beach, California, Mr. Keene was stationed aboard the USS Bennington and completed several combat tours with the 7th Fleet during the Vietnam War. During one of his tours, Mr. Keene and the USS Bennington responded to aid the USS Pueblo when it was captured by North Korean ships.

When Mr. Keene completed his service, he was not informed of his eligibility for a number of medals. When he realized that his time and efforts in the Navy had earned him these medals, he contacted Congressman **Luján**'s office for help.

"Mr. Keene bravely served his country and has added to New Mexico's proud legacy of military service," said Congressman **Lujan**. "I am honored that we had the opportunity to assist Mr. Keene and ensure that he received the medals and the thanks he earned."

"I want to thank the Congressman for all his hard work," said Mr. Keene. "It's great to finally get the honor we as veterans all deserve."

Congressman **Luján** and his staff worked on behalf of Mr. Keene to obtain the following medals that he earned for his brave military service prior to his Honorable Discharge in 1969:

o National Defense Medal
o Vietnam Service Medal with a Silver Star
o Meritorious Unit Commendation Ribbon with a Bronze Star
o Good Conduct Medal

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: Lujan Statement on Cesar Chavez Day

LENGTH: 226 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today to commemorate César Chávez Day, which is celebrated on March 31.

"The United States has been built on the foundation of men and women who refused to accept injustice and who fought to improve their lives and the lives of those around them. Today, as we reflect on the legacy of César Chávez, we remember a man who dedicated his life to the cause of equality and led the effort for social justice for working men and women.

"A son of migrant workers who grew up during the Great Depression, César Chávez endured in his belief that the American Dream was not exclusive. He harnessed the steadfast power of working people and defied the forces of discrimination and injustice in order to win the basic rights and protections that all workers deserve.

"Today we are reminded that we are at our best when we come together united in the cause for justice, but we are also reminded that this fight is ongoing. We are compelled to take up this cause and endure, just as César Chávez did, in order to secure a future that is worthy of the dreams and aspirations of all people."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

Lujan Statement on Cesar Chavez Day

LENGTH: 231 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today to commemorate César Chávez Day, which is celebrated on March 31.

"The United States has been built on the foundation of men and women who refused to accept injustice and who fought to improve their lives and the lives of those around them. Today, as we reflect on the legacy of César Chávez, we remember a man who dedicated his life to the cause of equality and led the effort for social justice for working men and women.

"A son of migrant workers who grew up during the Great Depression, César Chávez endured in his belief that the American Dream was not exclusive. He harnessed the steadfast power of working people and defied the forces of discrimination and injustice in order to win the basic rights and protections that all workers deserve.

"Today we are reminded that we are at our best when we come together united in the cause for justice, but we are also reminded that this fight is ongoing. We are compelled to take up this cause and endure, just as César Chávez did, in order to secure a future that is worthy of the dreams and aspirations of all people."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

Lujan Presents Medals to Navy Veteran Gus Keene in Gallup

LENGTH: 306 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District awarded a number of medals to Navy veteran Gus Keene this morning at a ceremony in Gallup. He was joined by Commander Dave Cuellar, U.S. Navy (Ret.), founder of Veterans Helping Veterans.

A native of Acoma Pueblo, Gus Keene was drafted into the Navy in 1965 from Tuba City, Arizona. After completing boot camp in Long Beach, California, Mr. Keene was stationed aboard the USS Bennington and completed several combat tours with the 7th Fleet during the Vietnam War. During one of his tours, Mr. Keene and the USS Bennington responded to aid the USS Pueblo when it was captured by North Korean ships.

When Mr. Keene completed his service, he was not informed of his eligibility for a number of medals. When he realized that his time and efforts in the Navy had earned him these medals, he contacted Congressman **Luján**'s office for help.

"Mr. Keene bravely served his country and has added to New Mexico's proud legacy of military service," said Congressman **Lujan**. "I am honored that we had the opportunity to assist Mr. Keene and ensure that he received the medals and the thanks he earned."

"I want to thank the Congressman for all his hard work," said Mr. Keene. "It's great to finally get the honor we as veterans all deserve."

Congressman **Luján** and his staff worked on behalf of Mr. Keene to obtain the following medals that he earned for his brave military service prior to his Honorable Discharge in 1969:

o National Defense Medal
o Vietnam Service Medal with a Silver Star
o Meritorious Unit Commendation Ribbon with a Bronze Star
o Good Conduct Medal

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: Lujan Statement on Fifth Anniversary of the Affordable Care Act

LENGTH: 247 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the fifth anniversary of the Affordable Care Act being signed into law.

"The Affordable Care Act is working, and it is having a real impact on the lives of the people of New Mexico. For too long, New Mexico has ranked high on the list of the uninsured. As a result of the Affordable Care Act, the number of uninsured New Mexicans has started to fall, decreasing by nearly 5 percent. This means that thousands of families are no longer one accident or illness away from financial ruin.

"Five years after the ACA was signed into law, more than 16 million Americans who did not have health coverage now do. In addition, 129 million Americans have the peace of mind of knowing that they will not be dropped from their plan or discriminated against because of a pre-existing condition. Seniors are saving money on their prescription medicine, women can no longer be charged more just for being a woman, and no New Mexican has to fear hitting a lifetime limit on their health coverage.

"Moving forward, Congress should work in a bipartisan effort to strengthen the law and make improvements that will further lower costs and increase access to care for New Mexicans and the American people.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: Lujan Statement on the Death of Mayor George Gonzales

LENGTH: 242 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement on the death of former Santa Fe Mayor George Gonzales, who passed away last night.

"Last night we lost a great New Mexico leader from the Santa Fe community whose contributions extended from his efforts in City Hall to his daily work on the airwaves. George Gonzales loved Santa Fe and its people and sought to build a stronger community through his passion for service and music.

"Beginning in his early years as a singer-songwriter, his deep interest in music guided him through life, leading him to own local Santa Fe radio stations. His familiar voice informed, uplifted, and enriched all those who tuned in to listen to his daily messages celebrating a birthday, an anniversary, or the memory of lost loved one.

"George Gonzales' love to help people was only exceeded by his love for his family. While we say goodbye to Mr. Gonzales, his legacy lives on in his children who have followed in his footsteps. Mr. Gonzales will be greatly missed, but their good work ensures that his memory lives on. My thoughts and prayers are with the Gonzales family during this sad time, and on behalf of the **Luján** family, I express our sincere condolences for their loss."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: N.M. Delegation Encourages Department of Defense to Support UNM's Proposal to Create National Institute of Photonics

LENGTH: 582 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Initiative will create jobs, build on N.M.'s unique expertise in optics and photonics, delegation says in letter to Defense Secretary

WASHINGTON - Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced that they are urging the Department of Defense to select a proposal led by a team that includes the University of New Mexico in a competition to create a national photonics hub. The team, a collaboration of academic institutions from New Mexico and three other states, was named a finalist earlier this year. If selected, it will receive federal funding and support and become part of a network of regional manufacturing institutes or "hubs" across the country that help bridge the gap between applied research and product development. The hub would spur the development of cutting-edge technology and create high-tech jobs in the Albuquerque area.

The New Mexico congressional delegation has strongly supported the UNM team's application, which would establish the first such manufacturing hub west of the Mississippi as part of the Integrated Photonics Institute for Manufacturing Innovation (IP-IMI) program. Photonics technologies are used in robotics, medical imaging, next-generation displays, defense, biometric security and many other fields. The group could receive $110 million in federal grant matching funds to develop a partnership between industry, government and academia to accelerate the creation of new photonics technologies. UNM would serve as the lead sensing hub, focusing on the development of integrated phonic sensors for chem-bio sensing.

In a letter to Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter, all five members of New Mexico's congressional delegation expressed their strong support for the proposal.

"This team will bring together government, industry and academia to develop this manufacturing ecosystem here in the U.S. They have broad talents and proven track records in microelectronics and chip packaging, as well as significant expertise in world-class photonics manufacturing," the letter reads. "New Mexico's unique capabilities in Mid Infrared photonic systems have served our DOD and commercial industries for decades. UNM will stand up the New Mexico Hub on Sensing-Integrated Manufacturing for Mid-infrared Photonic Applications Technology (IMMPACT) which will work toward self-sufficiency."

"The U.S. photonics industry currently supports more than 100,000 high-paying jobs, a number that could double within the next decade as new photonic-electronic chips find their way into products and technologies across many industries," the letter continues. "The combined team's established research and development in critical areas of this technology, coupled with its electronics and photonics packaging expertise, will build a pipeline of innovation and talent for this high-tech industry."

The UNM team is led by the Information Science Institute at the University of Southern California and also includes the University of California system schools in Los Angeles, San Diego and Berkeley; Arizona State University; and Ohio State University. The team is competing against two others based in New York and Florida. Full and final applications are due by March 31, and the final selection is expected in June 2015.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: Lujan: House Republican Budget Stands in Stark Contrast to Democrats' Efforts to Support Hard-Working Families

LENGTH: 292 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting against House Republicans' budget for Fiscal Year 2016.

"A budget is a statement of values, and the contrast between the House Republican budget that puts special interests first and the House Democratic budget that invests in growing the middle class could not be clearer. House Republicans provide tax breaks to billionaires, yet shortchange investments in early education that are vital to our children's future and infrastructure that are essential to putting more New Mexicans to work. House Democrats invest in job training programs, education at every level, and clean energy - critical components for strengthening our nation's competitiveness and building a stronger economy that creates more jobs and opportunities for the people of New Mexico.

"Once again, House Republicans call for the end of Medicare as we know it by replacing it with a voucher that fails to cover the cost of health care for New Mexico's seniors, leaving them to pay

higher out-of-pocket costs. At a time when New Mexico ranks near the top in child hunger, the Republican budget lays the foundation for cuts to nutrition programs that help families put food on the table during difficult times.

"While I may not agree with every provision in each alternative Democratic budget, they all stand in stark contrast to the Republican plan by supporting hard-working families through investments in infrastructure, affordable college education, and growing paychecks."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

111 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: Lujan: VA Change to 40-Mile Rule a Commonsense Step Forward to Better Meet the Needs of New Mexico Veterans

LENGTH: 280 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted a recent decision by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to modify a rule that determines eligibility for the Veterans Choice Program. Under the current version, veterans are eligible to seek care for a doctor outside the VA system if they are more than 40 miles away from a VA facility "as the crow flies." The announced change will measure driving distance, enabling more veterans to receive care closer to home.

"In rural communities across New Mexico, veterans have had to travel great distances to receive the care they have earned with their brave service. Under the Veterans Choice Program, Congress took an important step to make it easier for them to receive care closer to their own communities," Congressman **Luján** said. "As we know in New Mexico, the path between two points is not always a straight line; it's through mountain passes and valleys. The announced change to this rule is a commonsense step to reflect the realities we face in rural communities, to better meet the needs of New Mexico's veterans and to better follow the intent of the law."

The Veterans Choice Program was created as part of the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act, which passed with **Luján**'s support last July. The law provides key funding to reduce the VA backlog, hire new medical personnel at VA hospitals and clinics, and allow the VA to lease new medical facilities.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: Lujan Votes to Protect Seniors' Access to Their Doctor and Extend Health Care for Children

LENGTH: 235 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District voted today in support of the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act, bipartisan legislation to protect seniors' access to doctors through Medicare.

"Year after year for more than a decade, Congress has passed short-term fixes to a flawed system in order to prevent seniors on Medicare from losing access to the doctors they trust. Time and again, rather than enacting a stable payment system for doctors, Congress has kicked the can down the road. Finally, a bipartisan effort has led to a compromise to permanently ensure seniors' can continue to see their doctor.

"This legislation combines needed reforms in the way we reimburse doctors through Medicare to promote quality care with a vital extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program that prevents 2 million children from becoming uninsured. In addition, it provides critical funding for community health centers that play a significant role in the effort to expand access to affordable health care in New Mexico.

"While not perfect, this legislation represents a compromise that on the whole makes much-needed progress in ensuring access to health care for our children and seniors."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: Lujan Presents Medals to Navy Veteran Gus Keene in Gallup

LENGTH: 330 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** pins a medal on Gus Keene at a ceremony in Gallup this morning. **Luján** helped secure the medals Mr. Keene earned through his service in the U.S. Navy.

Gallup, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District awarded a number of medals to Navy veteran Gus Keene this morning at a ceremony in Gallup. He was joined by Commander Dave Cuellar, U.S. Navy (Ret.), founder of Veterans Helping Veterans.

A native of Acoma Pueblo, Gus Keene was drafted into the Navy in 1965 from Tuba City, Arizona. After completing boot camp in Long Beach, California, Mr. Keene was stationed aboard the USS Bennington and completed several combat tours with the 7th Fleet during the Vietnam War. During one of his tours, Mr. Keene and the USS Bennington responded to aid the USS Pueblo when it was captured by North Korean ships.

When Mr. Keene completed his service, he was not informed of his eligibility for a number of medals. When he realized that his time and efforts in the Navy had earned him these medals, he contacted Congressman **Luján**'s office for help.

"Mr. Keene bravely served his country and has added to New Mexico's proud legacy of military service," said Congressman **Lujan**. "I am honored that we had the opportunity to assist Mr. Keene and ensure that he received the medals and the thanks he earned."

"I want to thank the Congressman for all his hard work," said Mr. Keene. "It's great to finally get the honor we as veterans all deserve."

Congressman **Luján** and his staff worked on behalf of Mr. Keene to obtain the following medals that he earned for his brave military service prior to his Honorable Discharge in 1969:

o National Defense Medal
o Vietnam Service Medal with a Silver Star
o Meritorious Unit Commendation Ribbon with a Bronze Star
o Good Conduct Medal

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

Lujan Statement on Cesar Chavez Day

LENGTH: 231 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today to commemorate César Chávez Day, which is celebrated on March 31.

"The United States has been built on the foundation of men and women who refused to accept injustice and who fought to improve their lives and the lives of those around them. Today, as we reflect on the legacy of César Chávez, we remember a man who dedicated his life to the cause of equality and led the effort for social justice for working men and women.

"A son of migrant workers who grew up during the Great Depression, César Chávez endured in his belief that the American Dream was not exclusive. He harnessed the steadfast power of working people and defied the forces of discrimination and injustice in order to win the basic rights and protections that all workers deserve.

"Today we are reminded that we are at our best when we come together united in the cause for justice, but we are also reminded that this fight is ongoing. We are compelled to take up this cause

and endure, just as César Chávez did, in order to secure a future that is worthy of the dreams and aspirations of all people."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

115 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

April 2, 2015 Thursday

Lujan Presents Medals to Navy Veteran Gus Keene in Gallup

LENGTH: 306 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District awarded a number of medals to Navy veteran Gus Keene this morning at a ceremony in Gallup. He was joined by Commander Dave Cuellar, U.S. Navy (Ret.), founder of Veterans Helping Veterans.

A native of Acoma Pueblo, Gus Keene was drafted into the Navy in 1965 from Tuba City, Arizona. After completing boot camp in Long Beach, California, Mr. Keene was stationed aboard the USS Bennington and completed several combat tours with the 7th Fleet during the Vietnam War. During one of his tours, Mr. Keene and the USS Bennington responded to aid the USS Pueblo when it was captured by North Korean ships.

When Mr. Keene completed his service, he was not informed of his eligibility for a number of medals. When he realized that his time and efforts in the Navy had earned him these medals, he contacted Congressman **Luján**'s office for help.

"Mr. Keene bravely served his country and has added to New Mexico's proud legacy of military service," said Congressman **Lujan**. "I am honored that we had the opportunity to assist Mr. Keene and ensure that he received the medals and the thanks he earned."

"I want to thank the Congressman for all his hard work," said Mr. Keene. "It's great to finally get the honor we as veterans all deserve."

Congressman **Luján** and his staff worked on behalf of Mr. Keene to obtain the following medals that he earned for his brave military service prior to his Honorable Discharge in 1969:

o National Defense Medal
o Vietnam Service Medal with a Silver Star
o Meritorious Unit Commendation Ribbon with a Bronze Star
o Good Conduct Medal

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

116 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

April 1, 2015 Wednesday

Vietnam vet receives medals, warm welcome home

BYLINE: Gaye Brown de Alvarez Staff writer

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 310 words

DATELINE: ALLUP

ALLUP -- When Acoma resident Gus Keene joined the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam war, the first thing that happened was he was thrown into

G

a pool.

"They wanted to see if I could swim," Keene said.

He could swim. He was assigned for duty to the USS Bennington in 1964 and served on the ship until the end of his tour of duty in 1969.

Monday, Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., was in town to present medals and ribbons to Keene -- medals he never received or even knew he was eligible for his service to the country.

"I never received anything," Keene said.

The ceremony was in the City Hall Council room and members of Veterans Helping Veterans, the City Council and the County Commission were present. The group said the pledge of allegiance and a prayer was recited before the medal award ceremony.

"We get to acknowledge one here today that had not

been acknowledged before," **Lujan** said and talked about how this year was the 50th anniversary of the war, when troops were sent in to Vietnam.

"I was at the Santa Fe Cemetery and I want to say I'm sorry and welcome home," **Lujan** said.

Keene received the National Defense medal ribbon, the Vietnam Service Medal with a Silver Star ribbon and the Meritorious Unit Accommodation ribbon with a Bronze Star medal, and a Good Conduct Medal.

Lujan pinned the medals and ribbons on Keene's jacket.

"Thank you for this recognition," Keene said. "To my brothers and sisters, thank you as well. It's been a long time waiting and when we all come home, we were not ever recognized like other individuals from Iraq and Afghanistan, for their service and support. Welcome home brothers and sisters, welcome home.

"My father was in Normandy but he was never recognized either. We'll work on his awards."

Keene thanked his wife, which he jokingly referred to as his "chauffer," and a prayer closed the ceremony.

Welcome home Gus Keene.

LOAD-DATE: April 14, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: Navy veteran Gus Keene, left, is pinned with medals dating back to service from the Vietnam War by U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** at City Hall in Gallup Monday. Adron Gardner/Independent

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Communications Daily

March 31, 2015 Tuesday

CAPITOL HILL

SECTION: CAPITOL HILL

LENGTH: 203 words

FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler backs moving forward with the universal service program's high-cost loop support (HCLS) mechanism, he told Sen. Jerry Moran, R-Kan., in a March 17 letter released last week. "We believe it is important to move forward with implementation of this mechanism to ensure that universal service funds are being used as cost effectively and efficiently as possible," Wheeler said, noting the FCC will be considering a petition for reconsideration from the National Congress of American Indians. "In the meantime, however, please be assured that we will closely monitor the effects of the interim HCLS mechanism on rate-of-return carriers, particularly those that serve Indian Country, and will revisit this issue in the event that it has unanticipated results," he said. Wheeler sent a different letter on the same topic to other lawmakers March 16. The FCC Office of Native Affairs and Policy "is considering potential dates in 2015 when I can meet personally with the Tribally-owned rate-of-return carriers to discuss their concerns," he said in a letter to Sens. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M, and Tom Udall, D-N.M., and Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., and Steve Pearce, R-N.M.

LOAD-DATE: March 30, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newsletter

Copyright 2015 Warren Communications News, Inc
All Rights Reserved

118 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 31, 2015

LUJAN STATEMENT ON CESAR CHAVEZ DAY; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 214 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today to commemorate Cesar Chavez Day, which is celebrated on March 31.

"The United States has been built on the foundation of men and women who refused to accept injustice and who fought to improve their lives and the lives of those around them. Today, as we reflect on the legacy of Cesar Chavez, we remember a man who dedicated his life to the cause of equality and led the effort for social justice for working men and women.

"A son of migrant workers who grew up during the Great Depression, Cesar Chavez endured in his belief that the American Dream was not exclusive. He harnessed the steadfast power of working people and defied the forces of discrimination and injustice in order to win the basic rights and protections that all workers deserve.

"Today we are reminded that we are at our best when we come together united in the cause for justice, but we are also reminded that this fight is ongoing. We are compelled to take up this cause

and endure, just as Cesar Chavez did, in order to secure a future that is worthy of the dreams and aspirations of all people."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-cesar-chavez-day1/

LOAD-DATE: April 1, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

119 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Farmington Daily Times (New Mexico)

March 31, 2015 Tuesday

U.S. Rep. Lujan touts natural gas in Farmington visit

BYLINE: By Dan Schwartz The Daily Times

SECTION: NEWS

LENGTH: 556 words

FARMINGTON San Juan County can strengthen its economy by retrofitting vehicles to run on natural gas and propane, U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** said Tuesday during a local visit.

"It's a good concept," said **Lujan**, the Democratic representative for District 3.

He said converting engines to burn natural gas or propane would create jobs and use New Mexico's resources to make money and keep it circulating locally.

He supports the Natural Gas Act, which proposes incentives for buying and building natural-gas vehicles, he said. But the Farmington region needs fueling stations before large numbers of trucks, buses and cars can be converted, he said.

Lujan toured Farmington on Tuesday, visiting Navajo Preparatory School in the morning, as well as the new Farmington Community Health Center. He appeared before the volunteer group the Farmington Noonday Civitans at noon and then met with at least 20 people at the Sycamore Park Community Center during the afternoon.

In the afternoon meeting, Bloomfield resident MP Schildmeyer told **Lujan** about a two-year study of the San Juan and Animas rives in San Juan County. The study's results, which recently were presented, surprised scientists . The study showed there were significant levels of bacteria in the rivers that indicate the presence of human waste.

"The pollution we have here is human," Schildmeyer said.

She asked **Lujan** if there is federal aid to clean the rivers.

Lujan said he will work to find funds, but Congress can no longer earmark federal money for projects. Water, he said, is an important resource.

Another woman said **Lujan** does not visit Farmington as often as he visits Rio Rancho.

"Ma'am, we've been here quite a bit," **Lujan** said.

According to spokesman Andrew Stoddard, the congressman represents one of the country's largest congressional districts, and he's driven approximately 70,000 miles across northern New Mexico, including coming to San Juan County for a two-day trip in July. Stoddard said in an email that **Lujan** has visited the area four times in a little more than two years.

Others asked the congressman about campaign finance reform, the Affordable Care Act and the rising cost of retirement. One woman, a member of the Navajo Nation, said oil and gas companies are drilling on sacred land without consulting tribal officials.

Afterward, **Lujan** met privately at the community center with groups of people to discuss their issues.

Lujan said he advocates for long-term funding of a federal program that provides San Juan County approximately $2.2 million a year.

The program, known as the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program, compensates counties nationally though largely those in Western states for the federal land within their borders that cannot be developed or included in property tax collections.

PILT has awarded counties hundreds of million of dollars since the program was initiated in 1976. But since 2012, the program has been funded only on a year-to-year basis and often in the last hours before Congress adjourns, leaving county officials uncertain about how much money they can count on.

Lujan said he signed a letter with many of his colleagues supporting long-term PILT funding.

"The ultimate goal is to get multi-year funding," he said.

Dan Schwartz covers government for The Daily Times. He can be reached at 505-564-4606 and @dtdschwartz on Twitter.

LOAD-DATE: April 2, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: Community members listen Tuesday as U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** answers questions during a forum at the Sycamore Park Community Center in Farmington.
U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** speaks Tuesday at the Sycamore Park Community Center in Farmington.
U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** shakes hands and introduces himself to his constituents Tuesday before speaking at a forum at the Sycamore Park Community Center in Farmington.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Farmington Daily Times, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

March 31, 2015 Tuesday 3:36 AM EST

Lujan Statement on Cesar Chavez Day

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 216 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today to commemorate Cesar Chavez Day, which is celebrated on March 31.

"The United States has been built on the foundation of men and women who refused to accept injustice and who fought to improve their lives and the lives of those around them. Today, as we reflect on the legacy of Cesar Chavez, we remember a man who dedicated his life to the cause of equality and led the effort for social justice for working men and women.

"A son of migrant workers who grew up during the Great Depression, Cesar Chavez endured in his belief that the American Dream was not exclusive. He harnessed the steadfast power of working people and defied the forces of discrimination and injustice in order to win the basic rights and protections that all workers deserve.

"Today we are reminded that we are at our best when we come together united in the cause for justice, but we are also reminded that this fight is ongoing. We are compelled to take up this cause and endure, just as Cesar Chavez did, in order to secure a future that is worthy of the dreams and aspirations of all people."

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150401-5084617 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: April 1, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

March 31, 2015 Tuesday

New Mexico: Lujan Statement on DHS Funding

LENGTH: 193 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting for a clean bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through the end of the fiscal year.

"By finally joining Democrats in passing a full-year funding bill - a bill that House Republicans could have brought up for a vote anytime in the last three months - the Department of Homeland Security will now have the resources and certainty it needs.

"Since last year, Republicans' political games with stopgap funding bills have had a negative impact on the Department's ability to plan and allocate billions of dollars in grants that fund local emergency management programs that support first responders, such as firefighters and EMTs. DHS will now be able to move forward with these critical grants, but not before the American people learned that House Republicans are willing to put their political security ahead of America's national security."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 1, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

122 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

March 31, 2015 Tuesday

New Mexico: Lujan Statement on Women's History Month

LENGTH: 333 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on Women's History Month, which is celebrated during the month of March.

"Women's History Month is an opportunity to reflect on the contributions and achievements that women have made in every aspect of our society. As we celebrate the progress that has been made, we must continue to push for greater equality, not only for women today, but also for the next generations of women.

"We must continue to fight for fairness in the workplace and commit to policies that support women and their families. Women have an increasingly stronger presence in the workforce; however, a wage gap still exists with women only earning 78 cents for every dollar earned by men, and women of color earning even less. More and more women act as both caretakers and earners, making the issues of paycheck fairness and equal pay important to not just women, but to their families and our economy.

"Expanding educational opportunities for all Americans, including young women, is of critical importance, particularly when it comes to the fields of science, technology, engineering and math that are vital to our economic competitiveness. Women are underrepresented in the STEM fields despite the fact that many discoveries by women have pioneered modern technology and pushed the boundaries of what is possible in the pursuit of knowledge. Encouraging people to study STEM at an early age, especially young ladies, is critical to ensure that instead of just using the next great app, they will be the one to create it.

"This Women's History Month, let us celebrate all that women have accomplished and contributed while continuing to advocate for equality and greater opportunity, because when women succeed, America succeeds."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 1, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

New Mexico: Lujan Announces Congressional Art Competition for High School Students

LENGTH: 742 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced today details for this year's Congressional Art Competition. This annual competition allows members of Congress to display the talent and creativity of their high school constituents. The winning entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year. The winner will travel to Washington, D.C. for a reception honoring the national winners.

"The Congressional Art Competition gives New Mexico's young artists the opportunity to display their fine work and share their talents on the national stage," Congressman **Luján** said. "I look forward to seeing the creative work from the next generation of artists who will continue in the rich artistic tradition that has long been a part of New Mexico's heritage and culture."

The competition is open to all high school students within the Third Congressional District of New Mexico. All entries must be submitted to **Luján**'s Santa Fe district office by Tuesday, April 7, 2015 at 5 p.m. The winner will be announced at a reception on Saturday, April 11.

2015 3rd Congressional District of New Mexico General Guidelines for Students

A photo of each piece of artwork should be submitted with each piece of artwork (Rep. **Luján**'s office will take a photo of the artwork if the student is unable to produce a photo for submission).
A completed 2015 Congressional Art Competition Student Information and Release Form (signed by a parent or guardian if the student is under the age of 18), must be submitted with each piece of artwork.
Winner need not be present at the reception to win.
Recognition will be given to the top placing pieces of artwork, with the winning piece being displayed in Washington, D.C.
Artwork must be submitted for review and judging by Tuesday, April 7, 2015 at 5 p.m. to the Santa Fe office of Rep. **Luján**.

Attn: Eliza Sultan
1611 Calle Lorca Suite A
Santa Fe, NM 87505
(505) 984-8950

2015 Congressional General Guidelines for Students

The competition is open to high school students only. Exception may be made for schools that have 7th through 12th grades on one campus.
Artwork must be two-dimensional.
Each piece can be no larger than 28"x28"x4" (28 inches high, 28 inches wide, and 4 inches deep), including the frame. Artwork can be submitted to Rep. **Luján**'s office unframed. If the artwork is selected as the winning piece for display in D.C., it will be required to be framed and must adhere to the size guidelines. Rep.**Luján**'s office will work with the winner to have the winning piece framed.
Framed artwork cannot weigh more than 15 lbs.
Accepted media for artwork are as follows:
o Paintings: oil, acrylics, watercolor, etc.
o Drawings: pastels, colored pencils, pencil, charcoal, ink, markers
o Collages: must be two dimensional

o Prints: lithographs, silkscreen, block prints
o Mixed Media: use of more than two mediums such as pencil, ink, watercolor, etc.
o Computer-Generated art
o Photographs
Each entry must be original in concept, design, and execution and may not violate U.S. copyright laws. Any entry that has been copied from an existing photo or image that was created by someone other than the student is a violation of the competition rules and will not be accepted.
Work entered must be in the original medium (that is, not a scanned reproduction of a painting or drawing).
Artwork will hang in the Capitol for the entire year of the exhibition and cannot be returned to the students earlier. Students should, therefore, submit artwork they will not need for other purposes.
Artwork must adhere to the policy of the House Office Building Commission. In accordance with this policy, exhibits depicting subjects of contemporary political controversy or a sensationalistic or gruesome nature are not allowed. It is necessary that all artwork be reviewed by the panel chaired by the Architect of the Capitol and any portion not in consonance with the Commission's policy will be omitted from the exhibit. The panel will make the final decision regarding the suitability of all artwork for the Congressional Art Competition exhibition in the Capitol.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 1, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

March 31, 2015 Tuesday

New Mexico: Lujan Statement on DHS Funding

LENGTH: 193 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting for a clean bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through the end of the fiscal year.

"By finally joining Democrats in passing a full-year funding bill - a bill that House Republicans could have brought up for a vote anytime in the last three months - the Department of Homeland Security will now have the resources and certainty it needs.

"Since last year, Republicans' political games with stopgap funding bills have had a negative impact on the Department's ability to plan and allocate billions of dollars in grants that fund local emergency management programs that support first responders, such as firefighters and EMTs. DHS will now be able to move forward with these critical grants, but not before the American people learned that House Republicans are willing to put their political security ahead of America's national security."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

125 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

March 31, 2015 Tuesday

New Mexico: Lujan Statement on Women's History Month

LENGTH: 333 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on Women's History Month, which is celebrated during the month of March.

"Women's History Month is an opportunity to reflect on the contributions and achievements that women have made in every aspect of our society. As we celebrate the progress that has been made, we must continue to push for greater equality, not only for women today, but also for the next generations of women.

"We must continue to fight for fairness in the workplace and commit to policies that support women and their families. Women have an increasingly stronger presence in the workforce; however, a wage gap still exists with women only earning 78 cents for every dollar earned by men, and women of color earning even less. More and more women act as both caretakers and earners, making the

issues of paycheck fairness and equal pay important to not just women, but to their families and our economy.

"Expanding educational opportunities for all Americans, including young women, is of critical importance, particularly when it comes to the fields of science, technology, engineering and math that are vital to our economic competitiveness. Women are underrepresented in the STEM fields despite the fact that many discoveries by women have pioneered modern technology and pushed the boundaries of what is possible in the pursuit of knowledge. Encouraging people to study STEM at an early age, especially young ladies, is critical to ensure that instead of just using the next great app, they will be the one to create it.

"This Women's History Month, let us celebrate all that women have accomplished and contributed while continuing to advocate for equality and greater opportunity, because when women succeed, America succeeds."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

126 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

March 31, 2015 Tuesday

New Mexico: Lujan Announces Congressional Art Competition for High School Students

LENGTH: 742 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced today details for this year's Congressional Art Competition. This annual competition allows members of Congress to display the talent and creativity of their high school constituents. The winning entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year. The winner will travel to Washington, D.C. for a reception honoring the national winners.

"The Congressional Art Competition gives New Mexico's young artists the opportunity to display their fine work and share their talents on the national stage," Congressman **Luján** said. "I look forward to

seeing the creative work from the next generation of artists who will continue in the rich artistic tradition that has long been a part of New Mexico's heritage and culture."

The competition is open to all high school students within the Third Congressional District of New Mexico. All entries must be submitted to **Luján**'s Santa Fe district office by Tuesday, April 7, 2015 at 5 p.m. The winner will be announced at a reception on Saturday, April 11.

2015 3rd Congressional District of New Mexico General Guidelines for Students

A photo of each piece of artwork should be submitted with each piece of artwork (Rep. **Luján**'s office will take a photo of the artwork if the student is unable to produce a photo for submission).
A completed 2015 Congressional Art Competition Student Information and Release Form (signed by a parent or guardian if the student is under the age of 18), must be submitted with each piece of artwork.
Winner need not be present at the reception to win.
Recognition will be given to the top placing pieces of artwork, with the winning piece being displayed in Washington, D.C.
Artwork must be submitted for review and judging by Tuesday, April 7, 2015 at 5 p.m. to the Santa Fe office of Rep. **Luján**.

Attn: Eliza Sultan
1611 Calle Lorca Suite A
Santa Fe, NM 87505
(505) 984-8950

2015 Congressional General Guidelines for Students

The competition is open to high school students only. Exception may be made for schools that have 7th through 12th grades on one campus.
Artwork must be two-dimensional.
Each piece can be no larger than 28"x28"x4" (28 inches high, 28 inches wide, and 4 inches deep), including the frame. Artwork can be submitted to Rep. **Luján**'s office unframed. If the artwork is selected as the winning piece for display in D.C., it will be required to be framed and must adhere to the size guidelines. Rep.**Luján**'s office will work with the winner to have the winning piece framed.
Framed artwork cannot weigh more than 15 lbs.
Accepted media for artwork are as follows:
o Paintings: oil, acrylics, watercolor, etc.
o Drawings: pastels, colored pencils, pencil, charcoal, ink, markers
o Collages: must be two dimensional
o Prints: lithographs, silkscreen, block prints
o Mixed Media: use of more than two mediums such as pencil, ink, watercolor, etc.
o Computer-Generated art
o Photographs
Each entry must be original in concept, design, and execution and may not violate U.S. copyright laws. Any entry that has been copied from an existing photo or image that was created by someone other than the student is a violation of the competition rules and will not be accepted.
Work entered must be in the original medium (that is, not a scanned reproduction of a painting or drawing).
Artwork will hang in the Capitol for the entire year of the exhibition and cannot be returned to the students earlier. Students should, therefore, submit artwork they will not need for other purposes.
Artwork must adhere to the policy of the House Office Building Commission. In accordance with this policy, exhibits depicting subjects of contemporary political controversy or a sensationalistic or gruesome nature are not allowed. It is necessary that all artwork be reviewed by the panel chaired by the Architect of the Capitol and any portion not in consonance with the Commission's policy will be omitted from the exhibit. The panel will make the final decision regarding the suitability of all artwork for the Congressional Art Competition exhibition in the Capitol.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 30, 2015

LUJAN PRESENTS MEDALS TO NAVY VETERAN GUS KEENE IN GALLUP;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 318 words

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** pins a medal on Gus Keene at a ceremony in Gallup this morning. **Lujan** helped secure the medals Mr. Keene earned through his service in the U.S. Navy.

Gallup, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District awarded a number of medals to Navy veteran Gus Keene this morning at a ceremony in Gallup. He was joined by Commander Dave Cuellar, U.S. Navy (Ret.), founder of Veterans Helping Veterans.

A native of Acoma Pueblo, Gus Keene was drafted into the Navy in 1965 from Tuba City, Arizona. After completing boot camp in Long Beach, California, Mr. Keene was stationed aboard the USS Bennington and completed several combat tours with the 7th Fleet during the Vietnam War. During one of his tours, Mr. Keene and the USS Bennington responded to aid the USS Pueblo when it was captured by North Korean ships.

When Mr. Keene completed his service, he was not informed of his eligibility for a number of medals. When he realized that his time and efforts in the Navy had earned him these medals, he contacted Congressman **Lujan's** office for help.

"Mr. Keene bravely served his country and has added to New Mexico's proud legacy of military service," said Congressman **Lujan**. "I am honored that we had the opportunity to assist Mr. Keene and ensure that he received the medals and the thanks he earned."

"I want to thank the Congressman for all his hard work," said Mr. Keene. "It's great to finally get the honor we as veterans all deserve."

Congressman **Lujan** and his staff worked on behalf of Mr. Keene to obtain the following medals that he earned for his brave military service prior to his Honorable Discharge in 1969:

* National Defense Medal

* Vietnam Service Medal with a Silver Star

* Meritorious Unit Commendation Ribbon with a Bronze Star

* Good Conduct Medal

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-presents-medals-to-navy-veteran-gus-keene-in-gallup/

LOAD-DATE: March 31, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

March 30, 2015 Monday 9:50 PM EST

Lujan Presents Medals to Navy Veteran Gus Keene in Gallup

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 290 words

DATELINE: GALLUP, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District awarded a number of medals to Navy veteran Gus Keene this morning at a ceremony in Gallup. He was joined by Commander Dave Cuellar, U.S. Navy (Ret.), founder of Veterans Helping Veterans.

A native of Acoma Pueblo, Gus Keene was drafted into the Navy in 1965 from Tuba City, Arizona. After completing boot camp in Long Beach, California, Mr. Keene was stationed aboard the USS Bennington and completed several combat tours with the 7th Fleet during the Vietnam War. During one of his tours, Mr. Keene and the USS Bennington responded to aid the USS Pueblo when it was captured by North Korean ships.

When Mr. Keene completed his service, he was not informed of his eligibility for a number of medals. When he realized that his time and efforts in the Navy had earned him these medals, he contacted Congressman **Lujan's** office for help.

"Mr. Keene bravely served his country and has added to New Mexico's proud legacy of military service," said Congressman **Lujan**. "I am honored that we had the opportunity to assist Mr. Keene and ensure that he received the medals and the thanks he earned."

"I want to thank the Congressman for all his hard work," said Mr. Keene. "It's great to finally get the honor we as veterans all deserve."

Congressman **Lujan** and his staff worked on behalf of Mr. Keene to obtain the following medals that he earned for his brave military service prior to his Honorable Discharge in 1969:

* National Defense Medal

* Vietnam Service Medal with a Silver Star

* Meritorious Unit Commendation Ribbon with a Bronze Star

* Good Conduct Medal

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150331-5081981 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: March 30, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

March 28, 2015 Saturday

House moves to protect doctors' Medicare payments; Bill may add $500B to national debt

BYLINE: Copyright © 2015 Albuquerque Journal BY MICHAEL COLEMAN JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 468 words

WASHINGTON - In a rare display of bipartisanship, all three of New Mexico's U.S. House members this week voted to reform the federal payment system for Medicare providers and renew a health insurance program for children.

The legislation, which passed the House 392-37 but still needs Senate approval, aims to overhaul the Medicare pricing system for physicians - a long-sought goal of Congress and the health care industry.

The legislation would likely raise premiums for some Medicare recipients and also would extend the State Children's Health Insurance Program - or S-CHIP - by two years instead of the four years Democrats had sought.

The non-partisan Center for Budget Priorities on Friday estimated that the bill would add $500 billion to the national debt over the next two decades. Only about one-third, or $70 billion, of the new spending would be offset through a combination of provider reductions, increased means-testing of Medicare premiums and other minor reforms, according to the Center.

The bill would repeal the so-called Medicare Sustainable Growth Rate formula and replace it with a formula that provides stability for Medicare physician payments by raising reimbursements by 0.5 percent a year for five years.

The bill "is a critical first step that will help provide seniors with access to quality health care, while ensuring doctors will be able to continue serving them within the Medicare program," said Rep. Steve Pearce, the New Mexico delegation's lone Republican. "This is not a perfect bill, but it is a course correction."

The Medicare payment system originates from a 1997 law that tied physician payments to the growth of the economy. But doctors faced double-digit reimbursement cuts as health care costs grew faster than the economy - leaving Congress to step in most years with a temporary fix to block the formula from working.

If President Barack Obama doesn't sign the bill into law by Tuesday, a 21 percent cut in Medicare payments would go into effect.

"I am proud to support a bipartisan compromise that ensures seniors will continue to have access to the doctors they know and trust," said Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., noted the bill also contains money for community health centers.

"While not perfect, this legislation represents a compromise that on the whole makes much-needed progress in ensuring access to health care for our children and seniors," he said.

A spokeswoman for Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., said the senator "would very much like to resolve the Medicare doctors' payments once and for all" but he also prefers more than two years of S-CHIP funding in the bill. He has not yet determined his position on the House bill, she said.

A spokeswoman for Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., said the senator was still evaluating the bill.

LOAD-DATE: March 30, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Albuquerque Journal

US Official News

March 28, 2015 Saturday

Lujan: House Republican Budget Stands in Stark Contrast to Democrats' Efforts to Support Hard-Working Families

LENGTH: 295 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting against House Republicans' budget for Fiscal Year 2016.

"A budget is a statement of values, and the contrast between the House Republican budget that puts special interests first and the House Democratic budget that invests in growing the middle class could not be clearer. House Republicans provide tax breaks to billionaires, yet shortchange investments in early education that are vital to our children's future and infrastructure that are essential to putting more New Mexicans to work. House Democrats invest in job training programs, education at every level, and clean energy - critical components for strengthening our nation's competitiveness and building a stronger economy that creates more jobs and opportunities for the people of New Mexico.

"Once again, House Republicans call for the end of Medicare as we know it by replacing it with a voucher that fails to cover the cost of health care for New Mexico's seniors, leaving them to pay higher out-of-pocket costs. At a time when New Mexico ranks near the top in child hunger, the Republican budget lays the foundation for cuts to nutrition programs that help families put food on the table during difficult times.

"While I may not agree with every provision in each alternative Democratic budget, they all stand in stark contrast to the Republican plan by supporting hard-working families through investments in infrastructure, affordable college education, and growing paychecks."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: March 29, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

March 28, 2015 Saturday

Lujan: House Republican Budget Stands in Stark Contrast to Democrats' Efforts to Support Hard-Working Families

LENGTH: 295 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting against House Republicans' budget for Fiscal Year 2016.

"A budget is a statement of values, and the contrast between the House Republican budget that puts special interests first and the House Democratic budget that invests in growing the middle class could not be clearer. House Republicans provide tax breaks to billionaires, yet shortchange investments in early education that are vital to our children's future and infrastructure that are essential to putting more New Mexicans to work. House Democrats invest in job training programs, education at every level, and clean energy - critical components for strengthening our nation's competitiveness and building a stronger economy that creates more jobs and opportunities for the people of New Mexico.

"Once again, House Republicans call for the end of Medicare as we know it by replacing it with a voucher that fails to cover the cost of health care for New Mexico's seniors, leaving them to pay higher out-of-pocket costs. At a time when New Mexico ranks near the top in child hunger, the Republican budget lays the foundation for cuts to nutrition programs that help families put food on the table during difficult times.

"While I may not agree with every provision in each alternative Democratic budget, they all stand in stark contrast to the Republican plan by supporting hard-working families through investments in infrastructure, affordable college education, and growing paychecks."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

The Texas Tribune

March 27, 2015

Former Congressman's Son Mulls Challenging Farenthold.

SECTION: ISSN: 0897-2710

LENGTH: 800 words

To read more, click here:
http://www.texastribune.org/2015/03/27/ex-congressmans-son-mulls-challenging-farenthold/?utm_

WASHINGTON - U.S.
Rep. Blake Farenthold
could face a familiar name when he's up for re-election in his Gulf Coast-area district.

Former state Rep.
Solomon Ortiz
Jr. - the son of former U.S. Rep.
Solomon P. Ortiz
Sr., whom Farenthold defeated in 2010 - said he's weighing a 2016 challenge against the Repub

"I think a race for office is something that takes a lot of prayer and meditation and thou
obviously, I'm considering it."

Democrats say that amid a former spokeswoman's allegations of sexual harassment against Fa
the Corpus Christi
congressman. Farenthold
has denied the charges.

Ortiz said he recently traveled to Washington, D.C., to meet with New Mexico Rep. **Ben Ray**
arm of the House Democrats.

Besides **Lujan**, Ortiz has discussed a possible run with his father.

"He was the guy here in South Texas who broke down barriers," the younger Ortiz said of hi

And the topic has come up in conversations with some Texas House colleagues: U.S. Reps.

Marc Veasey
of Fort Worth and
Joaquin Castro
of San Antonio.

The elder Ortiz's loss to Farenthold in the 2010 Republican wave election was particularly
Democratic seat, but Farenthold defeated him by 775 votes.

Ortiz Jr. lost his Texas House re-election bid that same year.

Should he run, Ortiz would benefit from his father's name recognition. But this will not b
the district more strongly Republican during the 2011 redistricting.

Farenthold's re-election totals subsequently jumped, to 57 percent in 2012 and 64 percent

In regard to the legal issues and unflattering press coverage about Farenthold, Ortiz said
terms of what they think."

"When you have these clouds hanging over your head, it limits your ability to govern and b
better."

Farenthold spokesman Kurt Bardella dismissed Ortiz's comments and the allegations.

"The district deserves representatives who will defend their right to know what this gover
someone trying to score cheap political points by using the specter of false allegations as c

Lujan's DCCC predecessor, Rep. Steve Israel of New York, ran a committee that frequently c

would have little competition for the nomination.

At least one prominent local Democrat, Corpus Christi Mayor Nelda Martinez, told the Tribu

Speculation about a Farenthold-Ortiz Jr. faceoff is nothing new. Almost the same scenario mulled a run to The Dallas Morning News.

Ortiz's tone is more committal this time around. And Democrats anticipate an easier time r presidential election years.

Ortiz stressed repeatedly in his interview with the Tribune that beyond Democrats, Republi

"You want good government, and Blake Farenthold does not deliver that," he said.

Bardella answered that criticism by touching on issues that play well with the conservativ

"Good government is getting to the bottom of what happened in Benghazi, stopping the IRS f lawlessness," Bardella wrote. "Apparently, Mr. Ortiz has a very different definition of what

Looking ahead, Ortiz said he fully understands the Republican nature of the district, but

"It's obviously a district drawn intentionally to retain a Republican seat, but that doesn

LOAD-DATE: March 31, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 407183579

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

JOURNAL-CODE: 3QUI ASAP

Copyright 2015 Gale Group, Inc.
All Rights Reserved
ASAP
Copyright 2015 The Texas Tribune

133 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 26, 2015

LUJAN VOTES TO PROTECT SENIORS' ACCESS TO THEIR DOCTOR AND EXTEND HEALTH CARE FOR CHILDREN; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 231 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted today in support of the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act, bipartisan legislation to protect seniors' access to doctors through Medicare.

"Year after year for more than a decade, Congress has passed short-term fixes to a flawed system in order to prevent seniors on Medicare from losing access to the doctors they trust. Time and again, rather than enacting a stable payment system for doctors, Congress has kicked the can down the

road. Finally, a bipartisan effort has led to a compromise to permanently ensure seniors' can continue to see their doctor.

"This legislation combines needed reforms in the way we reimburse doctors through Medicare to promote quality care with a vital extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program that prevents 2 million children from becoming uninsured. In addition, it provides critical funding for community health centers that play a significant role in the effort to expand access to affordable health care in New Mexico.

"While not perfect, this legislation represents a compromise that on the whole makes much-needed progress in ensuring access to health care for our children and seniors."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-votes-to-protect-seniors-access-to-their-doctor-and-extend-health-care-for-children/

LOAD-DATE: March 27, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 26, 2015

NM DELEGATION RESPONDS TO REPORT BY WIPP TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT TEAM; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 259 words

WASHINGTON - Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce and **Ben Ray Lujan** issued the following joint statement on the report by the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Technical Assessment Team, analyzing the scientific cause of the drum failure that led to the Feb. 14, 2014, radiological incident at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP).

"Today's report answers some of the questions about what led to the radiological release at WIPP on Feb. 14, 2014. We thank the scientists, including experts from Sandia Labs, for their work, which was done in coordination with the analysis by DOE's Accident Investigation Board.

"The Technical Assessment Team concluded that the release was caused by a chemical reaction with some incompatible materials that were added to one specific drum. We look forward to reviewing the recommendations of the Accident Investigation Board report in the coming weeks. Similarly, New

Mexico Tech will soon begin a peer review of the Technical Assessment Team work, which will provide an independent second look at the science and causes of the release. The multiple layers of assessment are another step in the process of reopening WIPP and ensuring the continued safety of both WIPP and Los Alamos National Lab.

"In the meantime, we will continue doing everything we can to ensure resources are available to resume cleanup at Los Alamos and safely reopen WIPP."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/nm-delegation-responds-to-report-by-wipp-technical-assessment-team/

LOAD-DATE: March 27, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

135 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

March 26, 2015 Thursday 9:08 AM EST

Lujan Votes to Protect Seniors' Access to Their Doctor and Extend Health Care for Children

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 224 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted today in support of the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act, bipartisan legislation to protect seniors' access to doctors through Medicare.

"Year after year for more than a decade, Congress has passed short-term fixes to a flawed system in order to prevent seniors on Medicare from losing access to the doctors they trust. Time and again, rather than enacting a stable payment system for doctors, Congress has kicked the can down the road. Finally, a bipartisan effort has led to a compromise to permanently ensure seniors' can continue to see their doctor.

"This legislation combines needed reforms in the way we reimburse doctors through Medicare to promote quality care with a vital extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program that prevents 2 million children from becoming uninsured. In addition, it provides critical funding for community

health centers that play a significant role in the effort to expand access to affordable health care in New Mexico.

"While not perfect, this legislation represents a compromise that on the whole makes much-needed progress in ensuring access to health care for our children and seniors."

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150327-5079666 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: March 27, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

136 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

March 26, 2015 Thursday

N.M. Delegation Encourages Department of Defense to Support UNM's Proposal to Create National Institute of Photonics

LENGTH: 563 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Martin Heinrich, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced that they are urging the Department of Defense to select a proposal led by a team that includes the University of New Mexico in a competition to create a national photonics hub. The team, a collaboration of academic institutions from New Mexico and three other states, was named a finalist earlier this year. If selected, it will receive federal funding and support and become part of a network of regional manufacturing institutes or "hubs" across the country that help bridge the gap between applied research and product development. The hub would spur the development of cutting-edge technology and create high-tech jobs in the Albuquerque area.

The New Mexico congressional delegation has strongly supported the UNM team's application, which would establish the first such manufacturing hub west of the Mississippi as part of the Integrated Photonics Institute for Manufacturing Innovation (IP-IMI) program. Photonics technologies are used in robotics, medical imaging, next-generation displays, defense, biometric security and many other fields. The group could receive $110 million in federal grant matching funds to develop a partnership between industry, government and academia to accelerate the creation of new photonics

technologies. UNM would serve as the lead sensing hub, focusing on the development of integrated phonic sensors for chem-bio sensing.

In a letter to Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter, all five members of New Mexico's congressional delegation expressed their strong support for the proposal.

"This team will bring together government, industry and academia to develop this manufacturing ecosystem here in the U.S. They have broad talents and proven track records in microelectronics and chip packaging, as well as significant expertise in world-class photonics manufacturing," the letter reads. "New Mexico's unique capabilities in Mid Infrared photonic systems have served our DOD and commercial industries for decades. UNM will stand up the New Mexico Hub on Sensing-Integrated Manufacturing for Mid-infrared Photonic Applications Technology (IMMPACT) which will work toward self-sufficiency."

"The U.S. photonics industry currently supports more than 100,000 high-paying jobs, a number that could double within the next decade as new photonic-electronic chips find their way into products and technologies across many industries," the letter continues. "The combined team's established research and development in critical areas of this technology, coupled with its electronics and photonics packaging expertise, will build a pipeline of innovation and talent for this high-tech industry."

The UNM team is led by the Information Science Institute at the University of Southern California and also includes the University of California system schools in Los Angeles, San Diego and Berkeley; Arizona State University; and Ohio State University. The team is competing against two others based in New York and Florida. Full and final applications are due by March 31, and the final selection is expected in June 2015.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: March 26, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 25, 2015

LUJAN STATEMENT ON THE DEATH OF MAYOR GEORGE GONZALES; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 232 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement on the death of former Santa Fe Mayor George Gonzales, who passed away last night.

"Last night we lost a great New Mexico leader from the Santa Fe community whose contributions extended from his efforts in City Hall to his daily work on the airwaves. George Gonzales loved Santa Fe and its people and sought to build a stronger community through his passion for service and music.

"Beginning in his early years as a singer-songwriter, his deep interest in music guided him through life, leading him to own local Santa Fe radio stations. His familiar voice informed, uplifted, and enriched all those who tuned in to listen to his daily messages celebrating a birthday, an anniversary, or the memory of lost loved one.

"George Gonzales' love to help people was only exceeded by his love for his family. While we say goodbye to Mr. Gonzales, his legacy lives on in his children who have followed in his footsteps. Mr. Gonzales will be greatly missed, but their good work ensures that his memory lives on. My thoughts and prayers are with the Gonzales family during this sad time, and on behalf of the **Lujan** family, I express our sincere condolences for their loss."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-the-death-of-mayor-george-gonzales/

LOAD-DATE: March 26, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 25, 2015

LUJAN: HOUSE REPUBLICAN BUDGET STANDS IN STARK CONTRAST TO DEMOCRATS' EFFORTS TO SUPPORT HARD-WORKING FAMILIES;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 291 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting against House Republicans' budget for Fiscal Year 2016.

"A budget is a statement of values, and the contrast between the House Republican budget that puts special interests first and the House Democratic budget that invests in growing the middle class could not be clearer. House Republicans provide tax breaks to billionaires, yet shortchange investments in early education that are vital to our children's future and infrastructure that are essential to putting more New Mexicans to work. House Democrats invest in job training programs, education at every level, and clean energy - critical components for strengthening our nation's competitiveness and building a stronger economy that creates more jobs and opportunities for the people of New Mexico.

"Once again, House Republicans call for the end of Medicare as we know it by replacing it with a voucher that fails to cover the cost of health care for New Mexico's seniors, leaving them to pay higher out-of-pocket costs. At a time when New Mexico ranks near the top in child hunger, the Republican budget lays the foundation for cuts to nutrition programs that help families put food on the table during difficult times.

"While I may not agree with every provision in each alternative Democratic budget, they all stand in stark contrast to the Republican plan by supporting hard-working families through investments in infrastructure, affordable college education, and growing paychecks."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-house-republican-budget-stands-in-stark-contrast-to-democrats-efforts-to-support-hardworking-families/

LOAD-DATE: March 26, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 25, 2015

LUJAN: VA CHANGE TO 40-MILE RULE A COMMONSENSE STEP FORWARD TO BETTER MEET THE NEEDS OF NEW MEXICO VETERANS;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 279 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted a recent decision by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to modify a rule that determines eligibility for the Veterans Choice Program. Under the current version, veterans are eligible to seek care for a doctor outside the VA system if they are more than 40 miles away from a VA facility "as the crow

flies." The announced change will measure driving distance, enabling more veterans to receive care closer to home.

"In rural communities across New Mexico, veterans have had to travel great distances to receive the care they have earned with their brave service. Under the Veterans Choice Program, Congress took an important step to make it easier for them to receive care closer to their own communities," Congressman **Lujan** said. "As we know in New Mexico, the path between two points is not always a straight line; it's through mountain passes and valleys. The announced change to this rule is a commonsense step to reflect the realities we face in rural communities, to better meet the needs of New Mexico's veterans and to better follow the intent of the law."

The Veterans Choice Program was created as part of the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act, which passed with **Lujan's** support last July. The law provides key funding to reduce the VA backlog, hire new medical personnel at VA hospitals and clinics, and allow the VA to lease new medical facilities.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-va-change-to-40mile-rule-a-commonsense-step-forward-to-better-meet-the-needs-of-new-mexico-veterans/

LOAD-DATE: March 26, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 25, 2015

N.M. Delegation Encourages Department of Defense to Support UNM's Proposal to Create National Institute of Photonics; Initiative will create jobs, build on N.M.'s unique expertise in optics and photonics, delegation says in letter to Defense Secretary;
Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 1138 words

WASHINGTON - Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced that they are urging the Department of Defense to select a proposal led by a team that includes the University of New Mexico in a competition to create a national photonics hub. The team, a collaboration of academic institutions from New Mexico

and three other states, was named a finalist earlier this year. If selected, it will receive federal funding and support and become part of a network of regional manufacturing institutes or "hubs" across the country that help bridge the gap between applied research and product development. The hub would spur the development of cutting-edge technology and create high-tech jobs in the Albuquerque area.

The New Mexico congressional delegation has strongly supported the UNM team's application, which would establish the first such manufacturing hub west of the Mississippi as part of the Integrated Photonics Institute for Manufacturing Innovation (IP-IMI) program. Photonics technologies are used in robotics, medical imaging, next-generation displays, defense, biometric security and many other fields. The group could receive $110 million in federal grant matching funds to develop a partnership between industry, government and academia to accelerate the creation of new photonics technologies. UNM would serve as the lead sensing hub, focusing on the development of integrated phonic sensors for chem-bio sensing.

In a letter to Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter, all five members of New Mexico's congressional delegation expressed their strong support for the proposal.

"This team will bring together government, industry and academia to develop this manufacturing ecosystem here in the U.S. They have broad talents and proven track records in microelectronics and chip packaging, as well as significant expertise in world-class photonics manufacturing," the letter reads. "New Mexico's unique capabilities in Mid Infrared photonic systems have served our DOD and commercial industries for decades. UNM will stand up the New Mexico Hub on Sensing-Integrated Manufacturing for Mid-infrared Photonic Applications Technology (IMMPACT) which will work toward self-sufficiency."

"The U.S. photonics industry currently supports more than 100,000 high-paying jobs, a number that could double within the next decade as new photonic-electronic chips find their way into products and technologies across many industries," the letter continues. "The combined team's established research and development in critical areas of this technology, coupled with its electronics and photonics packaging expertise, will build a pipeline of innovation and talent for this high-tech industry."

The UNM team is led by the Information Science Institute at the University of Southern California and also includes the University of California system schools in Los Angeles, San Diego and Berkeley; Arizona State University; and Ohio State University. The team is competing against two others based in New York and Florida. Full and final applications are due by March 31, and the final selection is expected in June 2015.

The full text of the letter is HERE https://www.scribd.com/doc/259949086/N-M-Delegation-Encourages-Department-of-Defense-to-Support-UNM-s-Proposal-to-Create-National-Institute-of-Photonics and below:

The Honorable Ashton B. Carter

Secretary

U.S. Department of Defense

1000 Defense Pentagon

Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Carter:

We are writing to express our strong support for the proposal submitted by the University of Southern California's (USC) Information Sciences Institute (ISI) Team to establish a new Integrated Photonics Institute for Manufacturing Innovation (IP-IMI).

USC ISI and its partners at University of New Mexico (UNM), the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA), the University of California-Berkeley (UCB), the University of California-San Diego (UCSD), Arizona State University, and the Ohio State University, as well as numerous industry partners, will establish a reliable photonics manufacturing capability to serve both our Department of Defense (DOD) and commercial markets. Ultimately, the USC IP-IMI will be an end-to-end integrated photonics manufacturing "ecosystem."

This team will bring together government, industry and academia to develop this manufacturing ecosystem here in the U.S. They have broad talents and proven track records in microelectronics and chip packaging, as well as significant expertise in world-class photonics manufacturing. They also can leverage complementary expertise in serving commercial and DOD industries, a key to the success of the IP-IMI initiative. New Mexico's unique capabilities in Mid Infrared photonic systems have served our DOD and commercial industries for decades. UNM will stand up the New Mexico Hub on Sensing - Integrated Manufacturing for Mid-infrared Photonic Applications Technology (IMMPACT) which will work toward self-sufficiency.

New Mexico has a long history of innovation and collaboration in the development and deployment of DOD technologies, as well as Department of Energy (DOE) programs. Our state is home to Sandia National Laboratories, Los Alamos National Laboratory, and the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL). We have nationally-recognized programs in workforce education and training at the UNM and Central New Mexico Community College. UNM, Sandia, Los Alamos and AFRL also have strong relations with a wide network of small to medium sized manufacturers, as well as the major industrial companies involved in photonics research and applications. New Mexico also has the New Mexico Optics Industry Association (nmOptics), a non-profit association recognized by the International Society for Optics and Photonics (SPIE) as an industry leader which promotes the growth of the optics and photonics industry in our state.

The U.S. photonics industry currently supports more than 100,000 high-paying jobs, a number that could double within the next decade as new photonic-electronic chips find their way into products and technologies across many industries. The combined team's established research and development in critical areas of this technology, coupled with its electronics and photonics packaging expertise, will build a pipeline of innovation and talent for this high-tech industry.

We believe that the USC ISI proposal has merit, and we urge you to give it thoughtful consideration. Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,

Tom Udall, United States Senator

Martin Heinrich, United States Senator

Stevan Pearce, United States Representative

Ben Ray Lujan, United States Representative

Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, United States Representative

Read this original document at: http://www.tomudall.senate.gov/?p=press_releaseandid=1902

LOAD-DATE: March 26, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

March 25, 2015 Wednesday 10:00 AM EST

Lujan: House Republican Budget Stands in Stark Contrast to Democrats' Efforts to Support Hard-Working Families

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 281 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting against House Republicans' budget for Fiscal Year 2016.

"A budget is a statement of values, and the contrast between the House Republican budget that puts special interests first and the House Democratic budget that invests in growing the middle class could not be clearer. House Republicans provide tax breaks to billionaires, yet shortchange investments in early education that are vital to our children's future and infrastructure that are essential to putting more New Mexicans to work. House Democrats invest in job training programs, education at every level, and clean energy - critical components for strengthening our nation's competitiveness and building a stronger economy that creates more jobs and opportunities for the people of New Mexico.

"Once again, House Republicans call for the end of Medicare as we know it by replacing it with a voucher that fails to cover the cost of health care for New Mexico's seniors, leaving them to pay higher out-of-pocket costs. At a time when New Mexico ranks near the top in child hunger, the Republican budget lays the foundation for cuts to nutrition programs that help families put food on the table during difficult times.

"While I may not agree with every provision in each alternative Democratic budget, they all stand in stark contrast to the Republican plan by supporting hard-working families through investments in infrastructure, affordable college education, and growing paychecks."

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150326-5077643 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: March 27, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

March 25, 2015 Wednesday 9:59 AM EST

Lujan Statement on the Death of Mayor George Gonzales

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 231 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement on the death of former Santa Fe Mayor George Gonzales, who passed away last night.

"Last night we lost a great New Mexico leader from the Santa Fe community whose contributions extended from his efforts in City Hall to his daily work on the airwaves. George Gonzales loved Santa Fe and its people and sought to build a stronger community through his passion for service and music.

"Beginning in his early years as a singer-songwriter, his deep interest in music guided him through life, leading him to own local Santa Fe radio stations. His familiar voice informed, uplifted, and enriched all those who tuned in to listen to his daily messages celebrating a birthday, an anniversary, or the memory of lost loved one.

"George Gonzales' love to help people was only exceeded by his love for his family. While we say goodbye to Mr. Gonzales, his legacy lives on in his children who have followed in his footsteps. Mr. Gonzales will be greatly missed, but their good work ensures that his memory lives on. My thoughts and prayers are with the Gonzales family during this sad time, and on behalf of the **Lujan** family, I express our sincere condolences for their loss."

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150326-5077642 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: March 27, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

March 25, 2015 Wednesday 3:25 AM EST

Lujan: VA Change to 40-Mile Rule a Commonsense Step Forward to Better Meet the Needs of New Mexico Veterans

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 269 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted a recent decision by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to modify a rule that determines eligibility for the Veterans Choice Program. Under the current version, veterans are eligible to seek care for a doctor outside the VA system if they are more than 40 miles away from a VA facility "as the crow flies." The announced change will measure driving distance, enabling more veterans to receive care closer to home.

"In rural communities across New Mexico, veterans have had to travel great distances to receive the care they have earned with their brave service. Under the Veterans Choice Program, Congress took an important step to make it easier for them to receive care closer to their own communities," Congressman **Lujan** said. "As we know in New Mexico, the path between two points is not always a straight line; it's through mountain passes and valleys. The announced change to this rule is a commonsense step to reflect the realities we face in rural communities, to better meet the needs of New Mexico's veterans and to better follow the intent of the law."

The Veterans Choice Program was created as part of the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act, which passed with **Lujan's** support last July. The law provides key funding to reduce the VA backlog, hire new medical personnel at VA hospitals and clinics, and allow the VA to lease new medical facilities.

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150326-5077129 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: March 27, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

March 25, 2015 Wednesday

Lujan Statement on Fifth Anniversary of the Affordable Care Act

LENGTH: 250 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the fifth anniversary of the Affordable Care Act being signed into law.

"The Affordable Care Act is working, and it is having a real impact on the lives of the people of New Mexico. For too long, New Mexico has ranked high on the list of the uninsured. As a result of the Affordable Care Act, the number of uninsured New Mexicans has started to fall, decreasing by nearly 5 percent. This means that thousands of families are no longer one accident or illness away from financial ruin.

"Five years after the ACA was signed into law, more than 16 million Americans who did not have health coverage now do. In addition, 129 million Americans have the peace of mind of knowing that they will not be dropped from their plan or discriminated against because of a pre-existing condition. Seniors are saving money on their prescription medicine, women can no longer be charged more just for being a woman, and no New Mexican has to fear hitting a lifetime limit on their health coverage.

"Moving forward, Congress should work in a bipartisan effort to strengthen the law and make improvements that will further lower costs and increase access to care for New Mexicans and the American people."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 8, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

March 25, 2015 Wednesday

Lujan Statement on the Death of Mayor George Gonzales

LENGTH: 245 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement on the death of former Santa Fe Mayor George Gonzales, who passed away last night.

"Last night we lost a great New Mexico leader from the Santa Fe community whose contributions extended from his efforts in City Hall to his daily work on the airwaves. George Gonzales loved Santa Fe and its people and sought to build a stronger community through his passion for service and music.

"Beginning in his early years as a singer-songwriter, his deep interest in music guided him through life, leading him to own local Santa Fe radio stations. His familiar voice informed, uplifted, and enriched all those who tuned in to listen to his daily messages celebrating a birthday, an anniversary, or the memory of lost loved one.

"George Gonzales' love to help people was only exceeded by his love for his family. While we say goodbye to Mr. Gonzales, his legacy lives on in his children who have followed in his footsteps. Mr. Gonzales will be greatly missed, but their good work ensures that his memory lives on. My thoughts and prayers are with the Gonzales family during this sad time, and on behalf of the **Luján** family, I express our sincere condolences for their loss."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: March 26, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Lujan Statement on Fifth Anniversary of the Affordable Care Act

LENGTH: 250 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the fifth anniversary of the Affordable Care Act being signed into law.

"The Affordable Care Act is working, and it is having a real impact on the lives of the people of New Mexico. For too long, New Mexico has ranked high on the list of the uninsured. As a result of the Affordable Care Act, the number of uninsured New Mexicans has started to fall, decreasing by nearly 5 percent. This means that thousands of families are no longer one accident or illness away from financial ruin.

"Five years after the ACA was signed into law, more than 16 million Americans who did not have health coverage now do. In addition, 129 million Americans have the peace of mind of knowing that they will not be dropped from their plan or discriminated against because of a pre-existing condition. Seniors are saving money on their prescription medicine, women can no longer be charged more just for being a woman, and no New Mexican has to fear hitting a lifetime limit on their health coverage.

"Moving forward, Congress should work in a bipartisan effort to strengthen the law and make improvements that will further lower costs and increase access to care for New Mexicans and the American people."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: March 26, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

147 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

March 24, 2015 Tuesday

Transcript of Pelosi, Luján Press Conference Today After Tour of Santa Fe Community College

LENGTH: 1300 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the House of Representative Nancy Pelosi, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi and Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** held a press conference today following a tour of Santa Fe Community College. Below is a transcript of the Leader's opening remarks, as well as a question and answer session:

Leader Pelosi's Opening Remarks:

"Thank you all very much. Thank you very much, we call him 'Mr. Chairman,' **Ben Ray Luján**, in Washington, D.C. It is an honor to be here with you always, once again. I think the last time we came together it was about 'When Women Succeed, America Succeeds,' and that's still part of our theme.

[Applause]

"Mr. President, President Grissom, thank you for your great leadership here at Santa Fe Community College. And yes, if my coming here brings rain - any excuse will do for me to come to Santa Fe, or to come to New Mexico, the 'Land of Enchantment' - aptly named. So whether it's for weather or whatever, I'm happy to come. Kathy, thank you for your wonderful words about Mr. **Ben Ray Luján**. I know how respected he is in the community here. I want you to know how respected he is in the Congress. It's especially wonderful to be here with his mother, Carmen. And one thing he didn't say about Speaker **Luján** introducing the bill, passing the bill to establish Santa Fe Community College is that it won by one vote. It took leadership. It took courage, and he got the job done. Thank you to the **Luján** family for that, and for so many other things.

[Applause]

"It's clear, listening to August - what more can anyone say, what better testimonial to an institution than to hear a student speak to it in such a beautiful way. It's clear also, that although he may be the first in his family to receive a college degree, [with] what he brings to this institution, it's clear that there were others who went before him in his family who clearly could have had that opportunity. And if it's a financial consideration, that's really harmful - not only to the individuals, but to our country. So how do we pay for all of this? I'll get to that in a moment.

"But first, I want to thank all of you for sending Ben Ray to the Congress. Again, as a Member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, he's just a spectacular voice for the future, for innovation, for entrepreneurship, for everything you do here. His legislative agenda is one that is in furtherance of all of that. The respect he commands there - he's a no-nonsense guy. If he's suggesting it, people listen, and they take heed, and they help him - in a non-partisan way I might add, in that regard. I intended to come up here and talk to you about what I saw today. But I really want to enlarge it for a moment, to say - beyond the technicalities of what I saw today, because I would surely demonstrate my limitations doing that. It was so spectacular, so new, so wonderful. But what I also saw was a spirit of what the President said. President Obama said this, and I'm going to tell him when we go home what we saw here - not home, home is where we live, Washington is where we work - so when we go there again.

"President Obama said: 'Community colleges are the unsung heroes of the nation's education system, providing a gateway for millions of Americans to good jobs and a better life.' What institution demonstrates that better than Santa Fe Community College, so beautifully? And that is in the context of when we talk about our budget, which we are debating right now in the Congress, being a statement of values. It's important to remember that nothing brings more money to the Treasury than the education of the American people, whether it's early childhood education - which President Grissom showed me is happening right here on this campus - earliest childhood, or k-12, higher

education, post-grad, an important part of it, lifetime learning. All of that is happening - so much of that is happening on this campus. It's the best investment a family can make in its children and its family members - sometimes it's not just the children; it's parents going back, and I know you have a large number of older people on the campus, probably in their late 20s or something like that.

[Laughter]

"Nonetheless, and it is in fact how to keep America number one. It's not just about the aspirations - but that would be justification enough, because that is so fundamental to our democracy, that we have education available to all Americans. But it is how we keep America number one. Clearly, from what August has said, innovation begins in the classroom. And here, you see a classroom that has facilities, whether it was welding, everything that we saw today, which has already been reviewed. What's important about it all is that this is really a model to the country, and I can go back and say all the things we argued for in the budget - they really are working. They really are working. And here's one place where they're working in such a forward way - transformational, I would say. "And it is also a situation where entrepreneurship springs from it, and that entrepreneurship is really the lifeblood of our economy. And it's a place where veterans - Cheney, it's such a joy to see you here, where Cheney, where veterans find a place to make their contribution and the rest, and enrich the student body by their presence. Thank you, Santa Fe Community College, for opening that door to our veterans. Thank you, Cheney, for your service to our country.

[Applause]

"The thing about all of this, whether it's in the private sector, in business - we saw Caterpillar, I don't know if Caterpillar is still - but other private sector entities saying how they would be hiring some of the students who are trained here by showing what they need in the private sector. But in any event, whether it's private sector or educational institutions or whatever it is - talent attracts capital, capital provides the facilities, facilities attract talent. It's just this circle. So having a model like this that shows - with the ingenuity - Cheney was telling me they built the greenhouse from a kit, and then it has enabled all of this other science to emerge. Eric described [it] to us.

"So it is a remarkable connection - all of it that is happening here. That the connection to the **Luján** family is such a clear one is almost an emotional experience for me, but the fact that he will be able to take all of that back. Now, there's something you should know about Ben Ray that you may not have talked about before. Since you may have seen him, he is now a part of the Democratic Leadership of the House of Representatives. He is the chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. He is in the leadership because he commands so much respect from our Members, for all the reasons that you know and that we talked about earlier.

"He talked about middle class economics, to lift up the people of our country - not only the middle class, but those who aspire to it. Community colleges are an essential part of that. So Ben Ray - leadership, education, entrepreneurship, honoring our veterans, innovation - it's all connected, and to do it recognizing the beautiful diversity of America. We couldn't be better served or better led than by **Ben Ray Luján**. So I thank you for sending him here. And I thank you, Mr. President, for all that you are doing here. It's so remarkable. I've seen things that are transformational. I can't wait to go back to tell our colleagues about it, and hopefully raise the capital to help continue this. But thank you for being a model for the nation. I'm proud to be here with you."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 8, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

March 24, 2015 Tuesday

Transcript of Pelosi, Luján Press Conference Today After Tour of Santa Fe Community College

LENGTH: 1300 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the House of Representative Nancy Pelosi, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi and Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** held a press conference today following a tour of Santa Fe Community College. Below is a transcript of the Leader's opening remarks, as well as a question and answer session:

Leader Pelosi's Opening Remarks:

"Thank you all very much. Thank you very much, we call him 'Mr. Chairman,' **Ben Ray Luján**, in Washington, D.C. It is an honor to be here with you always, once again. I think the last time we came together it was about 'When Women Succeed, America Succeeds,' and that's still part of our theme.

[Applause]

"Mr. President, President Grissom, thank you for your great leadership here at Santa Fe Community College. And yes, if my coming here brings rain - any excuse will do for me to come to Santa Fe, or to come to New Mexico, the 'Land of Enchantment' - aptly named. So whether it's for weather or whatever, I'm happy to come. Kathy, thank you for your wonderful words about Mr. **Ben Ray Luján**. I know how respected he is in the community here. I want you to know how respected he is in the Congress. It's especially wonderful to be here with his mother, Carmen. And one thing he didn't say about Speaker **Luján** introducing the bill, passing the bill to establish Santa Fe Community College is that it won by one vote. It took leadership. It took courage, and he got the job done. Thank you to the **Luján** family for that, and for so many other things.

[Applause]

"It's clear, listening to August - what more can anyone say, what better testimonial to an institution than to hear a student speak to it in such a beautiful way. It's clear also, that although he may be the first in his family to receive a college degree, [with] what he brings to this institution, it's clear that there were others who went before him in his family who clearly could have had that opportunity. And if it's a financial consideration, that's really harmful - not only to the individuals, but to our country. So how do we pay for all of this? I'll get to that in a moment.

"But first, I want to thank all of you for sending Ben Ray to the Congress. Again, as a Member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, he's just a spectacular voice for the future, for innovation, for entrepreneurship, for everything you do here. His legislative agenda is one that is in furtherance of all of that. The respect he commands there - he's a no-nonsense guy. If he's suggesting it, people listen, and they take heed, and they help him - in a non-partisan way I might add, in that regard. I intended to come up here and talk to you about what I saw today. But I really want to enlarge it for a moment, to say - beyond the technicalities of what I saw today, because I would surely demonstrate my limitations doing that. It was so spectacular, so new, so wonderful. But what I also saw was a spirit of what the President said. President Obama said this, and I'm going to tell him when we go home what we saw here - not home, home is where we live, Washington is where we work - so when we go there again.

"President Obama said: 'Community colleges are the unsung heroes of the nation's education system, providing a gateway for millions of Americans to good jobs and a better life.' What institution demonstrates that better than Santa Fe Community College, so beautifully? And that is in the context of when we talk about our budget, which we are debating right now in the Congress, being a statement of values. It's important to remember that nothing brings more money to the Treasury than the education of the American people, whether it's early childhood education - which President Grissom showed me is happening right here on this campus - earliest childhood, or k-12, higher education, post-grad, an important part of it, lifetime learning. All of that is happening - so much of that is happening on this campus. It's the best investment a family can make in its children and its family members - sometimes it's not just the children; it's parents going back, and I know you have a large number of older people on the campus, probably in their late 20s or something like that.

[Laughter]

"Nonetheless, and it is in fact how to keep America number one. It's not just about the aspirations - but that would be justification enough, because that is so fundamental to our democracy, that we have education available to all Americans. But it is how we keep America number one. Clearly, from what August has said, innovation begins in the classroom. And here, you see a classroom that has facilities, whether it was welding, everything that we saw today, which has already been reviewed. What's important about it all is that this is really a model to the country, and I can go back and say all the things we argued for in the budget - they really are working. They really are working. And here's one place where they're working in such a forward way - transformational, I would say.
"And it is also a situation where entrepreneurship springs from it, and that entrepreneurship is really the lifeblood of our economy. And it's a place where veterans - Cheney, it's such a joy to see you here, where Cheney, where veterans find a place to make their contribution and the rest, and enrich the student body by their presence. Thank you, Santa Fe Community College, for opening that door to our veterans. Thank you, Cheney, for your service to our country.

[Applause]

"The thing about all of this, whether it's in the private sector, in business - we saw Caterpillar, I don't know if Caterpillar is still - but other private sector entities saying how they would be hiring some of the students who are trained here by showing what they need in the private sector. But in any event, whether it's private sector or educational institutions or whatever it is - talent attracts capital, capital provides the facilities, facilities attract talent. It's just this circle. So having a model like this that shows - with the ingenuity - Cheney was telling me they built the greenhouse from a kit, and then it has enabled all of this other science to emerge. Eric described [it] to us.

"So it is a remarkable connection - all of it that is happening here. That the connection to the **Luján** family is such a clear one is almost an emotional experience for me, but the fact that he will be able to take all of that back. Now, there's something you should know about Ben Ray that you may not have talked about before. Since you may have seen him, he is now a part of the Democratic Leadership of the House of Representatives. He is the chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. He is in the leadership because he commands so much respect from our Members, for all the reasons that you know and that we talked about earlier.

"He talked about middle class economics, to lift up the people of our country - not only the middle class, but those who aspire to it. Community colleges are an essential part of that. So Ben Ray - leadership, education, entrepreneurship, honoring our veterans, innovation - it's all connected, and to do it recognizing the beautiful diversity of America. We couldn't be better served or better led than by **Ben Ray Luján**. So I thank you for sending him here. And I thank you, Mr. President, for all that you are doing here. It's so remarkable. I've seen things that are transformational. I can't wait to go back to tell our colleagues about it, and hopefully raise the capital to help continue this. But thank you for being a model for the nation. I'm proud to be here with you."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: March 24, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

149 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 23, 2015

LUJAN STATEMENT ON FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 239 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the fifth anniversary of the Affordable Care Act being signed into law.

"The Affordable Care Act is working, and it is having a real impact on the lives of the people of New Mexico. For too long, New Mexico has ranked high on the list of the uninsured. As a result of the Affordable Care Act, the number of uninsured New Mexicans has started to fall, decreasing by nearly 5 percent. This means that thousands of families are no longer one accident or illness away from financial ruin.

"Five years after the ACA was signed into law, more than 16 million Americans who did not have health coverage now do. In addition, 129 million Americans have the peace of mind of knowing that they will not be dropped from their plan or discriminated against because of a pre-existing condition. Seniors are saving money on their prescription medicine, women can no longer be charged more just for being a woman, and no New Mexican has to fear hitting a lifetime limit on their health coverage.

"Moving forward, Congress should work in a bipartisan effort to strengthen the law and make improvements that will further lower costs and increase access to care for New Mexicans and the American people."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-fifth-anniversary-of-the-affordable-care-act/

LOAD-DATE: March 24, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

150 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

March 23, 2015 Monday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 227 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the fifth anniversary of the Affordable Care Act being signed into law.

"The Affordable Care Act is working, and it is having a real impact on the lives of the people of New Mexico. For too long, New Mexico has ranked high on the list of the uninsured. As a result of the Affordable Care Act, the number of uninsured New Mexicans has started to fall, decreasing by nearly 5 percent. This means that thousands of families are no longer one accident or illness away from financial ruin.

"Five years after the ACA was signed into law, more than 16 million Americans who did not have health coverage now do. In addition, 129 million Americans have the peace of mind of knowing that they will not be dropped from their plan or discriminated against because of a pre-existing condition. Seniors are saving money on their prescription medicine, women can no longer be charged more just for being a woman, and no New Mexican has to fear hitting a lifetime limit on their health coverage.

"Moving forward, Congress should work in a bipartisan effort to strengthen the law and make improvements that will further lower costs and increase access to care for New Mexicans and the American people."

LOAD-DATE: March 24, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

March 23, 2015 Monday 4:18 AM EST

Lujan Statement on Fifth Anniversary of the Affordable Care Act

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 236 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the fifth anniversary of the Affordable Care Act being signed into law.

"The Affordable Care Act is working, and it is having a real impact on the lives of the people of New Mexico. For too long, New Mexico has ranked high on the list of the uninsured. As a result of the Affordable Care Act, the number of uninsured New Mexicans has started to fall, decreasing by nearly 5 percent. This means that thousands of families are no longer one accident or illness away from financial ruin.

"Five years after the ACA was signed into law, more than 16 million Americans who did not have health coverage now do. In addition, 129 million Americans have the peace of mind of knowing that they will not be dropped from their plan or discriminated against because of a pre-existing condition. Seniors are saving money on their prescription medicine, women can no longer be charged more just for being a woman, and no New Mexican has to fear hitting a lifetime limit on their health coverage.

"Moving forward, Congress should work in a bipartisan effort to strengthen the law and make improvements that will further lower costs and increase access to care for New Mexicans and the American people."

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150324-5073785 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: March 24, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

March 23, 2015 Monday

Lujan: House Republican Budget Leaves Middle-Class Families Behind

LENGTH: 210 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the House Republican budget.

"Once again House Republicans have introduced a budget that makes steep cuts to areas that are critical to growing the middle class and strengthening our economy, while dismantling Medicare as we know it for New Mexico's seniors. House Republicans provide tax breaks to special interests and billionaires, yet shortchange investments in early education that are vital to our children's future and infrastructure that are essential to putting more New Mexicans to work.

"House Republicans' plan takes away health care coverage for more than 16 million Americans, putting health insurance companies back in charge. With New Mexico near the top in child hunger, the Republican budget lays the foundation for cuts to nutrition programs that help families put food on the table during difficult times. The House Republican budget moves New Mexico and our nation down the wrong path, leaving middle-class families behind."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: March 24, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

March 23, 2015 Monday

Lujan Announces Congressional Art Competition for High School Students

LENGTH: 745 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced today details for this year's Congressional Art Competition. This annual competition allows members of Congress to display the talent and creativity of their high school constituents. The winning entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year. The winner will travel to Washington, D.C. for a reception honoring the national winners.

"The Congressional Art Competition gives New Mexico's young artists the opportunity to display their fine work and share their talents on the national stage," Congressman **Luján** said. "I look forward to seeing the creative work from the next generation of artists who will continue in the rich artistic tradition that has long been a part of New Mexico's heritage and culture."

The competition is open to all high school students within the Third Congressional District of New Mexico. All entries must be submitted to **Luján**'s Santa Fe district office by Tuesday, April 7, 2015 at 5 p.m. The winner will be announced at a reception on Saturday, April 11.

2015 3rd Congressional District of New Mexico General Guidelines for Students

A photo of each piece of artwork should be submitted with each piece of artwork (Rep. **Luján**'s office will take a photo of the artwork if the student is unable to produce a photo for submission).
A completed 2015 Congressional Art Competition Student Information and Release Form (signed by a parent or guardian if the student is under the age of 18), must be submitted with each piece of artwork.
Winner need not be present at the reception to win.
Recognition will be given to the top placing pieces of artwork, with the winning piece being displayed in Washington, D.C.
Artwork must be submitted for review and judging by Tuesday, April 7, 2015 at 5 p.m. to the Santa Fe office of Rep. **Luján**.

Attn: Eliza Sultan
1611 Calle Lorca Suite A
Santa Fe, NM 87505
(505) 984-8950

2015 Congressional General Guidelines for Students

The competition is open to high school students only. Exception may be made for schools that have 7th through 12th grades on one campus.
Artwork must be two-dimensional.
Each piece can be no larger than 28"x28"x4" (28 inches high, 28 inches wide, and 4 inches deep), including the frame. Artwork can be submitted to Rep. **Luján**'s office unframed. If the artwork is selected as the winning piece for display in D.C., it will be required to be framed and must adhere to the size guidelines. Rep.**Luján**'s office will work with the winner to have the winning piece framed.
Framed artwork cannot weigh more than 15 lbs.
Accepted media for artwork are as follows:
o Paintings: oil, acrylics, watercolor, etc.
o Drawings: pastels, colored pencils, pencil, charcoal, ink, markers
o Collages: must be two dimensional
o Prints: lithographs, silkscreen, block prints
o Mixed Media: use of more than two mediums such as pencil, ink, watercolor, etc.
o Computer-Generated art
o Photographs
Each entry must be original in concept, design, and execution and may not violate U.S. copyright laws. Any entry that has been copied from an existing photo or image that was created by someone other than the student is a violation of the competition rules and will not be accepted.
Work entered must be in the original medium (that is, not a scanned reproduction of a painting or drawing).
Artwork will hang in the Capitol for the entire year of the exhibition and cannot be returned to the students earlier. Students should, therefore, submit artwork they will not need for other purposes.
Artwork must adhere to the policy of the House Office Building Commission. In accordance with this policy, exhibits depicting subjects of contemporary political controversy or a sensationalistic or gruesome nature are not allowed. It is necessary that all artwork be reviewed by the panel chaired by the Architect of the Capitol and any portion not in consonance with the Commission's policy will be omitted from the exhibit. The panel will make the final decision regarding the suitability of all artwork for the Congressional Art Competition exhibition in the Capitol.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: March 24, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by Tribune Content Agency

March 22, 2015 Sunday

EDITORIAL: No leadership? Squandered opportunity

BYLINE: The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: COMMENTARY

LENGTH: 617 words

March 22--Santa Fe Community College was in the spotlight Friday -- House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi was in town with U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** and they stopped by the college to visit. On the tour were programs in welding, agriculture and solar technology, all innovative and sustainable, each producing students ready to move on to a four-year college or go right to work.

The message was clear: Community colleges are incubators for economic growth. Graduates can find the kinds of jobs that keep families and individuals anchored firmly in the middle class.

There was an element of politics, of course, since **Luján** is now chairman of the Democratic Congressional Committee. He's charged with helping regain control of the U.S. House of Representatives for Democrats, and it is obvious that the need for job creation will be part of the attack.

The buzz words are set, too. The 2016 election, Democrats will argue, is about middle-class economics vs. trickle-down economics. Democrats will maintain that citizens will have better jobs, higher wages and an attainable path to success. Affordable education and accessible training are keys to those jobs materializing, which is one reason Pelosi and **Luján** were visiting SFCC.

For the college, it was an opportunity to show what it does so well, take students and provide opportunity. From there, graduates not only find jobs or pursue four-year degrees. They create businesses, learn to channel solar energy to heat and cool buildings, grow food using hydroponics technology -- in water, not soil -- in a greenhouse. More than 190 students are enrolled in these sustainable technologies, everything from green-building systems, greenhouse management, water treatment operation, biofuels, solar energy technology, even more prosaic but very necessary plumbing.

SFCC doesn't have a political point of view. Its job is to offer opportunity, something it has been doing for more than 30 years. (And, as students, faculty and staff at the tour were reminded Friday, the bill to establish the college was introduced in the Legislature in the 1980s by **Luján's** father, then-Rep. Ben **Luján**. It passed by one vote, showing how opportunity can stay unrealized without leadership.)

All this is in contrast to what just happened in Santa Fe, with the 60-day-long legislative session stumbling from start to finish. There was little focus (although lots of talk) on creating jobs or providing opportunity. Big ethics bills, for the most part, died along the way, as did important legislation to reduce interest rates on store-front loans and a long-overdue increase in the minimum wage. Grass-roots activists pushed back against legislation designed to give oil and gas companies free rein in counties where local zoning is more restrictive. But the capital outlay process was blown up, leaving communities in a bind.

Democrats in the Senate were left in the unenviable position of having to kill bad legislation; they did their job. One bright spot: Legislation to require better transparency in hospital costs, a project of Think New Mexico, did pass, with only the governor's signature necessary. And, yes, the $6.2 billion budget was approved. That's truly the one thing that has to get done.

By focusing on narrow, partisan bills -- many of which had failed in sessions past -- the GOP, from governor to new House leadership, ensured that not much of anything else was accomplished. Without leadership, opportunity is squandered. And that's exactly what happened in the 2015 legislative session.

___ (c)2015 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC

LOAD-DATE: March 23, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20150322-SF-EDITORIAL-No-leadership-Squandered-opportunity-0322-20150322

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2015 The Santa Fe New Mexican

155 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

March 21, 2015 Saturday

Pelosi touts education on tour of Santa Fe college; Rep. Luján hosts minority leader

BYLINE: MARK OSWALD JOURNAL NORTH

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C1

LENGTH: 471 words

SANTA FE - U.S. House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, in Santa Fe on Friday, fed some fish while promoting the role of community colleges.

She quoted President Barack Obama as saying the two-year schools are the "unsung heroes" in the American higher education system.

"Nothing brings more money to the Treasury than the education of the American people," Pelosi said after a tour of Santa Fe Community College's Trades and Advanced Technology Center.

"Talent attracts capital; capital provides the facilities; facilities attract talent," she said. "It's just a circle."

Pelosi lavished praise on what she saw at SFCC - including a hydroponics center where she fed and got splashed by frenzied tilapia. The California Democrat, ushered by U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., also checked out a welding program and solar energy innovations that can cool as well as heat buildings. Students and college staffers came in during spring break to show **Luján** and Pelosi around.

"What an important model for the country," she said of the center. "I can go back and say all the things we argue for in the budget, they really are working, and here's one place they're working in such a forward way - transformational, I would say."

Asked about Obama's recent proposal to make community colleges tuition-free for two years, Pelosi said making the plan a reality would be difficult.

"I don't want to turn this into a political conversation," she said, "but we have a fight about these kinds of things. You would think that a budget would be a statement of our national values - what's important to us as a country is where we should put our assets."

She added that without the "anvil" of college debt hanging over them, students have more choices and "can be entrepreneurial, they can take risks."

Pelosi and **Luján**, who was appointed chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee in November, also discussed the DCCC's annual "issues conference" that **Luján** is hosting in Santa Fe this weekend.

Luján said participants would be talking about standing for "middle-class economics ahead of trickle-down economics," and both said that voting rights and access to the polls are on the agenda as the nation marks the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s historic voting-rights march in Selma, Ala.

"The increased involvement of more people in the elective process is the most wholesome thing we can do for our country," Pelosi said, "but it also slams the use of big money in our politics, and that is what we have to do for our democracy."

She said the country needs to "have more people see the connection between their lives and the ballot box."

Pelosi had many good things to say about **Luján**, saying he's now known as "Mr. Chairman" in Washington and describing him as a "no-nonsense guy."

"If he's suggesting it, people listen," she said.

LOAD-DATE: March 23, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: EDDIE MOORE/JOURNAL U.S. Rep. Nancy Pelosi gets splashed by tilapia at Santa Fe Community College on Friday. With her are U.S. Rep **Ben Ray Luján,** D-N.M., left, and SFCC student Cheney Peak.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Albuquerque Journal

Targeted News Service

March 21, 2015 Saturday 5:58 PM EST

Rep. Courtney Introduces Bill to Support Refinancing of Certain Federal Student Loans

BYLINE: by MERLY LAPIG, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 439 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, March 21 -- Rep. Joe Courtney, D-Conn., has introduced legislation (H.R. 1434) to "provide for the refinancing of certain Federal student loans."

The bill was introduced on March 18 and has 79 co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. Robert C. Scott, D-Va., Ruben Hinojosa, D-Texas, Keith Ellison, D-Minn., Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., Mark Pocan, D-Wis., Mark Takano, D-Calif., Katherine M. Clark, D-Mass., Steve Israel, D-N.Y., Diana DeGette, D-Colo., Debbie Dingell, D-Mich., Joseph Crowley, D-N.Y., Karen Bass, D-Calif., Marcy Kaptur, D-Ohio, Frederica S. Wilson, D-Fla., Peter A. DeFazio, D-Ore., Chellie Pingree, D-Maine, Brendan Boyle, D-Pa., Elijah E. Cummings, D-Md., Elizabeth Esty, D-Conn., John A. Yarmuth, D-Ky., John B. Larson, D-Conn., Rick Larsen, D-Wash., Ann McLane Kuster, D-N.H., Michael E. Capuano, D-Mass., Xavier Becerra, D-Calif., **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., James McGovern, D-Mass., Nydia M. Velazquez, D-N.Y., John Sarbanes, D-Md., David N. Cicilline, D-R.I., Judy Chu, D-Calif., Joaquin Castro, D-Texas, Cheri Bustos, D-Ill., Donna F. Edwards, D-Md., Yvette D. Clarke, D-N.Y., Michael F. Doyle, D-Pa., Janice Hahn, D-Calif., Hakeen Jeffries, D-N.Y., Raul M. Grijalva, D-Ariz., Niki Tsongas, D-Mass., Alma S. Adams, D-N.C., Marcia L. Fudge, D-Ohio, Mark DeSaulnier, D-Calif., Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., Albio Sires, D-N.J., Ted Lieu, D-Calif., Seth Moulton, D-Mass., Susan A. Davis, D-Calif., Corrine Brown, D-Fla., Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., Eric Swalwell, D-Calif., Tim Ryan, D-Ohio, Barbara Lee, D-Calif., Ed Perlmutter, D-Colo., Jared Huffman, D-Calif., Stephen F. Lynch, D-Mass., Adam Smith, D-Wash., Linda T. Sanchez, D-Calif., Richard E. Neal, D-Mass., Chaka Fattah, D-Pa., Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., Joseph P. Kennedy III, D-Mass., Jim Langevin, D-R.I., James E. Clyburn, D-S.C., Henry C. Johnson, D-Ga., Anna G. Eshoo, D-Calif., Daniel Kildee, D-Mich., Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., David Loebsack, D-Iowa, Emanuel Cleaver, D-Mo., Timothy Walz, D-Minn., Rosa L. DeLauro, D-Conn., Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-Texas, Frank Pallone Jr., D-N.J., Suzanne Bonamici, D-Ore., William R. Keating, D-Mass., and Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill.; and Dels. Eleanor Holmes Norton, D-D.C., and Gregorio Sablan, D-M.P.

The legislation was referred to the House Education and the Workforce Committee, House Ways and Means Committee and the House Budget Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/1434/text.

Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://www.targetednews.com

22LapigM 150320-1196559

LOAD-DATE: March 21, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

March 20, 2015 Friday

Luján shines spotlight on New Mexico; 150 big-name Democrats, donors meet this weekend in Santa Fe

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 979 words

WASHINGTON - Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** is spending the weekend in Santa Fe, but it's far from an ordinary trip home for the northern New Mexico congressman. **Luján**, who was appointed chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee in November, will be the master of ceremonies at the DCCC's annual "issues conference," based at La Posada de Santa Fe Resort and Spa, just off the Santa Fa plaza. The conference allows about 150 of the Democratic Party's big donors and national elected officials to rub elbows and swap ideas.

In recent years, the annual gathering has convened in other prestigious locales, such as Napa Valley and New York City. But thanks to **Luján's** DCCC chairmanship, it's Santa Fe's turn in the spotlight.

Luján will start his day today with House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., at Santa Fe Community College, where they will tour the school, meet with the college president and talk about the importance of education in lifting people out of the poverty. Santa Fe Mayor Javier Gonzales said he will officially welcome the Democratic group at an event at the Center for Contemporary Arts tonight.

The conference itself is scheduled for Saturday at La Posada resort, according to an invitation obtained by the Journal. On Saturday night, conference attendees are invited to "Chairman **Luján's** Taste of Santa Fe," a party at the nationally renowned Gerald Peters Art Gallery.

Luján said he's proud to showcase his hometown.

"I wanted it to be held in Santa Fe because I wanted to show off New Mexico," **Luján** said, grinning ear to ear during a Journal interview this week in his office at the DCCC headquarters on Capitol Hill. "Anytime we can get people coming to Santa Fe, it's good for the local economy. I hope a lot of art is bought and restaurants visited."

In a statement provided to the Journal, Pelosi praised **Luján**, her handpicked leader of the 2016 Democraticcongressional campaign. The longtime Democratic power player said in November that she chose **Luján** because of his energy and "political astuteness." Political observers said **Luján's** Hispanic heritage likely also factored into Pelosi's decision as the Democratic Party seeks out candidates who appeal to the nation's fastest-growing ethnic group. Pelosi said **Luján** has "hit the ground running" in his first few months on the job.

"Chairman **Luján** has shown he has the energy and the dynamism to lead House Democrats to victory in 2016," Pelosi said in a statement provided to the Journal this week. "With Ben Ray's tireless determination, his values, and his deep strategic savvy, Democrats will continue to champion bigger paychecks and better infrastructure for hardworking Americans across the country."

Asked his priority as DCCC chairman, **Luján** was direct.

"My top goal is to put the House in play," he said, adding that he was routinely working 12- to 15-hour days to ensure he can attend to his regular duties as a congressman, as well as lead the DCCC.

Tall order

Recapturing the House in 2016 would seem to be a tall order, considering that Republicans now hold a 59-seat advantage in the House. With 247 seats over the Democrats' 188, the GOP has its largest majority since the 71st Congress, which convened from 1929 to 1931.

"Putting the House 'in play' is something the DCCC chair should try to do, but it isn't very realistic this cycle - at least not now," said Stu Rothenberg, a respected Washington political handicapper and author of the Rothenberg Political Report. "Things could change, of course, but 30 seats is a big number and the way districts are now drawn, there simply aren't that many great Democratic opportunities.

"In a big Democratic wave, 30 seats is possible," Rothenberg added. "But there are no signs of that now and presidential years generally don't generate big partisan waves the way midterm elections do."

In the fundraising contest, **Luján** - at least so far - is more than holding his own. In total, House Democrats raised $6.3 million in January, compared with House Republicans' total of $4.4 million. **Luján** set the pace personally, transferring $150,000 from his own campaign coffers to the DCCC's. A half-dozen other Democrats followed suit, shifting $100,000 each to the DCCC.

Ian Prior, spokesman for the Republican National Congressional Committee, said **Luján** has had trouble recruiting legitimate candidates early in his term and been embarrassed by slip-ups, including an erroneous fundraising email claiming that House Republicans had allowed the Department of Homeland Security to be shut down. Although the DHS funding battle went to the brink, the agency was never closed.

"Thus far into his term as DCCC Chairman, **Ben Ray Luján** has been unable to recruit legitimate candidates in several competitive House seats, making his delusional predictions of Democrats retaking the House all the more laughable," Prior said. "Meanwhile, the organization he leads has even been blasted by liberals for its questionable tactics and it has embarrassed itself repeatedly with unforced errors, like sending out fundraising emails erroneously claiming that the Department of Homeland Security had been shut down."

Meanwhile, Santa Fe Mayor Gonzales said he's excited to see his old friend **Luján** returning home as a national political figure. Gonzales also said he expects the Democrats to talk about income disparity - a reality they can witness for themselves in New Mexico's capital city.

"For all of the incredible cultural assets we have in Santa Fe that are globally recognized, we still have many families that are earning below poverty wages and a lot of our children - at least a third of them - go to school hungry every day or count on our schools to be fed," Gonzales said. "We have many families who continue to struggle every day to support their kids and be a part of the middle class, so it's fitting that they're here and they can see it."

LOAD-DATE: March 20, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: **LUJÁN:** "I wanted to show off New Mexico"

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Albuquerque Journal

States News Service

March 20, 2015 Friday

TRANSCRIPT OF PELOSI, LUJAN PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY AFTER TOUR OF SANTA FE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 2891 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi:

Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi and Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** held a press conference today following a tour of Santa Fe Community College. Below is a transcript of the Leader's opening remarks, as well as a question and answer session:

Leader Pelosi's Opening Remarks :

"Thank you all very much. Thank you very much, we call him "Mr. Chairman,' **Ben Ray Lujan**, in Washington, D.C. It is an honor to be here with you always, once again. I think the last time we came together it was about "When Women Succeed, America Succeeds,' and that's still part of our theme.

[Applause]

"Mr. President, President Grissom, thank you for your great leadership here at Santa Fe Community College. And yes, if my coming here brings rain - any excuse will do for me to come to Santa Fe, or to come to New Mexico, the "Land of Enchantment' - aptly named. So whether it's for weather or whatever, I'm happy to come. Kathy, thank you for your wonderful words about Mr. **Ben Ray Lujan**. I know how respected he is in the community here. I want you to know how respected he is in the Congress. It's especially wonderful to be here with his mother, Carmen. And one thing he didn't say about Speaker **Lujan** introducing the bill, passing the bill to establish Santa Fe Community College is that it won by one vote. It took leadership. It took courage, and he got the job done. Thank you to the **Lujan** family for that, and for so many other things.

[Applause]

"It's clear, listening to August - what more can anyone say, what better testimonial to an institution than to hear a student speak to it in such a beautiful way. It's clear also, that although he may be the first in his family to receive a college degree, [with] what he brings to this institution, it's clear that there were others who went before him in his family who clearly could have had that opportunity. And if it's a financial consideration, that's really harmful - not only to the individuals, but to our country. So how do we pay for all of this? I'll get to that in a moment.

"But first, I want to thank all of you for sending Ben Ray to the Congress. Again, as a Member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, he's just a spectacular voice for the future, for innovation, for entrepreneurship, for everything you do here. His legislative agenda is one that is in furtherance of all of that. The respect he commands there - he's a no-nonsense guy. If he's suggesting it, people listen, and they take heed, and they help him - in a non-partisan way I might add, in that regard. I

intended to come up here and talk to you about what I saw today. But I really want to enlarge it for a moment, to say - beyond the technicalities of what I saw today, because I would surely demonstrate my limitations doing that. It was so spectacular, so new, so wonderful. But what I also saw was a spirit of what the President said. President Obama said this, and I'm going to tell him when we go home what we saw here - not home, home is where we live, Washington is where we work - so when we go there again.

"President Obama said: "Community colleges are the unsung heroes of the nation's education system, providing a gateway for millions of Americans to good jobs and a better life.' What institution demonstrates that better than Santa Fe Community College, so beautifully? And that is in the context of when we talk about our budget, which we are debating right now in the Congress, being a statement of values. It's important to remember that nothing brings more money to the Treasury than the education of the American people, whether it's early childhood education - which President Grissom showed me is happening right here on this campus - earliest childhood, or k-12, higher education, post-grad, an important part of it, lifetime learning. All of that is happening - so much of that is happening on this campus. It's the best investment a family can make in its children and its family members - sometimes it's not just the children; it's parents going back, and I know you have a large number of older people on the campus, probably in their late 20s or something like that.

[Laughter]

"Nonetheless, and it is in fact how to keep America number one. It's not just about the aspirations - but that would be justification enough, because that is so fundamental to our democracy, that we have education available to all Americans. But it is how we keep America number one. Clearly, from what August has said, innovation begins in the classroom. And here, you see a classroom that has facilities, whether it was welding, everything that we saw today, which has already been reviewed. What's important about it all is that this is really a model to the country, and I can go back and say all the things we argued for in the budget - they really are working. They really are working. And here's one place where they're working in such a forward way - transformational, I would say.

"And it is also a situation where entrepreneurship springs from it, and that entrepreneurship is really the lifeblood of our economy. And it's a place where veterans - Cheney, it's such a joy to see you here, where Cheney, where veterans find a place to make their contribution and the rest, and enrich the student body by their presence. Thank you, Santa Fe Community College, for opening that door to our veterans. Thank you, Cheney, for your service to our country.

[Applause]

"The thing about all of this, whether it's in the private sector, in business - we saw Caterpillar, I don't know if Caterpillar is still - but other private sector entities saying how they would be hiring some of the students who are trained here by showing what they need in the private sector. But in any event, whether it's private sector or educational institutions or whatever it is - talent attracts capital, capital provides the facilities, facilities attract talent. It's just this circle. So having a model like this that shows - with the ingenuity - Cheney was telling me they built the greenhouse from a kit, and then it has enabled all of this other science to emerge. Eric described [it] to us.

"So it is a remarkable connection - all of it that is happening here. That the connection to the **Lujan** family is such a clear one is almost an emotional experience for me, but the fact that he will be able to take all of that back. Now, there's something you should know about Ben Ray that you may not have talked about before. Since you may have seen him, he is now a part of the Democratic Leadership of the House of Representatives. He is the chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. He is in the leadership because he commands so much respect from our Members, for all the reasons that you know and that we talked about earlier.

"He talked about middle class economics, to lift up the people of our country - not only the middle class, but those who aspire to it. Community colleges are an essential part of that. So Ben Ray - leadership, education, entrepreneurship, honoring our veterans, innovation - it's all connected, and to do it recognizing the beautiful diversity of America. We couldn't be better served or better led than by **Ben Ray Lujan**. So I thank you for sending him here. And I thank you, Mr. President, for all that

you are doing here. It's so remarkable. I've seen things that are transformational. I can't wait to go back to tell our colleagues about it, and hopefully raise the capital to help continue this. But thank you for being a model for the nation. I'm proud to be here with you."

***

Q: How did you get Leader Pelosi to come out here, or is this part of a bigger trip?

Congressman **Lujan**. Well, so - we just asked.

[Laughter]

We were fortunate that the Leader was willing to come out to New Mexico. And we're also here - we have people from around the United States that have come to New Mexico this weekend so that we can talk about the path forward, making sure we're talking about the middle class economics around the United States, that it's a staple of what we're talking about around the dinner table.

And look, middle class economics is about putting milk in the refrigerator, milk, eggs, maybe saving a little bit of money at the end of the month to help get your friends through college and making sure that's really a staple of what we're talking about across America, especially with the family that I grew up in.

But I'll tell you, the Leader has just been extraordinary in making sure that we're able to get to all parts of the United States. And we're very fortunate to have her here in New Mexico this week.

Leader Pelosi. I can't even count how many times I have been to New Mexico over the years. Maybe I'll go back and try to figure it out. But any invitation I accept and initiate some of my own - whether it's personally, politically, or officially - to come here. It's such a wonderful place, and clearly, what I came here and saw today was the future.

Q: Can you tell us a bit more about this meeting taking place this weekend, who's participating and how it's working?

Congressman **Lujan**. Well again, we have guests from around the country. We have Members of Congress that will be coming to visit on different topics. But middle class economics will be center stage. I'm sure that we're going to be talking about, as well, the Voting Rights Act, the 50th anniversary of Selma. I had the honor of being with the Leader and John Lewis, Jim Clyburn, for the commemoration.

Leader Pelosi. President Obama.

Congressman **Lujan**. And President Obama - what amazing words that he shared. I think the Leader captures the sentiment that she shares with so many across the United States with words that were shared that day as well. And it's centering around how we can how we can make sure we're moving together, to stand together for all of the working people all across America to make the country stronger - again, putting middle class economics ahead of trickle-down economics.

Leader Pelosi. If I just may add to that, I'm excited about all of it because it's connected - fairness in our economy, middle class economics versus trickle-down economics. But the voting rights piece of this is a very central piece for the following reason: it's the 50th anniversary, you all know that. The crossing of the bridge in Selma - the Edmund Pettus Bridge - was a bridge to the ballot. Leading up to that time, Rev. Martin Luther King always talked about the ballot, the ballot, the ballot being the path to legislation to improve the lives of people, to make the middle class stronger, and pull more people up into the middle class - the ballot, the ballot, the ballot.

This 50th anniversary gives us the opportunity - under the leadership of not only our Chairman, Mr. **Ben Ray Lujan** - but also Mr. Clyburn who's going to be here, and John Lewis who's going to be here, and Barbara Lee will have a conference or seminar or whatever this evening on this subject

because only one-third of the electorate voted in the last election and there has to be a way for us to say to people: "This is why this is important in your lives. Decisions that are made at the legislative table affect you." Walter Reuther said the bread box and the ballot box cannot be separated. If you win at the negotiating table, what you win there can be removed by elections and those who do not share the views about America's working families.

But it's really important for another reason, and that is: the increased involvement of more people in the electoral process is the most wholesome thing we can do for our country, but it also slams the use of big money in politics. And that is what we have to do for our democracy: empower people more, have more people see the connection between their lives, the ballot box, and decisions that are made after as well as reducing the role of money - reducing the skepticism that the American people have about how strong their voices are in the political process.

Ben Ray Lujan is the perfect person to bring all of that together - his commitment to middle class economics, his appreciation for expanding the vote to many more people, and again, his effectiveness in getting the job done. So thank you for planning this conference.

Q: Is the idea of fully-subsided community college for the first two years ...

Leader Pelosi. It's hard. You know, that is the President's proposal and it is something that should happen. I don't want to turn this into a political conversation but we have a fight about these kind of things. You would think that a budget would be a statement of our national values. What is important to us as a country should be where we put our assets. And by the way - I harken back to what I said before - nothing reduces the deficit more, because it brings more money to the treasury, than the education of the American people. So the investment in community colleges and reducing the cost - but what **Ben Ray Lujan** said was true about what we did but much of that has expired, and what we're trying to do is renew it. And the fight that we have in the battle of the budget is a reduction in commitment to Pell Grants - they want to freeze the amount of money for Pell Grants for 10 years thereby limiting the number of people who could access a Pell Grant and also how much money the Pell Grant will be for a family. Sometimes that difference makes that difference of a person going to higher education or not.

So, we think the two-year [community college plan] is the most logical thing that you can do. It may happen in some states before it happens nationally because of the battle of the budget that we have there, but again, it saves money as do Pell Grants, as does reducing the costs of student loans. And Ben Ray referred to it: it frees people, liberates people if they don't have this anvil - I call it the anvil of student debt - this anvil of student debt so that they can be entrepreneurial, they can take risks. August talked about discovery and invention and that entrepreneurial spirit that he has. If a student has all of that and massive debt, they have to make choices that are quite different than if they didn't. And as I say as a mother of five children: they might even get married.

[Laughter]

Take risks. Go out there. What could be more of a risk than starting a small business? It requires more optimism than maybe getting married. But it any event, it frees them to have choices and options - what we want the American people to have.

Congressman **Lujan**. Thank you. We have time for one more.

Q: [Inaudible]

Leader Pelosi. The question is: can I speak more about the role of women and girls in growing the economy, expanding the economy.

Yes. When I was - well, I don't know if it was the last time, but a recent time when I was in New Mexico, we talked about "When Women Succeed, America Succeeds' which really is very important for our economy to understand that. Other countries do. The Prime Minister of Japan was in Davos last year. They asked: "How are you going to turn your economy around?" He said, "The involvement of women in our economy." The President of Colombia was in my office. He said: "We have a secret

to grow our economy." I said: "Will you share it with us?" He said: "The involvement of women in our economy."

It's really so important. But for it to happen, we have to recognize that some changes have to happen. We have to have affordable, quality child care; we have to have paid sick leave; we have to have equal pay for equal work so that women can really thrive in the economy. But you can't say: "Our country is going to grow and be great but we're going to limit the involvement of half the people in our country," and expect that. Now it doesn't mean women are smarter or better or anything, it just means the beauty is in the mix. Having women at the table is very important. And I would extend that to women and minorities at the table. That's our country. That decision-making should happen with a full participation.

But we know - we have the facts, the figures, the data, the analysis and all the rest of it - if you involve women at every level - whether it's in the military training, whether it's in the academic world, whether it's in corporate America - the more women in leadership, the better. And of course, when it comes to government and politics, the most wholesome thing that we can do is to have more women appointed, elected, and not only having a seat at the table but having a seat at the head of the table.

And that's why I'm so proud that in our Caucus, we are a majority of women, minorities, and LGBT community folks. That's our Caucus - it's a majority of that beautiful mix, "A'. "B', not only there, but in our leadership, the people who would be chairs - in other words, when Ben Ray leads us to victory - those Ranking Members will be Chairs. The majority of people who would be Chairs are women, minorities, LGBT. So it's a pretty exciting thing because, again, not only a seat at the table, but a seat at the head of the table. And leading us all in all that is **Ben Ray Lujan**.

Congressman **Lujan**. Thank you, Madam Leader. And again, if everyone can help me thank Randy Grissom, Kathy Keith, August, Izaiah, Cheneyand everyone who helped us today, again. Thank you, Madam Leader for having us today. Thanks everybody.

LOAD-DATE: March 21, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

March 20, 2015 Friday 11:25 AM EST

Transcript of Pelosi, Lujan Press Conference Today After Tour of Santa Fe Community College

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 2900 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., issued the following news release:

Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi and Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** held a press conference today following a tour of Santa Fe Community College. Below is a transcript of the Leader's opening remarks, as well as a question and answer session:

Leader Pelosi's Opening Remarks:

"Thank you all very much. Thank you very much, we call him 'Mr. Chairman,' **Ben Ray Lujan**, in Washington, D.C. It is an honor to be here with you always, once again. I think the last time we came together it was about 'When Women Succeed, America Succeeds,' and that's still part of our theme.

[Applause]

"Mr. President, President Grissom, thank you for your great leadership here at Santa Fe Community College. And yes, if my coming here brings rain - any excuse will do for me to come to Santa Fe, or to come to New Mexico, the 'Land of Enchantment' - aptly named. So whether it's for weather or whatever, I'm happy to come. Kathy, thank you for your wonderful words about Mr. **Ben Ray Lujan**. I know how respected he is in the community here. I want you to know how respected he is in the Congress. It's especially wonderful to be here with his mother, Carmen. And one thing he didn't say about Speaker **Lujan** introducing the bill, passing the bill to establish Santa Fe Community College is that it won by one vote. It took leadership. It took courage, and he got the job done. Thank you to the **Lujan** family for that, and for so many other things.

[Applause]

"It's clear, listening to August - what more can anyone say, what better testimonial to an institution than to hear a student speak to it in such a beautiful way. It's clear also, that although he may be the first in his family to receive a college degree, [with] what he brings to this institution, it's clear that there were others who went before him in his family who clearly could have had that opportunity. And if it's a financial consideration, that's really harmful - not only to the individuals, but to our country. So how do we pay for all of this? I'll get to that in a moment.

"But first, I want to thank all of you for sending Ben Ray to the Congress. Again, as a Member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, he's just a spectacular voice for the future, for innovation, for entrepreneurship, for everything you do here. His legislative agenda is one that is in furtherance of all of that. The respect he commands there - he's a no-nonsense guy. If he's suggesting it, people listen, and they take heed, and they help him - in a non-partisan way I might add, in that regard. I intended to come up here and talk to you about what I saw today. But I really want to enlarge it for a moment, to say - beyond the technicalities of what I saw today, because I would surely demonstrate my limitations doing that. It was so spectacular, so new, so wonderful. But what I also saw was a spirit of what the President said. President Obama said this, and I'm going to tell him when we go home what we saw here - not home, home is where we live, Washington is where we work - so when we go there again.

"President Obama said: 'Community colleges are the unsung heroes of the nation's education system, providing a gateway for millions of Americans to good jobs and a better life.' What institution demonstrates that better than Santa Fe Community College, so beautifully? And that is in the context of when we talk about our budget, which we are debating right now in the Congress, being a statement of values. It's important to remember that nothing brings more money to the Treasury than the education of the American people, whether it's early childhood education - which President Grissom showed me is happening right here on this campus - earliest childhood, or k-12, higher education, post-grad, an important part of it, lifetime learning. All of that is happening - so much of that is happening on this campus. It's the best investment a family can make in its children and its family members - sometimes it's not just the children; it's parents going back, and I know you have a large number of older people on the campus, probably in their late 20s or something like that.

[Laughter]

"Nonetheless, and it is in fact how to keep America number one. It's not just about the aspirations - but that would be justification enough, because that is so fundamental to our democracy, that we have education available to all Americans. But it is how we keep America number one. Clearly, from what August has said, innovation begins in the classroom. And here, you see a classroom that has facilities, whether it was welding, everything that we saw today, which has already been reviewed. What's important about it all is that this is really a model to the country, and I can go back and say all the things we argued for in the budget - they really are working. They really are working. And here's one place where they're working in such a forward way - transformational, I would say.

"And it is also a situation where entrepreneurship springs from it, and that entrepreneurship is really the lifeblood of our economy. And it's a place where veterans - Cheney, it's such a joy to see you here, where Cheney, where veterans find a place to make their contribution and the rest, and enrich the student body by their presence. Thank you, Santa Fe Community College, for opening that door to our veterans. Thank you, Cheney, for your service to our country.

[Applause]

"The thing about all of this, whether it's in the private sector, in business - we saw Caterpillar, I don't know if Caterpillar is still - but other private sector entities saying how they would be hiring some of the students who are trained here by showing what they need in the private sector. But in any event, whether it's private sector or educational institutions or whatever it is - talent attracts capital, capital provides the facilities, facilities attract talent. It's just this circle. So having a model like this that shows - with the ingenuity - Cheney was telling me they built the greenhouse from a kit, and then it has enabled all of this other science to emerge. Eric described [it] to us.

"So it is a remarkable connection - all of it that is happening here. That the connection to the **Lujan** family is such a clear one is almost an emotional experience for me, but the fact that he will be able to take all of that back. Now, there's something you should know about Ben Ray that you may not have talked about before. Since you may have seen him, he is now a part of the Democratic Leadership of the House of Representatives. He is the chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. He is in the leadership because he commands so much respect from our Members, for all the reasons that you know and that we talked about earlier.

"He talked about middle class economics, to lift up the people of our country - not only the middle class, but those who aspire to it. Community colleges are an essential part of that. So Ben Ray - leadership, education, entrepreneurship, honoring our veterans, innovation - it's all connected, and to do it recognizing the beautiful diversity of America. We couldn't be better served or better led than by **Ben Ray Lujan**. So I thank you for sending him here. And I thank you, Mr. President, for all that you are doing here. It's so remarkable. I've seen things that are transformational. I can't wait to go back to tell our colleagues about it, and hopefully raise the capital to help continue this. But thank you for being a model for the nation. I'm proud to be here with you."

***

Q: How did you get Leader Pelosi to come out here, or is this part of a bigger trip?

Congressman **Lujan**. Well, so - we just asked.

[Laughter]

We were fortunate that the Leader was willing to come out to New Mexico. And we're also here - we have people from around the United States that have come to New Mexico this weekend so that we can talk about the path forward, making sure we're talking about the middle class economics around the United States, that it's a staple of what we're talking about around the dinner table.

And look, middle class economics is about putting milk in the refrigerator, milk, eggs, maybe saving a little bit of money at the end of the month to help get your friends through college and making sure that's really a staple of what we're talking about across America, especially with the family that I grew up in.

But I'll tell you, the Leader has just been extraordinary in making sure that we're able to get to all parts of the United States. And we're very fortunate to have her here in New Mexico this week.

Leader Pelosi. I can't even count how many times I have been to New Mexico over the years. Maybe I'll go back and try to figure it out. But any invitation I accept and initiate some of my own - whether it's personally, politically, or officially - to come here. It's such a wonderful place, and clearly, what I came here and saw today was the future.

Q: Can you tell us a bit more about this meeting taking place this weekend, who's participating and how it's working?

Congressman **Lujan**. Well again, we have guests from around the country. We have Members of Congress that will be coming to visit on different topics. But middle class economics will be center stage. I'm sure that we're going to be talking about, as well, the Voting Rights Act, the 50th anniversary of Selma. I had the honor of being with the Leader and John Lewis, Jim Clyburn, for the commemoration.

Leader Pelosi. President Obama.

Congressman **Lujan**. And President Obama - what amazing words that he shared. I think the Leader captures the sentiment that she shares with so many across the United States with words that were shared that day as well. And it's centering around how we can how we can make sure we're moving together, to stand together for all of the working people all across America to make the country stronger - again, putting middle class economics ahead of trickle-down economics.

Leader Pelosi. If I just may add to that, I'm excited about all of it because it's connected - fairness in our economy, middle class economics versus trickle-down economics. But the voting rights piece of this is a very central piece for the following reason: it's the 50th anniversary, you all know that. The crossing of the bridge in Selma - the Edmund Pettus Bridge - was a bridge to the ballot. Leading up to that time, Rev. Martin Luther King always talked about the ballot, the ballot, the ballot being the path to legislation to improve the lives of people, to make the middle class stronger, and pull more people up into the middle class - the ballot, the ballot, the ballot.

This 50th anniversary gives us the opportunity - under the leadership of not only our Chairman, Mr. **Ben Ray Lujan** - but also Mr. Clyburn who's going to be here, and John Lewis who's going to be here, and Barbara Lee will have a conference or seminar or whatever this evening on this subject because only one-third of the electorate voted in the last election and there has to be a way for us to say to people: "This is why this is important in your lives. Decisions that are made at the legislative table affect you." Walter Reuther said the bread box and the ballot box cannot be separated. If you win at the negotiating table, what you win there can be removed by elections and those who do not share the views about America's working families.

But it's really important for another reason, and that is: the increased involvement of more people in the electoral process is the most wholesome thing we can do for our country, but it also slams the use of big money in politics. And that is what we have to do for our democracy: empower people more, have more people see the connection between their lives, the ballot box, and decisions that are made after as well as reducing the role of money - reducing the skepticism that the American people have about how strong their voices are in the political process.

Ben Ray Lujan is the perfect person to bring all of that together - his commitment to middle class economics, his appreciation for expanding the vote to many more people, and again, his effectiveness in getting the job done. So thank you for planning this conference.

Q: Is the idea of fully-subsided community college for the first two years ...

Leader Pelosi. It's hard. You know, that is the President's proposal and it is something that should happen. I don't want to turn this into a political conversation but we have a fight about these kind of things. You would think that a budget would be a statement of our national values. What is important to us as a country should be where we put our assets. And by the way - I harken back to what I said

before - nothing reduces the deficit more, because it brings more money to the treasury, than the education of the American people. So the investment in community colleges and reducing the cost - but what **Ben Ray Lujan** said was true about what we did but much of that has expired, and what we're trying to do is renew it. And the fight that we have in the battle of the budget is a reduction in commitment to Pell Grants - they want to freeze the amount of money for Pell Grants for 10 years thereby limiting the number of people who could access a Pell Grant and also how much money the Pell Grant will be for a family. Sometimes that difference makes that difference of a person going to higher education or not.

So, we think the two-year [community college plan] is the most logical thing that you can do. It may happen in some states before it happens nationally because of the battle of the budget that we have there, but again, it saves money as do Pell Grants, as does reducing the costs of student loans. And Ben Ray referred to it: it frees people, liberates people if they don't have this anvil - I call it the anvil of student debt - this anvil of student debt so that they can be entrepreneurial, they can take risks. August talked about discovery and invention and that entrepreneurial spirit that he has. If a student has all of that and massive debt, they have to make choices that are quite different than if they didn't. And as I say as a mother of five children: they might even get married.

[Laughter]

Take risks. Go out there. What could be more of a risk than starting a small business? It requires more optimism than maybe getting married. But it any event, it frees them to have choices and options - what we want the American people to have.

Congressman **Lujan**. Thank you. We have time for one more.

Q: [Inaudible]

Leader Pelosi. The question is: can I speak more about the role of women and girls in growing the economy, expanding the economy.

Yes. When I was - well, I don't know if it was the last time, but a recent time when I was in New Mexico, we talked about 'When Women Succeed, America Succeeds' which really is very important for our economy to understand that. Other countries do. The Prime Minister of Japan was in Davos last year. They asked: "How are you going to turn your economy around?" He said, "The involvement of women in our economy." The President of Colombia was in my office. He said: "We have a secret to grow our economy." I said: "Will you share it with us?" He said: "The involvement of women in our economy."

It's really so important. But for it to happen, we have to recognize that some changes have to happen. We have to have affordable, quality child care; we have to have paid sick leave; we have to have equal pay for equal work so that women can really thrive in the economy. But you can't say: "Our country is going to grow and be great but we're going to limit the involvement of half the people in our country," and expect that. Now it doesn't mean women are smarter or better or anything, it just means the beauty is in the mix. Having women at the table is very important. And I would extend that to women and minorities at the table. That's our country. That decision-making should happen with a full participation.

But we know - we have the facts, the figures, the data, the analysis and all the rest of it - if you involve women at every level - whether it's in the military training, whether it's in the academic world, whether it's in corporate America - the more women in leadership, the better. And of course, when it comes to government and politics, the most wholesome thing that we can do is to have more women appointed, elected, and not only having a seat at the table but having a seat at the head of the table.

And that's why I'm so proud that in our Caucus, we are a majority of women, minorities, and LGBT community folks. That's our Caucus - it's a majority of that beautiful mix, 'A'. 'B', not only there, but in our leadership, the people who would be chairs - in other words, when Ben Ray leads us to victory - those Ranking Members will be Chairs. The majority of people who would be Chairs are women,

minorities, LGBT. So it's a pretty exciting thing because, again, not only a seat at the table, but a seat at the head of the table. And leading us all in all that is **Ben Ray Lujan**.

Congressman **Lujan**. Thank you, Madam Leader. And again, if everyone can help me thank Randy Grissom, Kathy Keith, August, Izaiah, Cheneyand everyone who helped us today, again. Thank you, Madam Leader for having us today. Thanks everybody.

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150324-5074080 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: March 29, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

160 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Cibola County Beacon (Grants, New Mexico)

March 17, 2015

'Grading' New Mexico's Congressional Delegation

BYLINE: Rosanne Boyett

SECTION: NEWS

LENGTH: 488 words

CIBOLA COUNTY - U.S. Congresswoman Michelle **Luján** Grisham, New Mexico First District, was the main speaker at a March 9 Rally held at the Roundhouse. The two-hour event focused on environmental issues including protecting communities' health and safety rights, renewable energy, and extending tax credits for solar investments.

A variety of community-based groups and several state legislators participated in the discussions, according to Conservations Voters New Mexico officials.

The CVNM had scheduled the event to coincide with the publication of the annual League of Conservation Voters "National Environmental Scorecard."

The 2014 report rated members of Congress on their leadership and their effort to protect the environment. The Scorecard covers the top environmental, energy, and public health votes cast during the second session of the 113th Congress. It included 35 House votes, which ties the record for the most votes ever scored in a single year, according to a LCV recent press release.

The New Mexico delegation members' ratings ranged from the 91st down to the 6th percentile. Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** was ranked at 91 percent; Congresswoman **Luján** Grisham received a

score of 86 percent. Senators Martin Heinrich and Tom Udall both scored 80 percent; and Representative Steve Pearce was rated at 6 percent.

Congressman **Luján**, Third District, recently introduced legislation in the House of Representatives focused on remediating some of the consequences of uranium mining.

House Bill 994 expands compensation for those exposed to radiation while working in uranium mines or living downwind from atomic weapons testing sites. A bipartisan coalition, which included Senators Udall and Heinrich, introduced companion legislation in the Senate.

"We are happy that House Bill 994 was re-introduced," said Linda Evers, founding member of Post '71 who lives near Milan. "We look forward to working with Congressman **Luján** and moving this legislation forward."

"The Environmental Alliance of New Mexico and our members were excited to hear from a parade of conservation champions at Environmental Action Moral Monday on March 9," recalled Molly Sanders, CVNM Education Fund program director.

"The Santa Fe event was an opportunity for citizens to raise their voices at the New Mexico Legislature about issues affecting the health of our communities," added Liliana Castillo, CVNM.

Visit www.cvnm.org or www/cvnmef.org for more information.

SIDEBAR

League of Conservation Voters

For more than 40 years, the "National Environmental Scorecard" issued by LCV has been the nationally accepted yardstick used to rate members of Congress on environmental, public health, and energy issues. LCV has released an interactive National Environmental Scorecard, which allows users to easily see how every member of Congress voted since the launch of LCV's first Scorecard in 1971.

Visit http://www.lcv.org for more information.

-30

LOAD-DATE: March 18, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Cibola County Beacon.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

LUJAN: HOUSE REPUBLICAN BUDGET LEAVES MIDDLE-CLASS FAMILIES BEHIND;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 199 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the House Republican budget.

"Once again House Republicans have introduced a budget that makes steep cuts to areas that are critical to growing the middle class and strengthening our economy, while dismantling Medicare as we know it for New Mexico's seniors. House Republicans provide tax breaks to special interests and billionaires, yet shortchange investments in early education that are vital to our children's future and infrastructure that are essential to putting more New Mexicans to work.

"House Republicans' plan takes away health care coverage for more than 16 million Americans, putting health insurance companies back in charge. With New Mexico near the top in child hunger, the Republican budget lays the foundation for cuts to nutrition programs that help families put food on the table during difficult times. The House Republican budget moves New Mexico and our nation down the wrong path, leaving middle-class families behind."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan.**house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-house-republican-budget-leaves-middleclass-families-behind/

LOAD-DATE: March 18, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 17, 2015

LUJAN ANNOUNCES CONGRESSIONAL ART COMPETITION FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 721 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today details for this year's Congressional Art Competition. This annual competition allows members of Congress to display the talent and creativity of their high school constituents. The winning entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year. The winner will travel to Washington, D.C. for a reception honoring the national winners.

"The Congressional Art Competition gives New Mexico's young artists the opportunity to display their fine work and share their talents on the national stage," Congressman **Lujan** said. "I look forward to seeing the creative work from the next generation of artists who will continue in the rich artistic tradition that has long been a part of New Mexico's heritage and culture."

The competition is open to all high school students within the Third Congressional District of New Mexico. All entries must be submitted to **Lujan's** Santa Fe district office by Tuesday, April 7, 2015 at 5 p.m. The winner will be announced at a reception on Saturday, April 11.

2015 3rd Congressional District of New Mexico General Guidelines for Students

* A photo of each piece of artwork should be submitted with each piece of artwork (Rep. **Lujan's** office will take a photo of the artwork if the student is unable to produce a photo for submission).

* A completed 2015 Congressional Art Competition Student Information and Release Form (signed by a parent or guardian if the student is under the age of 18), must be submitted with each piece of artwork.

* Winner need not be present at the reception to win.

* Recognition will be given to the top placing pieces of artwork, with the winning piece being displayed in Washington, D.C.

* Artwork must be submitted for review and judging by Tuesday, April 7, 2015 at 5 p.m. to the Santa Fe office of Rep. **Lujan**.

Attn: Eliza Sultan

1611 Calle Lorca Suite A

Santa Fe, NM 87505

(505) 984-8950

2015 Congressional General Guidelines for Students

* The competition is open to high school students only. Exception may be made for schools that have 7th through 12th grades on one campus.

* Artwork must be two-dimensional.

* Each piece can be no larger than 28"x28"x4" (28 inches high, 28 inches wide, and 4 inches deep), including the frame. Artwork can be submitted to Rep. **Lujan's** office unframed. If the artwork is selected as the winning piece for display in D.C., it will be required to be framed and must adhere to the size guidelines. Rep.**Lujan's** office will work with the winner to have the winning piece framed.

* Framed artwork cannot weigh more than 15 lbs.

* Accepted media for artwork are as follows:

o Paintings: oil, acrylics, watercolor, etc.

o Drawings: pastels, colored pencils, pencil, charcoal, ink, markers

o Collages: must be two dimensional

o Prints: lithographs, silkscreen, block prints

o Mixed Media: use of more than two mediums such as pencil, ink, watercolor, etc.

o Computer-Generated art

o Photographs

* Each entry must be original in concept, design, and execution and may not violate U.S. copyright laws. Any entry that has been copied from an existing photo or image that was created by someone other than the student is a violation of the competition rules and will not be accepted.

* Work entered must be in the original medium (that is, not a scanned reproduction of a painting or drawing).

* Artwork will hang in the Capitol for the entire year of the exhibition and cannot be returned to the students earlier. Students should, therefore, submit artwork they will not need for other purposes.

* Artwork must adhere to the policy of the House Office Building Commission. In accordance with this policy, exhibits depicting subjects of contemporary political controversy or a sensationalistic or gruesome nature are not allowed. It is necessary that all artwork be reviewed by the panel chaired by the Architect of the Capitol and any portion not in consonance with the Commission's policy will be omitted from the exhibit. The panel will make the final decision regarding the suitability of all artwork for the Congressional Art Competition exhibition in the Capitol.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-announces-congressional-art-competition-for-high-school-students1/

LOAD-DATE: March 18, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

March 17, 2015 Tuesday 3:40 AM EST

Lujan: House Republican Budget Leaves Middle-Class Families Behind

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 196 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the House Republican budget.

"Once again House Republicans have introduced a budget that makes steep cuts to areas that are critical to growing the middle class and strengthening our economy, while dismantling Medicare as we know it for New Mexico's seniors. House Republicans provide tax breaks to special interests and billionaires, yet shortchange investments in early education that are vital to our children's future and infrastructure that are essential to putting more New Mexicans to work.

"House Republicans' plan takes away health care coverage for more than 16 million Americans, putting health insurance companies back in charge. With New Mexico near the top in child hunger, the Republican budget lays the foundation for cuts to nutrition programs that help families put food on the table during difficult times. The House Republican budget moves New Mexico and our nation down the wrong path, leaving middle-class families behind."

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150318-5066722 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: March 18, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 10, 2015

Casey, 211 Members of Congress File Supreme Court Brief in Support of Marriage Equality;
Court Set to Hear Arguments in Potentially Landmark Case in April;
Sen. Robert P. Casey, Jr. (D-PA) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 725 words

Washington, DC- Today, U.S. Senator Bob Casey (D-PA) announced that he has joined 211 members of Congress in filing an amicus brief with the U.S. Supreme Court in support of marriage equality as the court considers the issue during this term. The four cases from Ohio, Tennessee, Michigan and Kentucky challenge state laws that prohibit same-sex couples from marrying and deny recognition to lawful marriages performed by other states. The Supreme Court will decide whether the Constitution guarantees same-sex couples the freedom to marry and to have their marriages respected nationwide.

"I'm hopeful that the Supreme Court will soon issue a landmark decision that will achieve equal rights for all Americans," Senator Casey said. "As a U.S. Senator representing Pennsylvania, I have heard from many LGBT Pennsylvanians and their families who want nothing more than equal rights under the law."

Full text of amicus brief

Full list of signatories

United States Senators Members of the U.S. House of Representatives

Tammy Baldwin Alma S. Adams Ann McLane Kuster

Michael F. Bennet Pete Aguilar James R. Langevin

Richard Blumenthal Brad Ashford John B. Larson

Cory Booker Karen Bass Brenda L. Lawrence

Barbara Boxer Joyce Beatty Barbara Lee

Sherrod Brown Xavier Becerra Sander M. Levin

Maria Cantwell Ami Bera John Lewis

Benjamin L. Cardin Donald S. Beyer Jr. Ted Lieu

Thomas R. Carper Earl Blumenauer Dave Loebsack

Robert P. Casey, Jr. Suzanne Bonamici Zoe Lofgren

Christopher Coons Brendan F. Boyle Alan S. Lowenthal

Joe Donnelly Robert A. Brady Nita M. Lowey

Richard J. Durbin Julia Brownley **Ben Ray Lujan**

Dianne Feinstein Cheri Bustos Michelle **Lujan** Grisham

Al Franken Lois Capps Stephen F. Lynch

Kirsten Gillibrand Michael E. Capuano Carolyn B. Maloney

Martin Heinrich Tony Cardenas Sean Patrick Maloney

Heidi Heitkamp John C. Carney, Jr. Doris O. Matsui

Mazie K. Hirono Andre Carson Betty McCollum

Tim Kaine Matt Cartwright Jim McDermott

Angus S. King, Jr. Kathy Castor James P. McGovern

Amy Klobuchar Joaquin Castro Jerry McNerney

Patrick Leahy Judy Chu Gregory W. Meeks

Edward J. Markey David N. Cicilline Grace Meng

Claire McCaskill Katherine M. Clark Gwen Moore

Robert Menendez Yvette D. Clarke Seth Moulton

Jeff Merkley James E. Clyburn Patrick E. Murphy

Barbara A. Mikulski Steve Cohen Jerrold Nadler

Christopher S. Murphy Gerald E. Connolly Grace F. Napolitano

Patty Murray John Conyers, Jr. Richard E. Neal

Bill Nelson Jim Cooper Richard M. Nolan

Gary Peters Joe Courtney Donald Norcross

Jack Reed Joseph Crowley Eleanor Holmes Norton

Harry Reid Elijah E. Cummings Beto O'Rourke

Bernard Sanders Danny K. Davis Frank Pallone, Jr.

Brian Schatz Susan A. Davis Bill Pascrell, Jr.

Charles E. Schumer Peter A. DeFazio Donald M. Payne, Jr.

Jeanne Shaheen Diana DeGette Nancy Pelosi

Debbie Stabenow John K. Delaney Ed Perlmutter

Jon Tester Rosa L. DeLauro Scott H. Peters

Mark R. Warner Suzan K. DelBene Chellie Pingree

Elizabeth Warren Mark DeSaulnier Mark Pocan

Sheldon Whitehouse Theodore E. Deutch Jared Polis

Ron Wyden Debbie Dingell David E. Price Lloyd Doggett Mike Quigley

Michael F. Doyle Charles B. Rangel Tammy Duckworth Kathleen M. Rice Donna F. Edwards Lucille Roybal-Allard

Keith Ellison Raul Ruiz

Eliot L. Engel C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger Anna G. Eshoo Bobby L. Rush Elizabeth H. Esty Tim Ryan

Sam Farr Linda T. Sanchez

Chaka Fattah Loretta Sanchez

Bill Foster John P. Sarbanes

Lois Frankel Janice D. Schakowsky Marcia L. Fudge Adam B. Schiff

Tulsi Gabbard Robert C. "Bobby" Scott

Ruben Gallego Jose E. Serrano

John Garamendi Brad Sherman

Alan Grayson Albio Sires Al Green Louise McIntosh Slaughter Raul M. Grijalva Adam Smith

Luis V. Gutierrez Jackie Speier

Janice Hahn Eric Swalwell

Alcee L. Hastings Mark Takai Denny Heck Mark Takano

Brian Higgins Mike Thompson

James A. Himes Dina Titus

Michael M. Honda Paul Tonko Steny H. Hoyer Norma J. Torres Jared Huffman Niki Tsongas Steve Israel Chris Van Hollen Sheila Jackson Lee Juan Vargas

Hakeem S. Jeffries Marc A. Veasey

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr. Nydia M. Velazquez

Marcy Kaptur Timothy J. Walz Robin L. Kelly Debbie Wasserman Schultz

Joseph P. Kennedy Maxine Waters

Dan Kildee Bonnie Watson Coleman Derek Kilmer Peter Welch

Ron Kind Frederica S. Wilson Ann Kirkpatrick John A. Yarmuth

Read this original document at: http://www.casey.senate.gov/newsroom/releases/casey-211-members-of-congress-file-supreme-court-brief-in-support-of-marriage-equality

LOAD-DATE: March 11, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

March 7, 2015 Saturday 4:37 AM EST

Rep. Beatty Introduces Resolution to Issue Commemorative Stamp Honoring 50th Anniversary of Three Civil Rights Marches from Selma, Alabama to Montgomery

BYLINE: by MARY GRACE DEJUCOS, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 566 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, March 7 -- Rep. Joyce Beatty, D-Ohio, has introduced concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 23) "expressing the sense of Congress that the United States Postal Service should issue a commemorative stamp honoring the 50th anniversary of the three civil rights marches from Selma, Alabama to Montgomery, Alabama that took place over the course of several weeks in March 1965."

The resolution was introduced on March 4 and has 101 co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. Terri A. Sewell, D-Ala., Bradley Byrne, R-Ala., Will Hurd, R-Texas, Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., Al Green, D-Texas, Brian Higgins, D-N.Y., Sanford D. Bishop Jr., D-Ga., Robin Kelly, D-Ill., Ron Kind, D-Wis., Charles B. Rangel, D-N.Y., Andre Carson, D-Ind., Sheila Jackson Lee, D-Texas, Bonnie Watson Coleman, D-N.J., John A. Yarmuth, D-Ky., Jim Cooper, D-Tenn., Chaka Fattah, D-Pa., Matthew Cartwright, D-Pa., Janice Hahn, D-Calif., Yvette D. Clarke, D-N.Y., Robert A. Brady, D-Pa., Steve Cohen, D-Tenn., Mike Honda, D-Calif., Donald M. Payne Jr., D-N.J., Xavier Becerra, D-Calif., Marcy Kaptur, D-Ohio, Peter Welch, D-Vt., Lois Frankel, D-Fla., Alcee L Hastings, D-Fla., Frederica S. Wilson, D-Fla., Bobby L. Rush, D-Ill., Doris O. Matsui, D-Calif., Betty McCollum, D-Minn., John Conyers Jr., D-Mich., Brad Ashford, D-Neb., Paul Tonko, D-N.Y., Carolyn B. Maloney, D-N.Y., Cheri Bustos, D-Ill., G.K. Butterfield, D-N.C., Lloyd Doggett, D-Texas, Tim Ryan, D-Ohio, Brendan Boyle, D-Pa., Albio Sires, D-N.J., Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., Emanuel Cleaver, D-Mo., David Scott, D-Ga., Elijah E. Cummings, D-Md., Gregory W. Meeks, D-N.Y., Gwen Moore, D-Wis., Marcia L. Fudge, D-Ohio, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., Maxine Waters, D-Calif., William "Lacy" Clay Jr., D-Mo., Debbie Dingell, D-Mich., **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., Karen Bass, D-Calif., Barbara Lee, D-Calif., Timothy Walz, D-Minn., Marc Veasey, D-Texas, Robert C. Scott, D-Va., Ted Lieu, D-Calif., Susan A. Davis, D-Calif., Danny K. Davis, D-Ill., Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-Texas, James E. Clyburn, D-S.C., Bennie G. Thompson, D-Miss., Denny Heck, D-Wash., Alma S. Adams, D-N.C., Hakeen Jeffries, D-N.Y., Julia Brownley, D-Calif., Elizabeth Esty, D-Conn., Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., Frank Pallone Jr., D-N.J., Judy Chu, D-Calif., Gerald E. Connolly, D-Va., Alan Lowenthal, D-Calif., Nita M. Lowey, D-N.Y., Lucille Roybal-Allard, D-Calif., Katherine M. Clark, D-Mass., Juan C. Vargas, D-Calif., James McGovern, D-Mass., Brad Sherman, D-Calif., Chellie Pingree, D-Maine, John B. Larson, D-Conn., Linda T. Sanchez, D-Calif., Cedric L. Richmond, D-La., Donna F. Edwards, D-Md., Bruce Westerman, R-Ark., Steve Israel, D-N.Y., Rick Larsen, D-Wash., Steny H. Hoyer, D-Md., Michael E. Capuano, D-Mass., Corrine Brown, D-Fla., Brenda Lawrence, D-Mich., John Garamendi, D-Calif., Patrick Murphy, D-Fla., Jim Renacci, R-Ohio, Henry C. Johnson, D-Ga., Raul M. Grijalva, D-Ariz., Keith Ellison, D-Minn., Stacey Plaskett, D-V.I., and Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton, D-D.C.,

The legislation was referred to the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

The full text of the resolution is available https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-concurrent-resolution/23/text?q={%22search%22%3A%5B%22h+con+res+23%22%5D}.

Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://www.targetednews.com

18DejucosGrace 150306 23NaragK-1194816

LOAD-DATE: March 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Cibola County Beacon (Grants, New Mexico)

March 6, 2015

Expanding Health Benefits for Uranium Industry Workers

BYLINE: Rosanne Boyett

SECTION: NEWS

LENGTH: 547 words

CIBOLA COUNTY - "We are happy that House Bill 994 was re-introduced," said Linda Evers, founding member of Post '71 who lives near Milan. "We look forward to working with Congressman **Luján** and moving this legislation forward."

She made her comments after learning that Congressman **Ben Ray Luján**, New Mexico's Third District, had introduced legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives designed to expand compensation benefits for those exposed to radiation while working in uranium mines or living downwind from atomic weapons testing sites. Companion legislation, SB 331, was introduced in the U.S. Senate by a bipartisan coalition, which included New Mexico Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich.

"Until this gets done - compensating and recognizing the miners, workers, down-winders, and all who are suffering from the impacts of uranium mining and nuclear testing during the Cold War - we will continue to push this legislation forward," said Congressman **Luján**.

The 2015 amendments to the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act build upon previous RECA legislation by further widening qualifications for compensation for radiation exposure; qualifying Post 1971 uranium workers for compensation; and expanding the downwind exposure area to include Colorado, Idaho, Montana, and New Mexico, as well as any county in Arizona, Nevada, or Utah, which has been shown to be affected by downwind contamination.

Specifically, the 2015 amendments would:

o Add core drillers to the list of compensable employees, which currently only includes miners, millers and ore transporters

o Add renal cancer, or any other chronic renal disease, to the list of compensable diseases for employees of mines and mills; currently, millers and transporters are covered for kidney disease, but miners are not

o Allow claimants to combine work histories to meet the requirement of the legislation - for example, individuals who worked one-half a year in a mill and one-half in a mine would be eligible for compensation. Currently, the Department of Justice has issued some exceptions for this, but the policy is not codified in law.

o Make all claimants available for an equal amount of compensation, specifically

$150,000, regardless of whether they are millers, miners, ore transporters, onsite employees, or down-winders

o Make all claimants eligible for medical benefits. Currently, only miners, millers, and ore transporters can claim medical benefits through the medical expense compensation program

o Recognize radiation exposure from the Trinity Test Site in New Mexico as well as nuclear testing done in the Pacific Ocean

o Expand the downwind areas to include all of Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, and Utah for the Nevada Test Site; New Mexico for the Trinity Test Site; and Guam for the Pacific Ocean tests

o Allow the use of affidavits to substantiate employment history, presence in an affected area, and work at a test site; current legislation only allows miners to use affidavits.

"I will continue my efforts to educate my colleagues in the House about the critical need to compensate all those who played a key role in our national security during the Cold War and have suffered as a result of their efforts," said Congressman **Luján** in a recent press release.

-30

LOAD-DATE: March 7, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Cibola County Beacon.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

US Official News

March 6, 2015 Friday

Lujan Statement on Women's History Month

LENGTH: 337 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on Women's History Month, which is celebrated during the month of March.

"Women's History Month is an opportunity to reflect on the contributions and achievements that women have made in every aspect of our society. As we celebrate the progress that has been made, we must continue to push for greater equality, not only for women today, but also for the next generations of women.

"We must continue to fight for fairness in the workplace and commit to policies that support women and their families. Women have an increasingly stronger presence in the workforce; however, a wage gap still exists with women only earning 78 cents for every dollar earned by men, and women of color earning even less. More and more women act as both caretakers and earners, making the issues of paycheck fairness and equal pay important to not just women, but to their families and our economy.

"Expanding educational opportunities for all Americans, including young women, is of critical importance, particularly when it comes to the fields of science, technology, engineering and math that are vital to our economic competitiveness. Women are underrepresented in the STEM fields despite the fact that many discoveries by women have pioneered modern technology and pushed the boundaries of what is possible in the pursuit of knowledge. Encouraging people to study STEM at an early age, especially young ladies, is critical to ensure that instead of just using the next great app, they will be the one to create it.

"This Women's History Month, let us celebrate all that women have accomplished and contributed while continuing to advocate for equality and greater opportunity, because when women succeed, America succeeds."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

March 6, 2015 Friday

Lujan Statement on Women's History Month

LENGTH: 337 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on Women's History Month, which is celebrated during the month of March.

"Women's History Month is an opportunity to reflect on the contributions and achievements that women have made in every aspect of our society. As we celebrate the progress that has been made, we must continue to push for greater equality, not only for women today, but also for the next generations of women.

"We must continue to fight for fairness in the workplace and commit to policies that support women and their families. Women have an increasingly stronger presence in the workforce; however, a wage gap still exists with women only earning 78 cents for every dollar earned by men, and women of color earning even less. More and more women act as both caretakers and earners, making the issues of paycheck fairness and equal pay important to not just women, but to their families and our economy.

"Expanding educational opportunities for all Americans, including young women, is of critical importance, particularly when it comes to the fields of science, technology, engineering and math that are vital to our economic competitiveness. Women are underrepresented in the STEM fields despite the fact that many discoveries by women have pioneered modern technology and pushed the boundaries of what is possible in the pursuit of knowledge. Encouraging people to study STEM at an early age, especially young ladies, is critical to ensure that instead of just using the next great app, they will be the one to create it.

"This Women's History Month, let us celebrate all that women have accomplished and contributed while continuing to advocate for equality and greater opportunity, because when women succeed, America succeeds."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: March 7, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

169 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

March 4, 2015 Wednesday

Iran deal a 'potential nuclear nightmare'; NM reaction to Netanyahu's controversial speech is mixed

BYLINE: Copyright © 2015 Albuquerque Journal BY MICHAEL COLEMAN JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 1044 words

WASHINGTON - Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stood before a joint session of Congress on Tuesday and blasted a pending White House deal on Iran's nuclear program, asserting it could "pave the way" to mass destruction in the Middle East.

But he appeared to make little headway with New Mexico Democrats as he encouraged congressional opposition to the Obama administration's negotiating strategy.

The speech at times drew thunderous applause and standing ovations, but some Democrats - including Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M. - remained unmoved and even stone-faced at times. Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., was the only member of the state's delegation to boycott the speech, although he watched from his Senate office.

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., said she was dismayed by Netanyahu's tone, while her guest, Rabbi Harry Rosenfeld of Albuquerque's Congregation Albert, told the Journal that Netanyahu "reinforced the seriousness of the threat that Iran poses to Israel and the world."

Rosenfeld also said that "as an American Jew" he was gratified to witness Congress' enthusiastic support for Israel within the House chamber. He said that although there is no consensus within his congregation about how to deal with the Iranian threat, "everybody is extremely worried."

"People would like a tougher deal than what they are hearing about," Rosenfeld said.

Netanyahu's speech was fraught with controversy because it was not cleared by the White House and Israeli elections are approaching. The Israeli prime minister told Congress that the nuclear agreement the White House is pursuing "doesn't block Iran's path to the bomb; it paves Iran's path to the bomb." He also offered a brief history lesson, reminding Congress of the radical Islamic revolution that transformed Iran's politics 36 years ago.

"Iran's revolutionary regime is deeply rooted in militant Islam, and that's why this regime will always be an enemy of America," Netanyahu said.

"If anyone thinks this deal kicks the can down the road, think again," Netanyahu added. "When we get down that road, we'll face a much more dangerous Iran, a Middle East littered with nuclear bombs and a countdown to a potential nuclear nightmare."

At the White House, President Barack Obama dismissed Netanyahu's speech as "nothing new" and insisted ongoing negotiations toward a deal will best ensure Iran doesn't acquire a nuclear weapon. The White House contends Netanyahu's approach would lead to less - not more - scrutiny of Iran's nuclear program, and that could lead to a need for military action. Obama said Netanyahu's speech "didn't offer any viable alternatives."

"I have repeatedly said that I would rather have no deal than a bad deal," Obama said. "But if we are successful in negotiating then, in fact, this will be the best deal possible to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. Nothing else comes close. Sanctions won't do it. Military action would not be as successful as the deal that we have put forward."

Netanyahu insisted that the world demand Iran stop threatening its neighbors in the Middle East, supporting terrorists and vowing to destroy Israel.

"This is a bad deal - a very bad deal," he said of the pending nuclear pact. "We are better-off without it."

Mixed reaction

The atmosphere swirling around Netanyahu's controversial speech rivaled that of a presidential State of the Union address, but with more protesters outside the Capitol and perhaps even more security inside. House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, who presented Netanyahu with a bust of Winston Churchill before his speech, said the prime minister was blunt and effective.

"This was a speech the American people needed to hear, plain and simple," Boehner said. "It addressed the gravity of the threats we face and why we cannot allow a nuclear Iran, or any semblance of a path to a nuclear Iran."

Udall, who sits on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, entered the chamber shortly before Netanyahu's speech and stood in the back. He applauded softly at some of Netatyahu's remarks but remained unmoved by others. Udall said he attended the speech "out of respect for the U.S.-Israel relationship." He also said that although all U.S. leaders oppose a nuclear-armed Iran, American diplomats should be given room to negotiate a deal that prevents such a scenario.

"I have deep concerns with how the speaker (Boehner) and prime minister scheduled his remarks and with the message the prime minister delivered," Udall said. "A resolution would reduce Iran's capability to produce the nuclear materials for a weapon while guaranteeing strict international inspections that allow the international community to respond to any possible nuclear breakout. Attempting to undermine these talks two weeks before the Israeli elections is both crassly political and dangerous. I urge the Congress not to interfere with the negotiations - that is a risky andmyopic road to take."

Rep. Steve Pearce, the delegation's lone Republican, applauded Netanyahu's address.

"The Israeli leader rightfully criticized the administration's ongoing closed-door negotiations between the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran, which are leading our nation down a very dangerous path and placing our world in harm's way," Pearce said. "We must not turn our backs on Israel in favor of Iran, a country that has proven itself untrustworthy. I stand with Israel. And so should President Obama."

Heinrich said he feared that Netanyahu's approach would lead to a war "that would likely cost our nation dearly in blood and treasure."

"If we abandon negotiations due to unrealistic expectations, then we will undoubtedly lose (international) inspections," Heinrich said. "That would encourage Iran to resume development and would result in a very high likelihood of direct military conflict."

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** offered support for Israel.

"Although the timing and planning of the speech was not ideal, our relationship with Israel must remain strong and bipartisan," he said.

Lujan Grisham said, "It was pretty clear (that Netanyahu was saying), 'You've got to decide between what's being recommended to you by the White House and me.'"

"There was no softening. I was hopeful that he would have a softer tone and say, 'Here are my worries.' He didn't do that."

LOAD-DATE: March 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu speaks before a joint meeting of Congress on Capitol Hill in Washington on Tuesday.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Albuquerque Journal

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 4, 2015

LUJAN STATEMENT ON WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 321 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on Women's History Month, which is celebrated during the month of March.

"Women's History Month is an opportunity to reflect on the contributions and achievements that women have made in every aspect of our society. As we celebrate the progress that has been made, we must continue to push for greater equality, not only for women today, but also for the next generations of women.

"We must continue to fight for fairness in the workplace and commit to policies that support women and their families. Women have an increasingly stronger presence in the workforce; however, a wage gap still exists with women only earning 78 cents for every dollar earned by men, and women of color earning even less. More and more women act as both caretakers and earners, making the issues of paycheck fairness and equal pay important to not just women, but to their families and our economy.

"Expanding educational opportunities for all Americans, including young women, is of critical importance, particularly when it comes to the fields of science, technology, engineering and math that are vital to our economic competitiveness. Women are underrepresented in the STEM fields despite the fact that many discoveries by women have pioneered modern technology and pushed the boundaries of what is possible in the pursuit of knowledge. Encouraging people to study STEM at an early age, especially young ladies, is critical to ensure that instead of just using the next great app, they will be the one to create it.

"This Women's History Month, let us celebrate all that women have accomplished and contributed while continuing to advocate for equality and greater opportunity, because when women succeed, America succeeds."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-womens-history-month/

LOAD-DATE: March 5, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

171 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

March 4, 2015 Wednesday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 314 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on Women's History Month, which is celebrated during the month of March.

"Women's History Month is an opportunity to reflect on the contributions and achievements that women have made in every aspect of our society. As we celebrate the progress that has been made, we must continue to push for greater equality, not only for women today, but also for the next generations of women.

"We must continue to fight for fairness in the workplace and commit to policies that support women and their families. Women have an increasingly stronger presence in the workforce; however, a wage gap still exists with women only earning 78 cents for every dollar earned by men, and women of color earning even less. More and more women act as both caretakers and earners, making the issues of paycheck fairness and equal pay important to not just women, but to their families and our economy.

"Expanding educational opportunities for all Americans, including young women, is of critical importance, particularly when it comes to the fields of science, technology, engineering and math that are vital to our economic competitiveness. Women are underrepresented in the STEM fields despite the fact that many discoveries by women have pioneered modern technology and pushed the boundaries of what is possible in the pursuit of knowledge. Encouraging people to study STEM at an early age, especially young ladies, is critical to ensure that instead of just using the next great app, they will be the one to create it.

"This Women's History Month, let us celebrate all that women have accomplished and contributed while continuing to advocate for equality and greater opportunity, because when women succeed, America succeeds."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: March 5, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

172 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

March 4, 2015 Wednesday 2:33 AM EST

Lujan Statement on Women's History Month

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 322 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on Women's History Month, which is celebrated during the month of March.

"Women's History Month is an opportunity to reflect on the contributions and achievements that women have made in every aspect of our society. As we celebrate the progress that has been made, we must continue to push for greater equality, not only for women today, but also for the next generations of women.

"We must continue to fight for fairness in the workplace and commit to policies that support women and their families. Women have an increasingly stronger presence in the workforce; however, a wage gap still exists with women only earning 78 cents for every dollar earned by men, and women of color earning even less. More and more women act as both caretakers and earners, making the issues of paycheck fairness and equal pay important to not just women, but to their families and our economy.

"Expanding educational opportunities for all Americans, including young women, is of critical importance, particularly when it comes to the fields of science, technology, engineering and math that are vital to our economic competitiveness. Women are underrepresented in the STEM fields despite the fact that many discoveries by women have pioneered modern technology and pushed the boundaries of what is possible in the pursuit of knowledge. Encouraging people to study STEM at an early age, especially young ladies, is critical to ensure that instead of just using the next great app, they will be the one to create it.

"This Women's History Month, let us celebrate all that women have accomplished and contributed while continuing to advocate for equality and greater opportunity, because when women succeed, America succeeds."

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150305-5051945 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: March 5, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

173 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

March 4, 2015 Wednesday

Lujan Statement on DHS Funding

LENGTH: 197 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting for a clean bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through the end of the fiscal year.

"By finally joining Democrats in passing a full-year funding bill - a bill that House Republicans could have brought up for a vote anytime in the last three months - the Department of Homeland Security will now have the resources and certainty it needs.

"Since last year, Republicans' political games with stopgap funding bills have had a negative impact on the Department's ability to plan and allocate billions of dollars in grants that fund local emergency management programs that support first responders, such as firefighters and EMTs. DHS will now be able to move forward with these critical grants, but not before the American people learned that House Republicans are willing to put their political security ahead of America's national security."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

March 4, 2015 Wednesday

Lujan Statement on DHS Funding

LENGTH: 197 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting for a clean bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through the end of the fiscal year.

"By finally joining Democrats in passing a full-year funding bill - a bill that House Republicans could have brought up for a vote anytime in the last three months - the Department of Homeland Security will now have the resources and certainty it needs.

"Since last year, Republicans' political games with stopgap funding bills have had a negative impact on the Department's ability to plan and allocate billions of dollars in grants that fund local emergency management programs that support first responders, such as firefighters and EMTs. DHS will now be able to move forward with these critical grants, but not before the American people learned that House Republicans are willing to put their political security ahead of America's national security."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: March 5, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Carlsbad Current-Argus (New Mexico)

March 3, 2015 Tuesday

Looking at the high costs of House Speaker Boehner

BYLINE: By Hal Rhodes Upon Reflection

SECTION: OPINION

LENGTH: 638 words

As these lines are written the bumptious Republican majority that controls the U.S. House seems prepared to shut down the Department of Homeland Security or, perhaps, avoid a shutdown by funding its operations for only three weeks.

It's madness. By a large bipartisan margin, the Senate has already sent the House a measure funding the department through September. It is a straight-forward funding bill, no gimmicks, no distractions. But wingnuts in the Republican House are demanding a measure that includes language invalidating some of President Obama's executive orders on immigration reform. Slipping extraneous stuff like that into a bill is called adding a "poison pill," something calculated to kill a proposal.

House speakers who are serious about getting things done, especially where national security is concerned, usually knock heads of supporters who foster such nonsense and tell them to cool it. But the current House Speaker, John Boehner, acquiesced and tried to borrow three weeks to avoid an immediate shutdown. Boehner has accomplished little as Speaker, but he plainly likes the title.

His latest caper began last fall when congressional Republicans joined Democrats in sending the president a measure funding the federal government, pending his signature. But there was a hitch. Funds for the Department of Homeland Security were withheld, on the understanding that the incoming Republican Senate and House majorities would approve separate Homeland Security funding when the new Congress convened in January.

Just about everyone smelled a skunk. Republicans had created a "bargaining tool" for themselves whereby they could hold Homeland Security hostage to their demands that the president's immigration reforms would be rescinded in return for an HSD funding bill.

Sure enough, when the new Congress undertook to draft a budget for Homeland Security, House Republicans used their majority to attach provisions to the measure that would nullify the president's immigration reforms. Two New Mexico's House members Democrats **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, voted against it. The third, Republican Steve Pearce voted for it, of course.

There was no way Senate Democrats were going to be blackmailed into eviscerating the president's executive orders by approving the House bill. What's more, Senate rules give the Democrats the tools with which to block the measure.

Boehner fully understood that the immigration provision would be a poison pill in the Senate and would cripple funding for Homeland Security. Prominent Senate Republicans had cautioned the Speaker against allowing such a provision in the bill.

Arizona's John McCain argued that Obama's reforms didn't belong in the legislation, noting that the issues are now before the federal judiciary after a judge in Texas ruled against them. Whereupon, by a 68-31 margin the Senate passed out its own uncluttered funding bill.

Basically the question had become: Why muck things up when the operations of a critical department hang in the balance?

Much has been made of the thousands upon thousands jobs that hang in the balance were Homeland Security employs were to be furloughed and/or made to work without pay.

New Mexico Democratic Sen. Tom Udall estimated that more than 2,300 DHS employees in New Mexico "including 1,780 Customs and Border Protection workers" would be caught in such a shutdown.

Beyond that is the whole specter of agencies and programs critical, literally, to homeland security put in jeopardy at the very time ISIS and other terrorist operations are escalating threats against American targets.

Why would Boehner risk such dangers? Quite simply because he fears being deposed as Speaker if he crosses the rowdy mob of House Republicans upon which his speakership rests.

That's the high price that comes with John Boehner as Speaker.

LOAD-DATE: March 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Carlsbad Current-Argus, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 3, 2015

LUJAN STATEMENT ON DHS FUNDING; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 181 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting for a clean bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through the end of the fiscal year.

"By finally joining Democrats in passing a full-year funding bill - a bill that House Republicans could have brought up for a vote anytime in the last three months - the Department of Homeland Security will now have the resources and certainty it needs.

"Since last year, Republicans' political games with stopgap funding bills have had a negative impact on the Department's ability to plan and allocate billions of dollars in grants that fund local emergency management programs that support first responders, such as firefighters and EMTs. DHS will now be able to move forward with these critical grants, but not before the American people learned that House Republicans are willing to put their political security ahead of America's national security."

Read this original document at: http://lujan.house.gov/press-releases/lujan-statement-on-dhs-funding1/

LOAD-DATE: March 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

March 3, 2015 Tuesday

The high costs of Boehner

BYLINE: Hal Rhodes

SECTION: TODAY'S OPINIONS

LENGTH: 666 words

As these lines are written the bumptious Republican majority that controls the U.S. House seems prepared to shut down the Department of Homeland Security or, perhaps, avoid a shutdown by funding its operations for only three weeks.

It's madness. By a large bipartisan margin, the Senate has already sent the House a measure funding the department through September. It is a straight-forward funding bill, no gimmicks, no distractions.

But wingnuts in the Republican House are demanding a measure that includes language invalidating some of President Barack Obama's executive orders on immigration reform. Slipping extraneous stuff like that into a bill is called adding a "poison pill," something calculated to kill a proposal.

House speakers who are serious about getting things done, especially where national security is concerned, usually knock heads of supporters who foster such nonsense and tell them to cool it. But the current House Speaker, John Boehner, acquiesced and tried to borrow three weeks to avoid an immediate shutdown.

Boehner has accomplished little as Speaker, but he plainly likes the title.

His latest caper began last fall when congressional Republicans joined Democrats in sending the president a measure funding the federal government, pending his signature.

But there was a hitch. Funds for the Department of Homeland Security were withheld, on the understanding that the incoming Republican Senate and House majorities would approve separate Homeland Security funding when the new Congress convened in January.

Just about everyone smelled a skunk. Republicans had created a "bargaining tool" for themselves whereby they could hold Homeland Security hostage to their demands that the president's immigration reforms would be rescinded in return for a Homeland Security funding bill.

Sure enough, when the new Congress undertook to draft a budget for Homeland Security, House Republicans used their majority to attach provisions to the measure that would nullify the president's immigration reforms.

Two New Mexico's House members -- Democrats **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Luján** Grisham -- voted against it. The third, Republican Steve Pearce voted for it, of course.

There was no way Senate Democrats were going to be blackmailed into eviscerating the president's executive orders by approving the House bill. What's more, Senate rules give the Democrats the tools with which to block the measure.

Boehner fully understood that the immigration provision would be a poison pill in the Senate and would cripple funding for Homeland Security. Prominent Senate Republicans had cautioned the speaker against allowing such a provision in the bill.

Arizona's John McCain argued that Obama's reforms didn't belong in the legislation, noting that the issues are now before the federal judiciary after a judge in Texas ruled against them.

Whereupon, by a 68-31 margin the Senate passed out its own uncluttered funding bill.

Basically, the question had become: Why muck things up when the operations of a critical department hang in the balance?

Much has been made of the thousands upon thousands of jobs that hang in the balance were Homeland Security employs were to be furloughed and/or made to work without pay.

New Mexico Democratic Sen. Tom Udall estimated that more than 2,300 DHS employees in New Mexico -- "including 1,780 Customs and Border Protection workers" -- would be caught in such a shutdown.

Beyond that is the whole specter of agencies and programs critical, literally, to homeland security put in jeopardy at the very time ISIS and other terrorist operations are escalating threats against American targets.

Why would Boehner risk such dangers?

Quite simply because he fears being deposed as speaker if he crosses the rowdy mob of House Republicans upon which his speakership rests.

That's the high price that comes with John Boehner as speaker.

At week's end, Boehner and his bunch kicked the can down the road for another week, though few think Boehner is in charge.

LOAD-DATE: March 11, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

178 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

March 3, 2015 Tuesday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON DHS FUNDING MARCH 3, 2015

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 175 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting for a clean bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through the end of the fiscal year.

"By finally joining Democrats in passing a full-year funding bill - a bill that House Republicans could have brought up for a vote anytime in the last three months - the Department of Homeland Security will now have the resources and certainty it needs.

"Since last year, Republicans' political games with stopgap funding bills have had a negative impact on the Department's ability to plan and allocate billions of dollars in grants that fund local emergency management programs that support first responders, such as firefighters and EMTs. DHS will now be able to move forward with these critical grants, but not before the American people learned that House Republicans are willing to put their political security ahead of America's national security."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: April 24, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

179 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

March 3, 2015 Tuesday 6:26 PM EST

Lujan Statement on DHS Funding

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 184 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting for a clean bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through the end of the fiscal year.

"By finally joining Democrats in passing a full-year funding bill - a bill that House Republicans could have brought up for a vote anytime in the last three months - the Department of Homeland Security will now have the resources and certainty it needs.

"Since last year, Republicans' political games with stopgap funding bills have had a negative impact on the Department's ability to plan and allocate billions of dollars in grants that fund local emergency management programs that support first responders, such as firefighters and EMTs. DHS will now be able to move forward with these critical grants, but not before the American people learned that House Republicans are willing to put their political security ahead of America's national security."

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150304-5048788 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: March 3, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

180 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

March 1, 2015 Sunday

Most of delegation to see Israeli PM

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. B2

LENGTH: 820 words

Most of New Mexico's congressional delegation will be in the U.S. House Tuesday when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu gives a controversial speech to a joint session of Congress, but Sen. Martin Heinrich won't be among them.

The speech to Congress, an idea hatched by Netanyahu and House Speaker John Boehner without consulting the White House, comes in the midst of especially tense relations between Washington and Tel Aviv. Netanyahu has criticized the Obama administration's negotiations with Iran on a nuclear deal, with Boehner and most congressional Republicans sympathetic to the Israeli position.

In a show of solidarity with Obama, about two dozen congressional Democrats, including Heinrich, have announced that they will boycott the speech.

"I'm always happy to listen to what Prime Minister Netanyahu has to say," Heinrich said. "I intend to watch his speech about Iran from my office, but I have strong objections to using the floor of the United State Congress as a stage for his election campaign - or anyone's for that matter. The U.S.-Israeli alliance is too important to be politically exploited just days before Israeli voters go to the polls."

The speech has become a politically sensitive issue in part because the Israeli lobby is strong on Capitol Hill and no member of Congress wants to get caught in the cross-hairs of AIPAC, the influential American Israel Public Affairs Committee. The committee's members are arriving in Washington over the weekend in preparation for next week's annual conference in Washington and are urging members of the House and Senate to show up for the speech.

Some Democratic senators, such as moderate Tim Kaine of Virginia, along with liberal independent Bernie Sanders of Vermont, have decided to boycott the speech, noting that it would be more appropriate after Israel's leadership elections on March 17.

Not surprisingly, Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., plans to attend. So does Sen. Tom Udall, a Democrat who sits on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. But Udall's not happy about it.

"Israel is a critical ally in the Middle East, and Sen. Udall will attend the prime minister's speech," his spokeswoman, Jennifer Talhelm, told me Friday. "But he believes Speaker Boehner and Prime Minister Netanyahu made a serious mistake by scheduling this speech on a partisan basis and should reschedule through the normal nonpartisan process for a time after the Israeli elections that is less politically charged."

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, a Democrat and the chairman of the Democrat Congressional Campaign Committee, also said he will be there - grudgingly.

"I plan to attend the Prime Minister's speech," **Lujan** said in a statement to the Journal on Friday. "I do, however have concerns with how this speech was scheduled and the timing. Our commitment to Israel must remain bipartisan. The failure to properly consult with the White House and Congressional Democrats needlessly injected partisan politics into this issue."

"Despite serious misgivings, Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham will attend the speech," said her spokesman, Gilbert Gallegos.

Former Gov. Gary Johnson is nothing if not tenacious.

The two-term former Republican governor from New Mexico, who has scaled the tallest peaks on all seven continents, recently announced that he will once again run for president in 2016 as a Libertarian.

Johnson sought the White House in 2012 as a Republican only to be mostly stymied in his attempts at to be included in the GOP debates. Johnson ultimately dropped his quest to win the Republican nomination and secured the Libertarian Party's presidential nomination instead.

He received 1 percent of the vote, a paltry number by election standards but still a record for a Libertarian candidate.

Johnson, who is now president and CEO of Washington state-based Cannibas Sativa Inc., is still banging the drum for marijuana legalization. That's why he was at CPAC - the Conservative Political Action Conference - in suburban Washington, D.C., on Thursday. Johnson debated legalization with Anne Marie Buerkle of the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission, who argued against pot as "mind-altering" and "destructive," as well as problematic for still developing children.

Johnson was viewed as a radical Republican on this issue when he first announced his support for legalization as governor in 1999, but judging by sometimes enthusiastic applause for Johnson's views at the conservative conference on Thursday, the party has evolved on this issue.

The growing influence of libertarian dogma into conservative circles has certainly helped fuel the shift. At CPAC, Johnson touted pot as a medicinal miracle and a safer alternative to drinking alcohol.

"Having a debate about marijuana legalization is like having a debate about whether the sun is going to come up tomorrow," Johnson said. "The sun is going to come up. Marijuana is going to be legalized."

E-mail: mcoleman@abqjournal.com

LOAD-DATE: March 2, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Albuquerque Journal

Political Transcript Wire

February 27, 2015 Friday

REP. JOE PITTS HOLDS A HEARING ON THE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT BUDGET REQUEST FOR F.Y. 2016

LENGTH: 29512 words

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH HOLDS A HEARING ON THE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT BUDGET REQUEST FOR F.Y. 2016

FEBRUARY 26, 2015

SPEAKERS: REP. JOE PITTS, R-PA. CHAIRMAN REP. MICHAEL C. BURGESS, R-TEXAS REP. EDWARD WHITFIELD, R-KY. REP. JOHN SHIMKUS, R-ILL. REP. TIM MURPHY, R-PA. REP. MARSHA BLACKBURN, R-TENN. REP. BRETT GUTHRIE, R-KY. REP. LEONARD LANCE, R-N.J. REP. GUS BILIRAKIS, R-FLA. REP. RENEE ELLMERS, R-N.C. REP. MORGAN GRIFFITH, R-VA. REP. CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS, R-WASH. REP. LARRY BUCSHON, R-IND. REP. SUSAN W. BROOKS, R-IND. REP. BILLY LONG, R-MO. REP. CHRIS COLLINS, R-N.Y. REP. JOE L. BARTON, R-TEXAS REP. FRED UPTON, R-MICH. EX OFFICIO

REP. GENE GREEN, D-TEXAS RANKING MEMBER REP. ELIOT L. ENGEL, D-N.Y. REP. LOIS CAPPS, D-CALIF. REP. JAN SCHAKOWSKY, D-ILL. REP. G.K. BUTTERFIELD, D-N.C. REP. KATHY CASTOR, D-FLA. REP. JOHN SARBANES, D-MD. REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M. REP. DORIS MATSUI, D-CALIF. REP. KURT SCHRADER, D-ORE. REP. JOSEPH P. KENNEDY III, D-MASS. REP. TONY CARDENAS, D-CALIF. REP. FRANK PALLONE JR., D-N.J. EX OFFICIO

WITNESSES: SYLVIA MATHEWS BURWELL, SECRETARY, THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

[*] PITTS: The subcommittee will come to order. The Chair will recognize himself for an opening statement.

I would like to thank Secretary Burwell for appearing before the Subcommittee to discuss the administration's FY2016 budget request for the Department of Health and Human Services. Earlier this year, Madam Secretary, you stated that, quote, "The hallmark of effective leadership is instilling a culture of transparency, ownership, and accountability," end quote.

These are all laudable goals and I appreciate your verbal commitment to these principles. However, your Department's actions have failed to adhere to the same standard. For example, we have only heard silence from the White House on how the administration is preparing for an adverse ruling in King v. Burwell.

We did receive a reply from you, and I thank you for that courtesy. But your letter contained no substantive answers to our questions. During your testimony to the Senate Finance Committee, you were again asked about the administration's plans. And, again, you repeatedly declined to provide a direct answer.

And, you know, this is not the transparency that we had hoped for. Understandably, we were very frustrated with Administration witnesses artfully dodging the questions we ask here. And so I'm asking you today, please let your guard down a little and give us direct and complete answers to our questions.

In 2009, the president correctly said, quote, "The real problem with our long-term deficit actually has to do with our entitlement obligations," end quote. Since then we have had the Simpson-Bowles Commission, a supercommittee, sequestration, and a government shutdown, and never once in all this time did the administration propose a plan to get the nation's fiscal House in order by recommending reforms to entitlements.

The 2014 Medicare Trustees Report, which you signed, tells us that Medicare will be bankrupt very soon. We recently had Senator Joe Lieberman and former OMB Director Alice Rivlin here. And they told us much the same. We stand ready to do the hard work of saving and strengthening Medicare. But we need a willing partner.

Once again, the president's budget fails to propose serious entitlement reform. The proposals in the budget related to Medicaid amount to saving just 15 days worth of program spending over the next 10 years. The plan, apparently, is to let Medicare expenditures continue to grow without any of the structural reforms needed to strengthen and save this critical program. And this is not taking ownership.

If we are going to save and strengthen our safety net programs for the most vulnerable, we have to do better than the president's budget. Both parties have to work together. You, we, and the president need to work together to save our entitlement programs to make them sustainable. So we ask that you please work with us.

On another subject, you may also remember that, in early November of last year, we spoke on the phone about why HHS has so far failed to hold California accountable under federal law. As you know, on August 22, 2014, the California Department for Managed Health Care --DMHC, issued a directive mandating that all plans under DMHC authority immediately include coverage for all legal abortions.

This is in direct violation of the Weldon Amendment, a civil rights statute that prohibits federal taxpayer funding for Federal agencies and state or local governments that discriminate because a health care entity does not provide, pay for, provide coverage of, or refer for abortions.

What California is doing is clearly illegal. It is also morally wrong, and violates the fundamental principles of freedom and conscience that our democracy is founded on. And it is your job to stop them, and so far that hasn't happened.

I'll have more to say about this when we get to questions. In the mean time, Madam Secretary, we look forward to your testimony. We hope that you will stay to answer all of our questions, and, with only five minutes of questions per member, we respectfully ask that you keep your answers concise and to the point.

And Dr. Burgess, do you want the remaining time?

BURGESS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's very kind of you.

And Secretary, thank you for coming to our humble little subcommittee. I am frustrated over the administration's lack of transparency and the ability for Congress to get information that realistically, we've been asking for the last four or five years, but specifically around ACA-created entities -- the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation, the Prevention in Public Health Fund, the Consumer Information -- the Office of Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight and the Patient Center for Outcomes and Research Initiative.

Year after year, they have failed to achieve their mission of reducing health care cost and improving quality. We can't hold them accountable if we don't know how you're spending the dollars, so we, you and I have talked about this. And I do look forward to our responses in being able to finally get that information regarding those agencies under your (inaudible).

PITTS: The Chair thanks the Gentleman.

And I recognize the Ranking Member, Mr. Green, five minutes for an opening statement.

GREEN: Good morning and thank you, Secretary Burwell for being here today to discuss the president's FY '16 budget proposal for the Department of Health and Human Services.

The budget is more than a line of items on a page. It's a reflection of the priorities of our country. Our commitment must be to protect the progress that we made and to make strategic investments so that progress will continue in the future.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the creation of Medicare and Medicaid. Since the Children's Health Insurance Program was created to ensure America's children have insurance, most recently Congress passed the Affordable Care Act, dramatically expanding access to health coverage and high quality care.

The Affordable Care Act took historic steps toward laying the foundation for a better and more efficient health care system and expanding access to cover for millions of Americans for whom it was previously out of reach.

It also took important steps to restore the fiscal solvency of our health care system. According to the most recent estimates by the Congressional Budget Office, the Affordable Care Act will reduce the deficit by more than $100 billion for the first decade and by more than $1 trillion in the second decade.

As we have seen through the second enrollment period, the Affordable Care Act has already succeeded in ensuring every American can have access to high quality affordable coverage. Thanks to the ACA nearly, 30 million Americans got covered. These are people who would otherwise be uninsured. We have made great progress, but the work is not done. I thank the agency for

implementing the landmark health reform law and continuing to work with us so that they can build on these successes.

It's -- in addition to prioritizing essential services and programs, I was pleased to see that the budget makes strategic investments to improve our health care system and clear the way for the progress into the future. This includes funding to support training of the next generation of health care providers, national preparedness against threats to public health, biomedical research, drug safety and mental health services.

The budget invests in community health centers to support the care that provide for 22 million patients in their role at providing an accessible, reliable source of primary care in underserved communities. Health centers will continue to be a critical element in our health system. The president's proposal takes a critical important step by including four years of funding for the children's healthcare insurance program.

Currently, more than 10 million children get health care insurance through CHIP. Additional funding for CHIP must be authorized so that there is no disruption in coverage and the states are able to continue operating their programs.

The budget proposes the increase in NIH funding, since its creation NIH is fostered new remarkable advancements in human health, but for the past decade, NIH has suffered inadequate funding. Without significant funding increases, the U.S. will lose its status as a global real leader in science and innovation. Additional resources will help defeat our nation's most harmful diseases and ensure that the United States continues to lead biomedical research and scientific breakthroughs.

The budget proposal strengthens national preparedness for threats to public health including naturally occurring threats and deliberate attacks. It also includes funding to reinforce our nation's ability to move quickly to detect infectious disease outbreaks through a new Advanced Molecular Detection initiative, maintaining strong expertise at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

These are just a few highlights of what is included in the proposed HHS budget. I look forward to hearing more about the administration's proposal during today's hearing.

Thank you, Madam Secretary for your -- joining the committee to discuss the HHS budget. And if someone would like about a minute and 20 seconds -- my colleague from California, Ms. Matsui.

MATSUI: Thank you very much for yielding me time. I welcome Secretary Burwell. I appreciate the goals the president and you have laid forth in the fiscal budget 2016, Department of HHS services budget. Building on the improvements made by the Affordable Care Act we're seeking to move our nation's health system by rewarding volume and forgetting about the waste business. So -- what we try to do this is working to achieve the triple aim in health care -- better care, better outcomes, and reduced cost.

We do this by making health insurance more affordable, by emphasizing prevention and public health, by encouraging scientific and clinical research, by taking advantage of the benefits of technology and building up our nation's mental health system.

Many of the proposals in the budget find savings in the Medicare Medicaid programs, by streamlining processes and realigning systems to ensure that patients get the right service at the right time.

The budget will make the SGR fix permanent, which we need to do to provide stability for doctors and for seniors and people with disabilities in the Medicare program. The budget will also extend its Children's Health Insurance Program or CHIP, that provides much needed pediatric coverage to our nation's children.

To conclude, I want to emphasize the Affordable Care Act is working. Over 11 million Americans signed up this year, including 500,000 in California alone. The Administration just announced that

since law was enacted in 2010, 9.4 million with Medicare have saved over $15 billion in prescription drugs. This is what we set out to do and appreciate working with you as we move forward.

Thank you. I yield back.

PITTS: The Gentlelady yields back.

The Chair now recognizes the chairman of the full committee, Mr. Upton for five minutes for opening statement.

UPTON: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Burwell, welcome.

Today marks your first official appearance before the Health Subcommittee, but I know that this is not your first time in this room, as you participated in one of our 21st Century Cures roundtables last year. And we very much appreciate that participation.

Your testimony does come at a very pivotal point in health policy, from our exciting cures effort to next week's Supreme Court oral arguments. We look forward to hearing the administration's perspective on the many important issues facing the American people.

You have said during your tenure at HHS that transparency, ownership, and accountability are important values for the department to demonstrate, which we certainly welcome. In that spirit, we look forward to gaining straightforward answers here today about implementation of the president's health care law.

There have been quite a few red flags raised in recent weeks on the continued struggles to implement key pieces of the health law. Just in the last week, 800,000 Households learned that key tax forms sent out by the administration contained major errors. Those Americans were asked to delay tax filing, therefore also delaying their refunds. A recent analysis from H&R Block estimates that the majority of Obamacare customers are being forced to pay back some of those subsidies.

Millions of Americans are also now learning about the law's IRS fines for failing to comply with the individual mandate. The backlash has been so intense that the administration has resorted to yet another special enrollment period to quell some of the anger of those who are just coming to learn about the individual mandate penalty.

And just last week, the healthcare,gov CEO Kevin Counihan suggested that the back-end functions of the exchanges would undergo a two-year development plan. That means this key part of the law will not be fully complete until President Obama leaves the White House.

Collectively, these revelations suggest that the health care law is still not working. Our constituents deserve better. We know that. That is why I have worked on introducing the Patient CARE Act, a health care reform blueprint with my colleagues in the Senate, Chairman Hatch, and Mr. Burr. I look forward to working with my colleagues about these ideas to improve health care in America by empowering states and families, not Washington.

Yes we have concerns with the president's signature law. But there are other important health areas that we believe are fertile for collaboration. For the past year, almost a year and a half, this committee has undertaken the bipartisan 21st Century Cures initiative to accelerate the pace of the discovery, development, and delivery of new treatments and cures for American patients.

I would like to thank you for your personal engagement on the 21st Century Cures initiative. As you know, this is a top priority for our committee this year. Patients and families in my district in Michigan and as well as across the country are looking for hope, and that's what we seek to instill.

And this effort is also important to many job creators as well, whether itbe Stryker, Perrigo or Pfizer in southwest Michigan. I also want to thank the staff throughout the administration, particularly at the FDA and the NIH, for their work, their time, and effort to help us improve the ideas released by our committee at the end of last month. We've established a very good foundation, I think, for bipartisan success. And I will yield to other Republican members on this side. Seeing none.

PITTS: (inaudible) none.

UPTON: I yield back.

PITTS: The Chair thanks the Gentleman. I now recognize the ranking member of the full committee, Mr.Pallone for five minutes for opening statement.

PALLONE: Thank you, Chairman Pitts and welcome Secretary Burwell. Thank you for being with us today.

Today, we're going to hear about the president's fiscal year 2016 health and human services budget proposal. And there are many important provisions in the president's budget that we in Congress must work to support.

I was pleased to see that the budget proposed a funding increase of $1 billion for the NIH investing in early stage basic research is one of the most promising ways that we can accelerate the discovery of new treatments and cures.

And support for NIH is critical to building our economy as well. Every dollar of NIH funding generates over $2 in local economic growth. Yet, we have let NIH purchasing power decline by over 20 percent since 2003, and that's why finding a way to significantly increase funding for NIH will be my top priority as the 21st Century Cures initiative continues. I was also pleased to see that the budget fully funds a four-year extension of the Children Health Insurance Program or CHIP. We must act on this proposal immediately with more than four-fifths of state legislatures adjourning by the end of June.

Lack of action and clarity from Congress will make budgeting and planning virtually impossible. By every measure, CHIP has become enormously successful and always has had strong bipartisan support. So extending CHIP funding should be the top priority of this committee to ensure consistent coverage for the millions of children who depend on this program. And I think we can all agree that no child should be left worse off because of the actions or lack thereof of Congress.

The budget also adopts the framework of the bipartisan bicameral SGR repeal and replacement legislation the Congress agreed to last year. I believe that because the sustainable growth rate is the result of a budget gimmick and we already spent $169 billion paying to fix the problem, that offsets especially those within our health programs are not necessary.

And if we must include offsets, the war savings which are known as the Overseas Contingency Operation Funds, could be used. I know some on the other side of the aisle don't share this view. What I do hope is that we can -- we can agree that first SGR should be paid off, should not be paid off on the backs of the beneficiaries.

Beneficiaries have already paid for their share of the cost of SGR repeal through higher premiums and half of all of the beneficiaries live on less than $23,500 per year. And that's why some of the proposals in the president's budget concern me.

The President's budget proposes to further increase Part B and Part D premiums, increase the Part B deductible for new enrollees and impose a new surcharge on the part B premium for beneficiaries with certain Medicare policies and also institutes a $100 copayment per home health episode.

And this increases out of pocket cost on beneficiaries and I think that, you know, we've had -- we've seen enough of that, beneficiaries may forego necessary services and as a result use more high cost acute care services, and such policies will disproportionately affect lower and middle income

beneficiaries who are not poor enough for Medicaid nor have access to employer-sponsored retiree health care.

So I urge the president and my colleagues to be extremely cautious when proposing cuts to Medicare and consider the impacts on our seniors. The last thing I wanted to mention is, well, first to commend you, Secretary, for your agency's hard work implementing the Affordable Care Act. Because of your efforts, 19 million uninsured Americans will be covered in this year 2015. And I recognize the challenge your agency faces in implementing this law with limited resources. However, despite what I call Republican obstructionism, the Affordable Care Act is working.

In sum, I think this is a sound budget. And I look forward to hearing from you today. And I would yield the remainder of my time to the gentlewoman from Florida, Ms. Castor.

CASTOR: Well, I thank the ranking member for yielding time.

And I welcome Secretary Burwell. We're very excited to hear about the budget, the investments in medical research, in children's health insurance, improvements in Medicare and the Centers for Disease Control, but I couldn't help but ask Mr. Pallone for a minute to highlight the Florida enrollment numbers under the ACA.

It's remarkable. And I know you've seen them. And we've talked about it. As of February 15th, over 1.6 million Floridians have signed up for health insurance in the federally facilitated marketplace. We were surprised. This exceeded all of our expectations to beat California and Texas, especially in a state that had many fits and starts over, whether to assist our neighbors in signing up.

But I wanted to highlight a couple of stories, that a 24-year- old, third year law student at the University of South Florida got assistance from the navigator. His income is about $16,000 a year in scholarships. He was able to find insurance for approximately $10 per month, zero deductible. It's his second year enrolling in the marketplace. He's very happy with his coverage. There are stories like that again, and again, and again, so I look forward to talking about it. Thank you.

PITTS: The Gentlelady yields back. That concludes the oral opening statements. As usual, all the written opening statements of members will be made a part of the record. And so, we'll go now to Secretary Burwell.

First of all, thank you for appearing for us today, Madam Secretary. Your written testimony will be made a part of the record. You'll be given five minutes to summarize your testimony. And we certainly appreciate you being here this morning. And you're recognized for five minutes for your summary.

BURWELL: Thank you, Chairman Pitts, Chairman Upton, Ranking Member Pallone, and Ranking Member Green, and members of the committee. I appreciate the invitation to be here today. I want to thank you for the opportunity to discuss the president's budget for the Department of Health and Human Services. I believe firmly that we all share common interests, and therefore we have a number of opportunities for common ground, from preventing and treating substance abuse to advancing the promise of precision medicine, to building an innovation economy and strengthening the American middle class.

The budget before you makes critical investments in health care, science, innovation and human services. It maintains our responsible stewardship of the taxpayers' dollars. It strengthens our work together with the Congress to prepare our nation for key challenges both at home and abroad.

For HHS, it proposes $83.8 billion in discretionary budget authority and this is a $4.8 billion increase, which will allow our Department to deliver impact today and lay a strong foundation for tomorrow.

It's fiscally responsible budget, which in tandem with accompanying legislative proposals would save taxpayers a net estimated $250 billion over the next decade. In addition, it is projected to continue slowing the growth of Medicare.

It could secure 200 -- $423 billion in savings as we build a smarter, healthier, better system. In terms of providing all Americans with the access to quality affordable health care, it builds upon our historic progress in reducing the number of uninsured and improving coverage for families who already have insurance.

We saw a recent example of this progress with the about 11.4 million Americans who either signed up or reenrolled in this past open enrollment. It extends CHIP for years. It covers newly eligible adults in the 28 states plus D.C. which have expanded Medicaid and then improves access to health for Native Americans.

To support communities throughout the country, including underserved communities, it invests $4.2 billion in health centers and $14.12 billion to bolster our nation's health workforce. It is -- it's more than 50,000 National Health Service core clinicians, serving nearly 16 million patients in high-need areas across the country.

With health center mandatory funding ending in 2016, we estimate that more than 7 million Americans may lose access to essential cost- effective primary care. And this could approximately result in 40,000 jobs lost.

To advance our common interest in building a better, smarter, healthier delivery system, the budget supports improvements to the way care is delivered, providers are paid and information is distributed.

On an issue for which there is bipartisan agreement, it replaces Medicare's broad sustainable growth rate formula and supports a long- term policy solution to fix the SGR. The Administration supports the type of bipartisan bicameral efforts that the Congress took last year. To advance our shared vision for leading the world in science and innovation, it increases funding for the NIH by $1 billion to advance biomedical and behavioral research. In addition, it invests 215 million for the precision medicine initiative, an effort to focus on developing treatments, diagnostics and prevention strategies tailored to individual genetic characteristics.

To further our common interest in providing Americans with the building blocks for success at every stage of life, this budget outlines an ambitious plan to make affordable quality childcare available to every working class, middle class family.

To keep Americans healthy, the budget strengthens our public health infrastructure with $975 million for domestic, an international preparedness including critical funds to the global health security agenda. The budget will support CDCs critical infrastructure and crosscutting research to facilitate rapid response to public health emergencies and public health threats like the recent measles outbreak.

It also invests in behavioral health sciences and substance use prevention. Finally, as we look to leave our Department stronger, the budget invest in our shared priorities of cracking down on waste, fraud, and abuse initiatives and are projected to yield $22 billion in gross savings for Medicare. We're also addressing our Medicare appeals backlog with a variety of approaches and we're investing in cyber security.

As I close, I want to make one final point and that is I am personally committed to responding quickly and thoughtful to the concerns of Congress and members. Since I was confirmed, I've made a top priority of our Department to respond promptly and thoroughly and work with you as we can. I also just want to take one moment to thank the HHS employees for all their work on Ebola, unaccompanied children and all the other issues.

With that, I look forward to your questions. Thank you.

PITTS: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

I will begin the question -- and questioning and recognize myself five minutes for that purpose. Let me start with the King v. Burwell, in a few short days, the Supreme Court will be hearing oral arguments in the King v. Burwell case that could have a major impact on Obamacare.

In January, we sent you a letter asking for any actions, analysis or -- and/or contingency plans that HHS has undertaken to prepare if the IRS rule is overturned. And while we received a letter from you earlier this week, your response failed to actually answer our question. The letter simply stated that you believe no administrative action by HHS could reverse the effects of a decision in favor of the plaintiffs.

Madam Secretary, your statement of opinion in the letter does not answer our simple question, so let me ask you the question this way. Have you or senior department officials instructed counselors within HHS to prepare any potential actions or approaches if the Supreme Court rules against the IRS?

BURWELL: Mr. Pitts and Mr. Chairman, with regards to what is in the letter, one of the things that I think is important to reflect that is in the letter is the analysis of what would happen. That is a part of the letter.

And in terms of what would happen, and I first should state, we believe that the court will decide in favor of the position we hold, which is we believe that this law says that people who have traveled across the country, people in Texas should have the same subsidies as people in New York, so important starting point.

But with regard with what would happen, because I think that's an important part of answering the question, first, what would happen is when those subsidies go away, 11.4 million people, that was the number I gave you. As of January 30th, when we did our most recent analysis, 87 percent of the individuals in the marketplace are eligible for subsidies. Those subsidies are on average estimated to be $268 per individual per month. Those subsidies, number one, would go away.

PITTS: Yeah.

BURWELL: That would lead to a number ...

PITTS: Madam Secretary, I understand that. I'm asking if you know of any plan to respond to approaches if the Supreme Court rules against the IRS, has the White House, has the OMB or other administration officials directed or asked you about any approaches in response to King v. Burwell or the work with the Treasury Department on potential responses? That's my question.

BURWELL: So in order to respond to the question, Mr. Chairman, in order to think about the question of a plan, one needs to, I think analyze the problem, which is what I was articulating in terms of the three major things that would occur if the court decides with the plaintiffs.

PITTS: Let me ask it at a different way. I would like to provide you some more information, that's why we expect you answer from you today. The committee received recently specific information from a source within your department about the existence of an approximately 100 page document related to potential actions HHS may take if the Supreme Court rules against the administration in King vs. Burwell, are you or senior staff at HHS or whatever this document?

BURWELL: Mr. Chairman, this is not a document I am not aware of. With regard to the question that you have asked, as I've said in the letter, we believe and I think it's very important to understand the damage because it is related to the answer. The damage comes in the number of uninsured that would occur. Number two, it occurs, and what happens in the individual market place where a group of less healthy individuals come in and that drives premiums up in that market place. And number three, the indigent care that occurs from the uninsured and what that means in both those states in terms of their economies as well as what it means for employer base. Those are the ramifications.

With regard to those things which we believe are the damage, as I state in the letter, we believe we do not have any administrative actions and therefore, there is not...

PITTS: All right, let me ask - going to another issue, I as you know as we discussed over the phone, I'm deeply concerned about the lack of HHS action regarding California and the DMHC authority to immediately include coverage for abortion. And this mandate, California mandate is a clear violation of the Weldon amendment which provides civil rights protections and prohibits funding to government entities discriminating against healthcare entities for following their conscience. Do you agree that the Burwell plan prohibits funding for states that mandate abortion coverage in insurance plans?

BURWELL: We take the Burwell amendment very seriously and since you spoke with me, Mr. Chairman, and we received those letters, we have opened an investigation in the office of civil rights at HHS to investigate the concerns that you and others have articulated. We take this seriously and are trying to move through that investigation is expeditiously as possible (inaudible).

PITTS: Since it's clear that California is in violation of federal law, can you project a date by which you expect the violation to be stopped?

BURWELL: With regard to the issue of the investigation, Mr. Chairman that's not something I need to let the investigation go and I have asked the team to make sure they do it as expeditiously as possible. But in order that I stay away from the investigation in terms of my interference in any way I want to let them go forward, but I have asked for due speed.

PITTS: OK. We'll follow up. Thank you. The chair recognize the Ranking Member Green for his questions.

GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Secretary, it's been almost five years since the Affordable Care Act was passed and I have yet to see any legislation introduced by my Republican colleagues to replace the Affordable Care Act even though we've had at least 56 votes on the House floor to repeal it. Given all these talk of repealing the Affordable Care Act, are you aware of any requests for technical assistance from Republicans on legislation that would replace the Affordable Care Act with a credible proposal to provide comprehensive health coverage to millions of Americans?

BURWELL: I am not aware of those requests.

GREEN: Madam Secretary, over the last couple of days we've heard a lot about contingency plans, if the millions of American's who received financial help through the Affordable Care Act would lose them. Are you aware of any Republican legislative proposals that would provide millions of Americans with the financial assistance that help them with affordable health care coverage?

BURWELL: I am not aware. GREEN: Secretary, I want to get your input on an issue that I know your concern and I appreciate you're addressing in your opening remarks that myself and a lot of members of our committee, there's a funding cliff that's facing our community health centers. Health centers serve nearly 22 million patients and are projected to serve 28.6 million patients over - in over 9,000 locations across the country in the Fiscal Year of 2016. Because of the patient demographics and statutory mandate to locate in underserved areas or to serve underserved populations, health centers are well positioned to provide health care service to millions of newly insured Americans.

They are particularly important in our district. It's federally designated underserved community in Houston, Texas. Secretary Burwell, I was pleased to see the present budget included multi-year extension of mandatory funding for health centers. As you know the health centers' patients face a major loss of access in the few months. If we don't act or to prevent the funding cliff caused by the exploration of the mandatory funding at the end of the fiscal year. Can you speak about the importance of community health centers within our health system as we look at the issues of access, quality and cost?

BURWELL: We believe that they are our fundamental underpinning and not just in terms of health care in communities, but they are also an important part of the economics of communities when you

think about the fact that we could lose up to 40,000 estimated jobs in terms of - if we don't extend. But as you think about the numbers thinking that one in 15 Americans actually are served by these health centers. How integral they are to providing primary care throughout the country.

And so, I think it's extremely important to continue that so that we can as we've reduced the number of uninsured, we also want to make sure that those people are having care and those that had care before still have access to that care, especially in our underserved communities across the country, not all, but many of which are very rural.

GREEN: Can you comment on the impact of the funding cuts would have on patients' access to care? Can you estimate how many fewer people would be able to receive services at our local health centers?

BURWELL: Are estimates are that if we aren't able to extend that it could be up to seven million patients who would no longer be able to have access to that care. We estimate that perhaps over 2,000 of the centers would shut down without that and that, then there are the patients who would not be served because people would have to scale back in the number of the centers with reduce funding.

GREEN: In those 2,000 centers do you know how many jobs we'd lost?

BURWELL: Approximately, the estimates are up to 40,000.

GREEN: OK. Thank you. The health centers are a crucial part of our nation's primary care infrastructure for 50 years and have long had a truly bipartisan support. And last year along with my colleagues on both sides including Representative Lance, support for reiterating our support for health centers in calling for a bipartisan solution, we had 250 co-signers including 31 members of our committee. A similar letter in the Senate gathered 66 votes and more than hundred national organizations have called for a fix. Consensus is something that must be done and we have to act as soon as possible.

This issue is a top priority of mine and I know a lot of other members literally Republican and Democrat across the country to look forward to working with you and our colleagues on the committee on a bipartisan basis to find the solution to avert that funding cliff.

Mr. Chairman, I have 43 seconds left and I'd like to yield for somebody for that 43 seconds on our side. Anybody want about 30 seconds now? OK. Well, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

PITTS: Thank you. The chair now recognizes the chairman of the full committee Mr. Upton, five minutes for questions.

UPTON: Thank you again, Mr. Chairman. Secretary Burwell, there are a number of healthcare law implementation issues that continue to trouble us, in the interest of time I'd ask that you submit answers to the following questions in writing within two weeks.

The CEO of healthcare.gov recently stated that there is a two- year development plan for the backend of the healthcare.gov. If you could provide us an estimate of when the backend will finally be fully automated will be great. Second one is HSS recently announced that 800,000 Americans enrolled in coverage through healthcare.gov received inaccurate tax forms under the ACA.

We'd like a detailed assessment on what - on when the department expects these taxpayers will have accurate information in hand so that they can file their taxes. And third, many Americans were automatically re-enrolled in exchange plans, raising concerns that individuals and families may be getting unexpected premium bills or inaccurate exchange subsidies in 2015. We would ask that you submit specific data on the number of Americans who have been automatically re-enrolled in those exchange plans, that'd be helpful.

BURWELL: I'd be happy to.

UPTON: Now, I'll return to 21st Century Cure and again, I appreciate your personal assistance with this and I - for the record, I want to certainly thank Dr. Collins (ph), Commissioner Hamburg (ph), Dr. Woodcock (ph) and Dr. Shuren (ph), countless others at your department for the help on 21st Century Cure. Because of that participation and participation of folks from across the country we've been able to learn more about the status of innovation in this country and we hear about ways to accelerate the discovery, development, and delivery of cures and treatments for patients.

As we heard at our first round table, there are over 10,000 diseases and we have only cures and treatments for about 500. So, we have a great deal of work ahead to do. We released a discussion document last month and I've been working with the Congresswoman to get, Mr. Ranking Member Pallone, Mr. Green, other members of our committee on both sides of the aisle to improve that document.

One area that includes a placeholder is precision medicine, something that the president talked about in the state of the union address and subsequently a White House event a couple of weeks ago. We put that place - we did put that placeholder into the draft and we look forward to continuing to work with you and the White House, the administration on that important issue. Could you give us some background on the administration precision medicine policy and what we should look forward to?

BURWELL: Thank you and thank you for the partnership as we work through these issues and it's exciting to have the energy around these issues including the precision medicine, which I think a subset of the broader issues you're looking at.

Our precision medicine initiative is $215 million with regard to as we think about it from a budget perspective, but I think thinking about it from the pieces and what it's doing, one part of the initiative is creating a very large database of a million people through NIH, but we will access that through other channels so that we're drawing from existing databases to get the information we need. Because as we're talking about what this is, precision medicine or personalized medicine is getting the information so that we can do treatments that are to the individual. I was at NIH recently. I had the opportunity to both see the tumors and meet the cancer patient of a kidney cancer patient where he had had a group of tumors removed, they came back.

But then, using precision medicine, which meant looking specifically at the genetic makeup of his tumors that could be treated in a different way, I met him. That happened months ago and now he - the patient was there discussing with me and is in a very different place.

So, one, that large database, two, specifically focusing in the area of cancer because we already are seeing some progress there and we believe that place is ripe for it. The other thing we need to do is FDA to make sure that as we think about precision medicine we regulate and think about how to approve these things in ways of a different type of medicine. And then, finally, we need the health records, the office of national coordinator for health - electronic health records to be a part of making sure this will do with payments and how clinicians will use. Those are the elements.

UPTON: But I just want to say that's very helpful and we're excited as well. And though I've been out to the NIH a number of times in the past number of years I want to remind members here that we've got a committee trip, we've invited I think all the members on this sub-committee to go out to the NIH next Monday morning.

Dr. Collins has been very interested in having us out to kick the tires like you saw yourself and I know that because we have votes tomorrow Friday and again on Monday and perhaps over the weekend, there may be more of us here over the weekend than originally thought. So, I want to remind members that they're invited to join with us and not miss votes Monday on a trip there and I yield back. Thank you very much.

PITTS: Sure. Thanks, Gentleman. I recognize the Ranking Member of the full committee, Mr. Pallone. Five minutes for your question, sir.

PALLONE: Secretary Burwell, you know, I'm sure you can sense that I'm very proud of the Affordable Care Act and concerned about Republican efforts to repeal it or now take it to court in the case of King versus Burwell. Are you aware of any Republican bill that would reduce the number of uninsured in this country by 11 million people or I said 11, it's actually 19 million people, the way that the Affordable Care Act does? I mean, obviously, I'm saying this because I don't see them coming up with any alternative.

BURWELL: You know, we haven't and I think it's important to reflect historically, when one looks at the history and actually I've gone back to Teddy Roosevelt and the quotations from Teddy Roosevelt forward to both Republican and Democratic administrations. We see whether it was President Bush, President Nixon, you know, Republican and Democrat, plus President Clinton. The conversation about how we make this next step forward with regard to reducing uninsured is something that we struggled with as a nation.

And this is the first time and someone reflected on the anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid - Medicare, in that 50 year anniversary, this is the first time that we have seen that. And so the plan that we have in place, the implementation of the Affordable Care Act has done that, but we have not seen any alternatives.

PALLONE: All right, let me ask you about CHIP all the Democrats on the committee recently introduced the bill to extend the CHIP program and I want to emphasize again that we have to act on this legislation immediately when we considered SGR which expires at the end of March. Well, funding may not expire until the end of September for CHIP. In fact, 20 states will finish their legislative sessions by the end of April and more than half by June 1st.

So it's clear that Congress needs to act swiftly to ensure states can budget appropriately for CHIP and to avoid any disruptions in children's coverage. So given the bipartisan history of this program I see no reason why Congress can't act very soon. Can you comment on the impact on states if the CHIP funding isn't extended soon?

BURWELL: I would comment on that from two different perspectives, one as a former director of OMB and the issues of predictability of funding and the issues of management and ability to manage. And so for the states to be able to do that, this is something that's important when we had predictability in our own budget system. We've seen the benefits of that economically throughout the past years, two years.

And the other thing I would say is having just spent a lot of time with the governors this weekend when they were in town. This is a very important issue to them. We have seen that letter that 40 governors have signed with regard to knowing that they have that predictability of a program that is providing great benefits to the children in their states.

PALLONE: Now, the Senate and House Republicans have released the CHIP proposal this week. However, this proposal would institute a 12- month waiting period, needlessly forces low income children off of Medicaid and on to CHIP and reduces or completely discontinues coverage for children above 250 percent of the federal poverty level despite the choice of 28 states around our nation to cover those kids. Can you discuss the impact of policies like this on some of our most vulnerable children?

BURWELL: So I think, we think that the CHIP program ss a program that was a bipartisan program and a program that is working in delivering results in terms of that quality healthcare for those children. And it has worked, we believe that it's in our budget, a four-year extension of the program is a very important thing and that we need to do that in the timely fashion to both make sure those children are covered and receive the care that they need. But also in addition to that have predictability for states, especially those states that are in their legislative process right now.

PALLONE: And I know you mentioned that four year extension, the budget includes a four year extension of the CHIP program. Can you talk about why that full extension of four years is so critical for the kids that depend on this health coverage and maybe also mention as part of the extension,

the budget includes a permanent extension of express lane eligibility, if you'd talk about the success of express lane eligibility as an option for states.

BURWELL: So the express lane eligibility and those issues, we - folks ask us to try and figure out ways to simplify, to make things easier and that's making things easier in two ways, when hear from folks, it's about both the customer in terms of when they came in as well as the states. And we believe this is a program that's been successful in getting to that simplicity and the simplicity often can work to create either, a, better quality or, b, lower cost and so, we think that's important. With regard to the four years we believe that is a good amount of time and the right amount of time for us to do this extension. There will be interaction with the Affordable Care Act, we know that and we believe that the four year period is the right period for us to understand and look at that.

PALLONE: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to submit for the record two CHIP articles, the first is an op ed published in the New York Times this month by Former Secretary Hilary Clinton and Former Senator Bill Frist (ph) discussing the long term bipartisan history of the program and the importance of a four year extension. And the second article was published in New York Times last month shows how health coverage for children pays for itself and all the research showing that when children have health coverage future earnings are boosted, if I could...

PITTS: Without objection ordered.

PALLONE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

PITTS: The chairman yields - the Gentleman yields back - the chair recognizes the chair emeritus to the full committee, Mr. Barton for five minutes for questions.

BARTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Madam Secretary, for being in here. As I have talked to you before there are a lots of problems that we have deal with, you in your position and the committee in our position. But there are some opportunities for bipartisanship and one of them is a piece of legislation that we call the ACE Kids Act. The original co-sponsors are Ms. Castor of Florida, Ms. (inaudible) of California, Mr. Green of Texas, myself on the Republican side along with several other members of this committee on the majority side.

You've said in your opening statement that the Medicaid is going to be about $345 billion this year, an increase of I believe of over 16 billion. Well, there is one piece of legislation we could pass on a bipartisan basis that would actually save money in Medicaid and that's the ACE Kids Act. It creates a home for families that have medically complex children based on an anchor hospital concept with the major children's hospitals in America, I think there are about 60 of them.

So if a parent has a child that's medically complex and qualifies for the program, that child gets access to the network on kind of a one-stop shop, all the specialties, all the various procedures are provided. Medicaid is billed one time. We think there are 12 million children that would qualify for the program and we believe that it will save billions of dollars over a ten year period.

It's been introduced in the Senate. The identical bill with three Republican co-sponsors, three Democrat co-sponsors, so here's a rare piece of legislation that both sides that I will support, the Republican leadership supports it, Chairman Upton supports it, Chairman Pitts supports it. Does your department have a position on the bill and if so could you explain to the committee what that position is?

BURWELL: So with regard to the specific legislation, I don't think we as the administration have issued a (inaudible) but I would say is all of the concepts we agree and we welcome the opportunity. The idea that we can improve both quality and cost for these children who are very complex and who are moving state to state and the current system doesn't afford us the opportunity both with regard to making sure we don't have duplicative payments, we obviously do not want that from a fiscal responsibility. And we want that ease that the parent can have the child at the right place with the right care even if it's across state lines. So I would just say we look forward to working with you.

Welcome the opportunity if there are questions and ways that we can provide, technical assistance and other things as part of this, we welcome that opportunity because we agree with the fundamental of what we're trying to do here and believe this is something that can improve both cost and quality.

BARTON: Well, I would encourage you and your department to take a look at the bill. It's not illegal or immoral for the administration to issue a letter of support and this is one that I think with Chairman Upton and Chairman Pitts and the ranking member and the full committee and sub-committee and leadership on both sides of the aisle in the House, this bill could go.

It could be a part of Chairman Upton's 21st Century effort or it could be a standalone bill. I also in the brief time I have want to concur with Ranking Member Green said about community health centers. I hope we can work together in a bipartisan fashion to find an answer to keep those funded. I know there's a funding issue this year that we need to address and reauthorize the program. I have a number of those health centers in my Congressional district and they are very helpful providing indigent care.

And finally, I wasn't going to ask this question but I'm a little bit puzzled when Chairman Pitts asked you the question about this report that deals with planning in case the health exchanges at the state level under the Affordable Care Act are found to not be legal the way they're currently funded, if there was a plan and if you had seen the plan. I'd take you at your word that you haven't seen the plan, but you don't think it's prudent that there should be a plan? I mean I hope I don't have a primary opponent. I hope I don't have a general election opponent, but I have a plan in case I do. I know you hope that the court upholds your position, but shouldn't the - shouldn't the administration and your agency have a plan in case it fails?

BURWELL: Congressman, what we seek in the letter and what we believe is if the court decides, which we don't believe they will, but if the court decides on behalf of the plaintiff, if the Supreme Court of the United States says that the subsidies are not available to the people of Texas, we don't have an administrative action that we could take. So the question of having a plan, we don't have an administrative action that we believe can undo the damage. And that's why when I was answering the chairman, I think, it's important to understand what the damage is because then it comes to the question of we don't believe we have any administrative...

BARTON: So my time has expired, but if the court strikes it down, the administration is just going to hold up your hands and say we surrender?

BURWELL: What we believe is - we believe the laws as it stands is how it should be implemented.

BARTON: I understand.

BURWELL: And with regard to when the Supreme Court speaks, if the Supreme Court speaks to this issue, we do not believe that there is an administrative authority that we have in our power to undo it. And so that's something we don't believe we have.

BARTON: That's puzzling but I accept that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your courtesy and the minority for letting me have the extra time.

PITTS: Sure. Thanks, Gentleman. And now I recognize the Gentleman from New York, Mr. Engel, five minutes for your questions. ENGEL: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and welcome Secretary Burwell. Let me piggyback on backup plan. You know, I was part of this committee, I participated in months in months of deliberations for the Affordable Healthcare Act. We had weeks of markups, this committee did, and not once was the mention of subsidies not being available to individuals in states that did not set up their own exchanges.

I've heard a lot of complaints on the other side of the aisle about the law but never was this issue discussed until they lost at the Supreme Court in 2012. Some of my friends signed on to amicus and wasted incredible time forcing votes on the full repeal of the law, yet they're upset that the administration doesn't have a back up plan should the Supreme Court ruling threaten the availability

of subsidies for 8.6 million Americans, and I think it's somewhat ironic that my Republican friends are demanding that this administration fix problems that they themselves created and have shown zero interest in fixing.

Should the Republicans get what they want and the Supreme Court rules in favor of King, I would urge my colleagues if that should happen to pass legislation to ensure that Americans have continued access to affordable coverage through the federal facilitated exchange just as Democrats intended. Next month the Affordable Care Act will have been the law of the land for five years. It's not a perfect law and there are issues that need to be changed with it, but I would like to see those issues addressed, unless both of us in a bipartisan way turn our focus on improving the law and enabling more quality coverage options for our constituents instead of trying to kill it, repeal it, take it to court and things like that. So, I just wanted to say that I'm sure that you agree with what I just said.

BURWELL: Yes. We look forward to moving forward and we do want to make improvements as we can.

ENGEL: Thank you. And I want to use my home state of New York as a great example of what's possible when the federal government has a willing and enthusiastic partner in the affordable healthcare implementation. As a result of our successful exchange and Medicaid expansion more than 2.1 million New Yorkers have quality healthcare coverage. Our state's uninsured rate has dropped to only 10 percent and there is clear evidence we are reaching the right people too, since 88 percent of people who obtain coverage through the exchange reported being uninsured at the time they enrolled.

So, it's really working in New York. And the health insurance options available through New York State of health are on average 50 percent cheaper than the comparable coverage available before the exchange was established. So, I want you to know, I'm sure you know it, that the ACA is working and working well in New York and that's why I really think it's terrible that I've been forced to take more than 50 votes to repeal some or all of this law. We should fix what's wrong, but in my state, it's really been a tremendous success.

BURWELL: And fortunately, I've had the opportunity to travel the country and see the individuals, those are the numbers and the individuals and whether it's Laura in Florida, 26 years old, married to someone who's a truck driver who does not have coverage. She is training to be an X-ray tech. They have two children. They did not have insurance. She now has insurance with a premium of $41 a month. Or a woman who had a MS in the State of Texas and for 17 years she had not had health insurance. And so how people go about - she treated her MS through the emergency room and she has four children and she works. And so when it would get bad enough, that's what she would do. And so the stories of what it means to people in terms of their financial and health security I think are - the numbers are important but it is those stories which really make this real.

ENGEL: And, you know, Secretary Burwell, I understand that we have seen robust exchange enrollment nationwide even in states where Republican governors refused to set up a state exchange or expand their Medicaid programs, isn't this true?

BURWELL: So the numbers and I spoke to this yesterday when we've been able to look at the numbers, 53 percent of the enrollees in the marketplace this year, in the federal market place are new enrollments. And so I think that is indicating the demand for the product and the need for the product.

ENGEL: Thank you. I want to second Mr. Pallone's positive discussions about CHIP. I've always been a strong supporter and as of July, 2014 an estimated 476,000 children were enrolled in this affordable coverage option for their care in New York. And so, I think that that is really, really important. I was pleased therefore to see that the budget proposal for FY 2016 included funding - included funding for CHIP for the next four years to FY 2019. So can you elaborate on what you believe increasing tobacco taxes is a viable means for funding this program while we sort out the transition issues associated with the Affordable Care Act?

BURWELL: We believe - one of the things we're trying to be physically responsible and indicating how we are paying for things. We believe that this is a legitimate way to pay for things, especially in the context of we are providing health care and something that we'll hopefully crate a deterrent and help healthcare in terms of the issue of the tobacco tax. As one analyzes across the department and whether it's a CMS or CDC the impact that tobacco has on health in our nation and the cost of healthcare in our nation is one that we think is a fair place to go to pay for this care for the children.

ENGEL: I agree with you and finally, I want to talk about graduate medical education because I was concerned that the administration's proposal to cut indirect GME funding, one in six positions in America obtains training in my home state of New York and we have some of the finest academic and medical centers in the country. So it requires significant funding and time to develop the infrastructure and expertise necessary to ensure quality care is available. So how do we ensure stability for these academic and medical centers and the patients they serve if we put GME funding at risk?

BURWELL: We believe and hope that our proposal does not do that and meets the objectives of making sure we are training appropriate physicians for both primary care and specialties where we don't have as many as we should, at the same time making sure that we target it. There's $100 million for pediatric, and then a wider pool for competition. It's an issue that we want to meet the same objectives, at the same time we do it in a fiscally responsible way.

ENGEL: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

PITTS: Thank the Gentleman, I will recognize is the vice- chairman from the subcommittee, Mr. Guthrie for five minutes for questions.

GUTHRIE: Thank you, Madam Secretary for coming, and I really look forward on 21st Century Cures, and all the things that we can work on over the next few years as vice-chair.

But first I'd like to direct your attention to the Cost Share Reduction Program contained in the ACA, specifically Sections 1402 and 1412. Does any part of this budget request -- or does any part of this budget that we're talking about today request any new authority, including any transfer authority to pay insurers under the Cost Share Reduction Program?

BURWELL: With regard to the program, which is a program as you know is about making sure that the cost of healthcare to those individuals that are coming into the marketplace is something that they can afford. That's what's it's about. And we believe that we do have the authorities to do the cost sharing.

GUTHRIE: Is there any new authority requested in this budget?

BURWELL: No new language.

GUTHRIE: There's no new language? And so, we do know it's up and running. I think we spent $3 billion already on the Cost Share Reduction Program that has been to insurers from taxpayer funds.

The budget that's been submitted estimates $11.2 billion over 2015, 2016. And CBO says $175 billion over the next 10 years is what they've estimated. And could you cite where the appropriations authority is -- as I said you do believe you have the authority, can you cite where that is?

BURWELL: We do believe we do and I'm sure you know that right now that this is an issue that is under litigation, and a court case that has been brought. And so, with regard to that, that is an issue that I will let our colleagues at the Justice Department speak to because of the place it is in litigation.

GUTHRIE: I understand that but we're doing oversight here. I'm not an attorney. And so, you had -- when you were at OMB -- at OMB in 2014 there actually was a request in the 2014 budget for direct appropriation. And that didn't happen for whatever reason but we're spending money.

So whether we spend a penny or 100 -- this is a $175 billion over a 10-year program. I mean, we feel like we -- this is an oversight hearing, not a -- and so, we feel like it's our responsibility to make sure to our taxpayers that we have good answers is on where this is coming from. So we're just asking for where the appropriation comes from -- authority...

BURWELL: I understand and I appreciate -- and I appreciate the question and I'm sorry that it is in litigation. I wish we weren't in a place where we are in litigation but when something has entered into that place it does create a difficult circumstance. I respect the issue of oversight but because the litigation has been brought by the House on this issue we're in a place where I think that is the appropriate place for this conversation...

GUTHRIE: I'm just not aware of any pending litigation exception in oversight hearing questions. And is there like a legal case or authority, or did the Justice Department tell you, you don't have to...

BURWELL: With regard to issues that are being litigated, generally, those are matters that we refer and let the Justice Department continue on.

GUTHRIE: And I am sure that you're aware that we've never been able to get an answer from the administration from where the language -- nobody has been able to point to us where that appropriation language comes from. And it was -- and you previously had requested appropriation.

Let me ask you another question. Recently you received -- I think 18 employers groups sent you a letter urging that small groups be maintained at 50 employees. And they were citing an actuarial analysis that showed when they go to 50 to 51 they -- the acturial analysis said that it would estimate it that two-thirds of the members, that they would receive an increase of 18 percent. And I honestly don't believe that these small employers, 51 to 100 employees can accept an 18 percent increase in their premiums.

Also the promise that if you like the plan you can keep it, because if they have -- if the 51 to 100 have to go into the new plan they'll have to meet the requirements of the healthcare law that essential benefits and the other things that have caused other people to lose their -- the plans that they like if they could keep -- and due to this impact would you support allowing states to keep their market at 50 or below, and not go to the 51 to 100?

BURWELL: This is an issue that we are looking at and examining because we have a number of comments on it. And I would say is I would welcome -- I would welcome the opportunity to see the piece of work that you're talking about and referring to so that we can see and understand that. I think what we want to do is understand the facts around this type of thing. So I would welcome the opportunity to see this study and piece of work that you're articulating.

GUTHRIE: OK. My understanding it has been submitted, a letter from this 18 employers, but we'll make sure that that -- that is forwarded. BURWELL: OK.

GUTHRIE: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I yield back.

PITTS: Sure. And I thank the Gentleman.

And I now recognize the Gentlelady from Illinois, Ms. Schakowsky for five minutes for questions.

SCHAKOWSKY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here today. I wanted to ask you if you are aware of any Republican legislative proposals that would keep insurance companies from denying coverage from

people with pre-existing conditions like cancer or dropping someone from coverage because they got in an accident or got sick.

BURWELL: I'm not aware of a piece of legislation that would take care of that issue.

SCHAKOWSKY: And are you aware of any Republican legislative proposal that would provide access to preventive services like cancer screenings, yearly wellness exams and do that at no additional out-of- pocket cost to consumers?

BURWELL: I am not aware of a piece of legislation that would do that in the fulsome way that the ACA does.

SCHAKOWSKY: Thank you. I wanted to talk a little bit about something that's a growing concern and that's Alzheimer's Disease, and the cost that it is in our personal lives and also in funding. So, scores of public agencies, including many HHS agencies, as well as numerous private and nonprofit organizations are trying to address this challenge of preventing Alzheimer's, serving those who have dementia today, finding a cure. Shouldn't the federal government be coordinating a plan on Alzheimer's?

BURWELL: In terms of the issue of coordination there is a body and advisory group that includes both people from the federal government, as well as external folks to be a part of putting together our thoughts and strategies. And this is -- it informs that we are doing investments. There are members of the federal government, across the government, as well as external bodies that are a part of that.

With regard to the work at the department, the work cuts across a number of different areas, NIH and research is generally what comes to mind from those people, but where the biggest dollars are spent is actually in CMS, and making sure that we're thinking through the issues and in that space because that's where the dollar is.

The other thing is the administration for community living is where we work on and think about things like those that are caregivers, and those that are going through that process of dementia and how they deal with it. So at the department we work through all of those. There are these overall advisory groups that we have externally and includes internal members.

SCHAKOWSKY: So, the population is aging rapidly obviously and Alzheimer's is taking a much bigger toll than ever on families, on healthcare systems, on people who have the disease. And the number of people living with dementia will continue to grow as Baby Boomers age. So you had mentioned that the research is going on, so what is HHS, NIH is doing to find a cure?

BURWELL: In this budget you see a 24 percent increase to funding for Alzheimer's which is much greater than the percentage increase even within the other NIH. So, focusing deeply on doing that is also part of the brain initiative as we think through their specific issues.

But we were also making progress on something called Teal (ph), which is a protein that is indicative of Alzheimer's. That's one of the pieces of research that's going on. And if we can make progress there -- the other piece of research is seeing if there are ways that we can slow the progression by understanding how the neural channels move and what's happening in the disease. Those are pieces of research that we're starting.

We believe that with the funding we're asking for, that we can move that research. We can broaden it and we can make it faster.

SCHAKOWSKY: So, dementia is a major focus of work in the United Kingdom and other developed countries. Are we keeping up with the rest of the world in research activities and investments?

BURWELL: You know, we believe that we are with regard to that. And I have been in touch with my colleagues and the secretary or the minister in the U.K. and continue to have those conversations.

So we make sure that we are learning and staying connected to our colleagues especially -- that's a particular example where I have been in touch Minister Hunt (ph) and we'll continue to do that so that we'll make sure that we're learning everything we can from our colleagues and in places where we can work together and see if we can leverage the efforts that are going in each of our countries. And that's both across the research, the regulation, as well as the more social issues.

SCHAKOWSKY: And who is on the Alzheimer's Advisory Committee? I'm asking that because shouldn't there be a person with Alzheimer's as part of the group?

BURWELL: I want to get back to you directly but it is my understanding that there is a person, that there is a slot, and that there -- either there is or will be a person that that does have -- but that is part of the committee. And I want to get back to you on that very specifically.

SCHAKOWSKY: Well, I thank you for the focus and as the co-chair of the senior task force of the Democratic Caucus I really want to work with you on that because this is a problem affecting so many families and individuals. I appreciate it. And I yield back. Thank you.

PITTS: The chair would like to thank the Gentlelady.

And I recognize the Gentleman from Kentucky Mr. Whitfield, five minutes for questions.

WHITFIELD: Thank you.

Secretary Burwell, well, I also want to thank you for being with us today and I want to just follow up on my colleague Brett Guthrie's question.

We're concerned about this cost reduction program because -- Cost Sharing Program because it's a $170 some billion over a number of years. And we understand that that's one of the issues involved in the lawsuit. But all we're asking you is since you all are dispersing the money what is your opinion as to where the appropriation is designated that you're working from?

BURWELL: This is an issue -- and as I said I understand the question. We believe we have the authorities. With regards to the specifics of that, because we are in litigation...

WHITFIELD: But you can't tell us where the money is coming from?

BURWELL: With regard to having that conversation that is what...

WHITFIELD: Were you instructed by DOJ not to answer that question?

BURWELL: With regard to that specific issue that is at the root of the litigation.

WHITFIELD: Were you instructed by DOJ not to answer the question?

BURWELL: With regard to -- when (inaudible) litigation like this , this is our standard...

WHITFIELD: Well, you know, yesterday we had Jenny McCarthy (ph) here and we were talking about 111-D (ph), which is before the Supreme Court right now. And she gave us her theory of why she thought she was right.

We're not saying that we're right or you're right, we're simply asking what is your theory, where does the money come from in your view?

BURWELL: That is something, as I said -- why don't I work to get back to you on where we feel comfortable with where the litigation is and I'd like to come back on that.

WHITFIELD: Well, I must say I have been impressed with your facility to use numbers. You were -- you're really tuned in to the budget, responding to Mr. Pitts, responding to Mr. Green about the community health centers.

I was at a Rotary Club meeting recently and I was asked the question. They said, "Congressman, can you tell us what dollar amount has been incurred by the federal government as a result of state expansion of Medicaid programs pursuant to the Affordable Care Act because we picked up a larger percentage of the normal cost."

And I would ask you that question. I didn't know the answer. But could you tell me what is the total dollar amount incurred by the federal government by the expansion of the state Medicaid programs a result of the Affordable Care Act?

BURWELL: In terms of the federal dollars versus the state dollars?

WHITFIELD: Yes, just the additional dollar amount incurred by us.

BURWELL: Let me go back and look because the question of being able to de-segregate whether a person came in because of expansion, or we're under the old rules. I think I would want to make sure that we can understand...

WHITFIELD: But you don't have a -- you don't have a dollar amount for that?

BURWELL: I'm not -- I don't know. I will check with the department if we do. The one thing that I think...

WHITFIELD: We would think that you all would definitely know that because that -- you know, we can all talk about the advantages and disadvantages of this program, but there is a big additional cost to the federal government. And we're simply asking, I'm asking what is that total dollar amount incurred?

BURWELL: I think the question that I am not sure is how one breaks out the actual number from expansion because when people come through...

WHITFIELD: Well, let me ask you this question...

BURWELL: That's where...

WHITFIELD: And what year does -- the states were encouraged to expand Medicaid which is fine because the federal government is picking up more of that dollar amount. But at some point in the future the federal government is not going to be picking up those additional costs.

What year is that?

BURWELL: What year that is, is we never go below -- the federal government never goes below a 90 percent of the payment of the additional...

WHITFIELD: Until when? BURWELL: And that is 2020...

WHITFIELD: 2020...

BURWELL: And so, 2016 is the year through which there is a 100...

WHITFIELD: OK.

BURWELL: And in your own state...

WHITFIELD: Well, do you have any projected cost over that period of time for the federal government.

BURWELL: No, you have those incorporated in our budget. But one of the things in terms of these cost issues that I think are important in the state of Kentucky...

WHITFIELD: OK. Well, that's OK. Listen, you can't answer the question but I appreciate it anyway.

And then let me ask you this. I noticed that you all made $2.5 billion in loans in the coops. And Kentucky has a good coop program as well.

We sent a letter last year and we were concerned about the solvency of some of these coops. And the federal government, as I said, its loan is $2.5 billion. We now see that in Iowa and in Nebraska those coops are in bankruptcy.

Have you all done any analysis to project -- are there other states that there is a chance that these coops are going to bankruptcy, or are you looking at that?

BURWELL: We are looking at the coops that -- the one thing that I think is very important to note is the cuts, the deep cuts in the funding for coops. When the program was originally designed and the passage of the Affordable Care Act occurred, the amount of money for the coops to do the loans -- and the loans that states like Iowa would have made a difference -- at the end because those monies were cut, they were cut as part of sequestration, they were cut in '12. They were cut in '11. They were cut in '13.

WHITFIELD: So are you saying that bankruptcy occurred because of sequestration?

BURWELL: What I am saying is that had we had more funding in order to provide the additional loans to the coops it could have made a difference. With regard to the fundamental of your question which is are we looking at the coops? And there are two things that we want to do, understand whether they are stable. And then the second is where we can provide technical assistance.

WHITFIELD: Well, those questions that you couldn't answer or were not familiar with , I do hope that you will get back with us with those answers soon... BURWELL: I would be happy to...

WHITFIELD: Within seven days if possible. Thank you.

BURWELL: I will -- I want to make sure that we will get back as quickly as...

WHITFIELD: Because I got to -- have to be back at that Rotary Club next week.

BURWELL: As a neighboring state I appreciate that.

PITTS: The Gentleman yields back.

The chair recognizes the Gentlelady from Florida Ms. Castor for five minutes.

CASTOR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, thank you again on behalf of the 1.6 million Floridians that were able to buy affordable health insurance in our exchange. I will give you due credit and to everyone at HHS. But I think the real credit goes to our terrific navigators that were on the ground, hospitals across the state of Florida, community health centers and family members that probably put in a good word for their sons and daughters, or aunts and uncles to sign up. You probably want to give them a pat on the back yourself this morning. I'd encourage you to do that.

BURWELL: I do. I want to express appreciation. I've seen the local stakeholders. I've met with them across this country and it was the communities coming together. It was individuals. It was people in

the community health centers. As was mentioned it was the business people. It was everyone when I would visit, the hospitals would be there. Everyone would be around the table working on this issue together. And it was that kind of work, and then the individuals that I visited on the Second Sunday (ph) and in Texas.

Actually I was given the opportunity to speak at one of the churches and it was all about coming together to give this information to people so that they could make choices, and have that financial and health security.

CASTOR: So in Florida we have a very competitive marketplace as well. Consumers could choose from 14 different issuers in the marketplace this year. That was up from last year where we had 11.

And Florida consumers could choose from an average of 42 health plans in their county for 2015 coverage. So with 1.6 million now enrolled it really demonstrates the high stakes involved with the Supreme Court case that the court will hear next week. I cannot imagine that the Court would rule to take that away from over a million and a half Floridians and then millions more all across the country.

And just like Representative Engel said -- I was here during the hearings in advance of the Affordable Care Act adoption, during the mark-up, during the amendment process, during negotiations with the United States Senate, never in those discussions was there any dichotomy between a state exchange and a federal exchange, and the availability of tax credits.

Have you seen any evidence to the contrary in your review of the record and the case that's before the Supreme Court?

BURWELL: With regard I would let the Justice Department who has reviewed everything. But the thing that I agree with is that we don't think that that was -- we just don't believe that that's what the law says, or what was intended by the law either.

CASTOR: Yes. And I can say straightforwardly as a member of this committee what the legislative intent was, and it was for those tax credits to be available to every American, no matter if they're in the state marketplace or a federal marketplace.

But I would say if the Court rules otherwise they're going to create chaos and they're going to strike right at the heart of the economic security of so many of my neighbors in Florida and many Americans. So, I know that they will study the legislative intent and I hope they rule the right way and we don't have to address that chaotic situation.

But I think that with the Affordable Care Act the real untold story is what has happened to people who have insurance, because I can cheer on the million and a half Floridians that now have it, but most of my neighbors already have insurance, private insurance or Medicare.

And I know there's more good news that was announced for my neighbors that rely on Medicare. Just in Florida alone Floridians have saved almost a billion dollars since 2010 because of the ACA's doughnut hole discount. Three hundred, almost 350,000 beneficiaries saw savings in 2014 to the tune of about $300 million last year. The average discount per beneficiary was $884.

Then for private insurance how come we haven't been able to get the word out on how much better an insurance policy -- a consumer can't be kicked off if they get sick. In Florida alone over 200,000 young adults can stay on their parents' plan. Floridians have received millions of dollars in rebates because the law says you have new rights and protections and insurance companies cannot spend that money on profits. It has to go to -- it can't spend the profits on salaries and excessive profits, it has to go to healthcare. How come -- what else can the administration do to tell this good news story?

BURWELL: I think we can do a better job of making sure people do know. And then another area is the issue of preventative care and the importance of the fact that your childhood visits and those things will no longer require co-pays or cost sharing in terms of when you go in for that or measles.

An important thing, I think, right now, and timely thing. And so, I think we need to do a better job of making sure people know about those improvements to quality.

CASTOR: Thank you. I yield back. PITTS: The chair thanks the lady.

And I recognize the Gentleman from Illinois Mr. Shimkus for five minutes for questions.

SHIMKUS: Thank you.

Secretary Burwell, thank you. I talked to your staff prior and I appreciate your outreach trying to call. It was a crazy day and I talked to them before you came to the table. And I do have great respect for that. But I also want to make sure that, you know, this happy-clap talk about how great the healthcare is and the Affordable Care Act is moderated by real concerns out there.

Remember the bill that passed and signed to the law we had nothing to do with it on the House side. It was a Senate health bill that came over to us that we passed, right? So that's the healthcare law that we have today. And the language of law is pretty clear. And I'm concerned also that the Supreme Court will rule that the federal exchanges in states are not authorized to receive subsidies and we just need -- we need to be prepared for that here. And I would hope the administration would be too.

I promised two ladies from my Congressional district that I would mention their names. Angie Eskar (ph) from Teutopolis who is pro- life, of strong family and she cannot buy a policy that does not have abortion or abortion coverage. And for millions in America this is a really important issue. And she -- and this is an emotional -- just like on the other side you know how this debate is. And I -- and I think part of the agreement from some of my pro-life Democrats was to ensure that that option would be available and it's just not for her.

The other one is Debbie McKinney-Huff (ph) from a town called Highland (ph). She's a Democrat. Her premiums went up astronomically last year. This year they've gone up another $2,000 with a $10,000 deductible. And she can't afford it. So for all the happy dancers there are -- there are challenges out there that we don't do our constituents service if we don't understand that there are problems that have to be resolved.

There are some budget requests that I want to talk about. And so, I'm going to move forward but I would just put that in the record. I'm a big supporter of Medicare Advantage. You know, I was here when we passed it. Seniors didn't have any prescription drug coverage. It's been very successful. It's very popular. The budget request makes a reduction again in that where the enrollment is going up, favorable are high and 670,000 people weren't able to access Medicaid Advantage. And if you are from rural parts of this country that option is very limited, if not -- or it doesn't exist. So I would ask that we re-look at that so that seniors who want to have this option can choose that. And our concern is your budget hurts the ability for that to happen.

BURWELL: So with regard to the first issue in terms of your two constituents I want to make sure that we understand that. On the issue of abortion in that.... SHIMKUS: And then let's just -- let's just answer this question because I got two more on the budget that I'm trying to address...

BURWELL: That we just focus on the Medicare Advantage issue.

SHIMKUS: Thank you.

BURWELL: With regard to that we want to make sure -- the program during the period of changes that we have had we've seen a large increase in the number of people in Medicare Advantage claims. I want to understand your 670 because 99 percent of beneficiaries have access to MA plans. And there may be something. And so, I'd like to understand that 670 better.

The third thing is that we know that those number of plans quality that have gone from four stars -- you know, gone to the higher ratings we've gone for 67 percent in the two highest rating categories at 17 percent to 67 percent. So we're improving quality.

More people are coming in this system and there is premium control. So, I want to understand the 670.

We want to make sure and are listening. We author our plans as we hear concerns, that's why I want to understand that 670 because we believe that we can continue making these changes.

It comes back to some of the points raised with regard to deficits and making sure that we're being responsible.

SHIMKUS: OK.

BURWELL: MedPAC and the GAO recommended that there is up-coding and we need to work on it.

SHIMKUS: OK. Thank you.

Are you aware of any efforts by FDA to accelerate the next round of user fee negotiations? And our concerns is if they are and they're not doing due diligence about the fees and the return on investment we would hope that they would not accelerate it until due diligence is done.

And the last thing I wanted to address was the Biologics Price Competition and Innovation Act -- stakeholders have to be involved in that. And that's really part of this 21st Century Cures debate. Not just having bureaucrats or panels but bringing patient, bringing physicians and bring in the like -- and our concern is that's not happening on this -- on the Biologics Price Competition and Innovation Act and those -- and those concerns.

And so, if you take that suggestion and if you want to come back and follow up on a lot of these issues we'd be happy to talk with you.

Again, I do appreciate you reaching out personally and I look forward to working with you.

BURWELL: And I do appreciate this issue of stakeholder input. We think it's important to making sure that we get this right.

SHIMKUS: Thank you very much.

PITTS: The chair thanks the Gentleman.

The chair now recognizes the Gentlelady from California Ms. Matsui for five minutes for questions.

MITSUI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Burwell, thank you for being here. I want to talk about mental health. When we think about health we need to consider the whole person. Mental health has historically taken a backseat to physical health, but the head is connected to the body and one affects the other.

I have been working for years with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and both sides at the capital to make changes, to fix our broken mental health system. And as you know a demonstration project based on The Excellence in Mental Health Act that I co-authored with my colleague here Congressman Lance into law last year.

And I look forward to working with you as -- and the administration to make sure that this is implemented properly and in a way that states can demonstrate success.

I also look forward to working with you to make further changes and improve our mental health system. I was pleased to see that the budget will eliminate Medicare's 190 day mental health services -- more in line -- and to keep that more in line with the physical for which no limit exists.

Can you briefly talk about that policy and how it will benefit seniors and people with disabilities who need psychiatric services?

BURWELL: Our overall approach in the mental health space and it's one that we consider a priority is to try and get us in terms of both care and payment to parity with how we think about other health issues.

And there are steps that we are taking throughout the budget and whether it's implementation of the piece of legislation that you referred, and the issue that your colleague just raised about stakeholder engagement and making sure that we're getting that input as we implement it. And so, we're implementing and thinking about the policies to promote behavioral and mental health through our payment system and making sure that there is parity. That seems to be something that's been important.

We're trying to focus on access because many people, the question of access to the right types of providers in terms of behavioral health, that's something you see in some of our analysis at that time. Budgeting work in terms of making sure that SAMHSA (ph) and others are ensuring that we have providers. And then there's access, and that's an issue for all people of all ages but especially young people getting the access that they need.

And so, as we think about all of the pieces working together about the funding, about the access and then -- that there are providers that can provide.

MITSUI: I appreciate that. And as we move forward there is a continuum of mental health issues that we need to address. And it's a complicated issue and we certainly would like to work with you as we move forward on that.

And I would like to also talk about seniors because that's a special interest area (ph) of mine too. And as we consider changes to the Medicare program our first priority should always be senior, especially knowing spend about 14 percent of their Household income on healthcare costs compared to five percent of Households who do not have a Medicare beneficiary.

And we need to find ways to save money in the Medicare program and we have been, but not by cutting benefits but by realigning incentives to improve outcomes in patient care. If a senior gets the right care at the right time it's not only better for the senior but it also saves the system a lot of money.

And now I appreciate some of the provisions in the budget and I would like to discuss this further with you. The budget seeks to save money by restoring trial (ph) rebates for the dual eligible population in Medicare.

Secretary Burwell, can you please elaborate on that?

BURWELL: In terms of the dual eligible policy?

MITSUI: Yes. Right. The drug rebates and dual eligible population.

BURWELL: One of the things that -- the dual eligible population has two elements to it. It is both a very complicated populated because there are people who have a number of different conditions that are being treated in different ways. It's also a very expensive population.

And as we work to improve both the quality and affordability of the care that's what we're trying to do as we look at these proposals. And it's all a part of the broader issue of delivery system reform which you touched on a little bit. And we have set out clear goals.

For the first time ever we have said that in the area of Medicare, that by 2016 we have set a goal that 30 percent of all payments will be in different payment systems, where we are not paying for volume but paying for value. And as a part of -- we move forward to this changed system, we want to do that. That's about price but it's also about quality. And this is a proposal that we're trying to move forward on both. MITSUI: And I know that this is going to be difficult because there are areas where you have to look at the budget. But as we look at this we also have to look at the seniors and that's really why when we look at this -- I know you seek to increase sort of the skin in the game for Medicare beneficiaries.

However I would argue that seniors already have a lot of skin in the game and Medicare and that additional cost sharing will not bring down costs in the program. And as you know as they have increased costs -- you look at -- most of them are supported by Social Security and then that -- what they do is shift over the cost to pay for their healthcare from Social Security. And so, I think it's something that we really have to look at more holistically.

So, thank you very much for everything that you're doing.

PITTS: And I thank the Gentlelady.

And now I recognize the Gentleman from Pennsylvania Dr. Murphy for five minutes for questions.

MURPHY: Welcome here, Madam Secretary. I appreciate you being here. I also want to associate myself with the comments of my friend Ms. Matsui of California about mental health, and I look forward to working with you on those things. In a related area we've had a number of hearings here regarding mental health and among them has been the Substance Abuse and the Mental Health Service Administration. We've asked them repeatedly for information over almost a year for getting some records.

Chairman Upton and I have asked for these things. We have not gotten those documents. And we're concerned about their delays. I wonder if you could help us get some assurance that we'll get those documents from SAMHSA (ph)?

BURWELL: As you and I had the opportunity to discuss this, this is something that we are working on. And I'm hopeful that very soon you'll have some of those documents and we'll continue to work with you on it.

MURPHY: Thank you. I appreciate your teamwork on this.

On another question when we passed the SGR patch, I think it was last year, there was also a demo project, which is what Ms. Matsui was also referring to, for certified community behavioral health clinics to improve access.

Now as part of this we also attach something for AOT, assisted outpatient treatment for counties and communities to also have access to some grants to facilitate that as long as they also were -- so those community behavioral health clinics would get those -- to also help for those who are cycling through with a history of violence, prison, homelessness, et cetera, those, that small one percent of one percent, or persistent chronically and mentally ill and going through this system. One thing is I want to make sure and find out from you is the way this was designed is to make sure that only those counties that really have AOT would be eligible for those grant programs if they're going to attach those to those community health centers. Is that something that you are aware of, and could you work with us to make sure that those grant programs are available in that sense?

BURWELL: We do want to work with you on that and, yes, we are working on that and we would like to work with you to make sure that we do have the standards in place.

MURPHY: Thank you.

Another one has to do with a program that was discussed by SAMHSA (ph) which is called I-CARE (ph) which is to help with those going into emergency rooms to deal with those in crisis. One of the concerns I have and certainly we have seen headlines and tragic sad cases such as that with Virginia Senator Creigh Deeds and his son Gus. The problems that there are thousands of times that this occurs in this country every year where there's just simply aren't enough psychiatric hospital beds.

And so, people languish in emergency rooms, often in a five point tie-down and given chemical sedatives until a room opens up. It could be hours or days, or weeks in some cases. We wouldn't have this problem if we had more psych beds. And so, I'm hoping that since the demand for psychiatric beds exceeds the current supply of inpatient psychiatric beds, is that something else that you can work as in legislation to say we ought to have a place for those in crisis to get stabilized and not go to jail, not sit in a jail cell and languish there, or sit in an emergency room. But work with us on that -- would you be willing to work with some of that too?

BURWELL: Yes.

MURPHY: Thank you.

BURWELL: Looking forward to that.

MURPHY: And another issue then related to the Assisted Outpatient Grant Program is a standalone thing. I want to show you, I think I have a poster here of -- I just want to show you some of the outcome measures.

This comes out of a Duke University study. When you have assisted outpatient treatment -- so working with someone from the court or judge, working with the person saying you need to stay in treatment for a number of months, outpatient treatment, not inpatient, take your medication and see this person, or report back like with a mental health court or something, they saw an 87 percent reduction in incarcerations, and 83 percent reduction in arrest, 77 percent reduction psychiatric inpatient hospitalizations, and a 33 percent reduction in ER hospitalizations.

So I just want to show that too. And by the way costs are cut in half for these folks too. But it is one in that -- and working with the issues of CBO scoring et cetera, we're really going to have to, I think, team up together in this and say there ought to be some options for people to be in outpatient care. And this is psychiatry, psychology, peer support, social workers, people helping with job training, housing, all those things together. But there has to be this coordination program. Would you work with us on this too?

BURWELL: We will. And I think it's part of the broader issue of delivery system reform and how we deliver quality. You're focused in a very important in mental health. When we look at diabetes and the clinics that I've visited across the country, when we get these adherence numbers up and people participating and that usually has to do with coordinated care and the type of interaction and communication you were talking about, we get adherence, we get less of the disease or problem, and we get lower cost because that happen when we have the bad things that go wrong when people aren't adhering.

MURPHY: Yes. It's going to require that different view of things. And I think you may be familiar with the hearing that we had in the Oversight Committee two weeks ago where a GAO report said and identified -- I was amazed by this, a 112 federal agencies and programs scattered across eight departments that deal with mental illness. And they said the Inter-Agency Coordination Program supporting individuals with serious mental illness is lacking.

It was really -- to me it's really dizzying and a sad description of the process here. I hope you will also work with us and it's a work to coordinate these programs. And can I have that assurance from you as well?

BURWELL: We will and we do coordinate -- we coordinate them across the over-arching issue and then within their areas like veterans homelessness and the issues that related -- and so, I want to have the conversation about how we think about and where we can strengthen those things.

MURPHY: Thank you. Let's continue working on that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

PITTS: The chair thanks the Gentleman.

And I recognize the Gentleman from Oregon Mr. Schrader from Oregon for five minutes for questions.

SCHRADER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for being here, Madam Secretary.

BURWELL: Thank you.

SCHRADER: Last year healthcare spending grew at this lowest rate on record since 1960. Healthcare pricing inflation is at its lowest rate in 50 years. And ACA has gotten a lot of attribution by CBO from making a big difference in that result.

Have you seen a Republican legislative language that would give us that same result?

BURWELL: We haven't seen a proposal that would continue us on our path with regard to some of the changes that we've put in place.

SCHRADER: Seniors have also benefitted dramatically from the ACA. Prescription drug costs are a big issue for them. Eight million, over eight million seniors have actually benefitted from and saved over $11 billion, as I understand it, on prescription drugs since the enactment of the ACA.

Is there a Republican proposal out there that does a similar thing?

BURWELL: We haven't seen a proposal about that would take care of this issue, the doughnut hole. And actually on Tuesday we actually were able to update our numbers in that space. And it is now $15 billion in terms of the savings, and on average in the country that's about $1,600 per senior.

SCHRADER: I find that ironic that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle keep asking for a contingency plan from the administration on this bogus lawsuit.

And yet, you know, as a firm believer in Article I Legislative Supremacy, with all due respect, Madam Secretary. I think it's our responsibility and the majority of the party controls both chambers, and -- where the heck is their contingency plan?

That's a rhetorical question, Madam Secretary. . One of the things that's been really good, I think, in my state is the expansion of the Affordable Care Act into the Medicaid population into the private sector. We've had some unqualified success. Emergency room visits are down by 21 percent. We've actually gotten hospital admissions complications from diabetes alone down 9 percent not to mention other diseases. COPD, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, hospital stays down almost 50 percent. Are you getting any of the same -- those same types of results from other states? What...

BURWELL: So, we are in - recently actually in the last two weeks out of the State of Kentucky we have seen a piece of analysis done by the University of Louisville and Deloitte and that piece of legislation -- that piece of analysis showed, they did it at the beginning of the expansion and then they did that analysis now.

And what the analysis showed is that the expansion will contribute to 40,000 jobs in the State of Kentucky and will contribute to their GDP by $30 billion and that's at the period up to 2021, so that is over a period of time. But we are starting to see both the economic and job impacts as well as some of the health impacts that you were describing.

SCHRADER: Well, contrary to popular demagoguery in right wing radio and TV, this is a marketplace system we set up federal government as the facilitator in that, the state hopefully those -- some of the state exchanges are also facilitator.

Like everyone I think here, we all believe in the power of marketplace competition. My own state for instance over the last year instead of seeing the double digit increases in insurance premiums on average, ours actually stayed level or decreased slightly. Now, that to me is a key indicator for the, you know, working or non-working the Affordable Care Act, our uninsured rate in Oregon went down 63 percent. I've had testimonials from hospitals and doctors about how people actually have health care access at this point in time. Could you talk about what you see nationally in increased competition?

BURWELL: So, with regard to the issue of increased competition, we saw 25 percent more issuers come into the marketplace this year and so more issuers means more plans and competition.

SCHRADER: It means they wouldn't be doing this if they weren't making some money at this and the program wasn't working, Madam Secretary.

BURWELL: And so -- and also with regards to the issue of competition, what we know is in many plans that are employer-based plans; people do not come in and shop. They just automatically reenroll. And as you know, we have that as part of the marketplace this year.

But we know that actually the majority of people came in and shopped and that I think is related to the competition and it's related to a consumer who wants to make the best choice, and that choice sometimes based on benefit, that choice sometimes based on cost and cost has a number of different elements whether that's premium or deductible.

SCHRADER: Great.

BURWELL: But we are seeing more players come in and we're also seeing the consumer behave in a way that's indicative that they want that competition in shopping.

UNKNOWN: I'd like to call out some kudos on the GME increase in the budget, the money you put in for Medicare appeals back home. We do a lot of work, of course with people having trouble navigating the system big time and the investment in primary care docs, I think that's important. A quick little comment on -- the only thing I'm a little concerned about is if we're going to bundle payments and increased competition why we are hammering on the Medicare Advantage plans a little bit?

BURWELL: As I mentioned to your colleague I think what we're trying to do is balance making sure that those plans are good and strong and we've seen that over the period of the changes we've done. We try and do the changes in a measured way that gets to things that actually have to do with what we believe is strong representation of the taxpayer in terms of places where we believe there are issues like upcoding that is occurring and that MedPAC (ph) has articulated those and others. We always want to listen in here and we want to watch carefully if we're seeing problems that occur with the changes but to date we haven't.

SCHRADER: Thank you. And I yield back.

PITTS: The Chair thanks the Gentleman. And I recognize the Gentleman from New Jersey Mr. Lance five minutes for questions.

LANCE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary regarding King versus Burwell, understand what you had said that there can be no administrative action should the plaintiff win the case. You've stated that explicitly and repeatedly and that is not my question. My question relates back to the Chairman who said in his opening line of

questioning that we have a specific source within your department that there is a document related to what HHS might do should the Supreme Court rule against the administration.

I understand that your point of view is that there can be no administrative action. You have stated that explicitly. Are you aware of any such document and I'm not asking about your position on administrative action. I'm asking about a document in this regard.

BURWELL: Congressman, I would -- if there is this document and you know of it, I would -- I would certainly like to know of the document because I don't have knowledge of a 100-page document.

LANCE: I didn't say 100-page now did I? I said a document. I don't know how many pages it is. You're not aware of any document?

BURWELL: What I have -- as I've said there isn't administrative action (inaudible).

LANCE: Yes, I don't -- I made that clear that I understand your point of view on that. Is there a document as to a reaction from HHS should the case be won by the plaintiff in the Supreme Court?

BURWELL: With regard to a reaction as I've said because I've articulated that I want to be careful because I have articulated (inaudible)...

LANCE: As I have tried to be careful.

BURWELL: ... the problems with regard to the question of what will happen. We know how many people are in the marketplace, how many (inaudible).

LANCE: Yes, that's filibustering. I understand that. I'm asking whether there is any document. We have a source indicating there is a document as to what might be the response from HHS.

BURWELL: I'm not familiar with the document you're referring to.

LANCE: And let me say that a former CMS administrator Tom Scully of, I believe, the Bush administration has said that, "Of course they have a document." He said, of course, they have one. I think he referred to a document. "They should all resign if they don't." I would hope that your department, Madam Secretary, would have some sort of contingency plan should the court rule for plaintiff. Do you believe that the suit is bogus?

BURWELL: With regard to the lawsuit as I've said what I believe is that the law is clear...

LANCE: Yes, I understand that. You believe the suit is bogus?

BURWELL: That's the characterization I -- my point about the suit is what I believe is that we hold the right position in the (inaudible).

LANCE: I understand that and it will be argued next week and a decision will be made by the end of June. Formerly, when I asked questions about this not from you but regarding prior officials, there was the impression that it was a frivolous suit. Do you believe the suit is frivolous or bogus?

BURWELL: What I believe is that we should continue making progress for the American people on three things that the Affordable Care Act (inaudible).

LANCE: Yes, I'm aware of that. Do you believe the suit is frivolous or bogus?

BURWELL: May I finish, Congressman? I believe that we as the executive branch and the legislative branch should be working together on three things we agree with. That's affordability, access and quality.

LANCE: I agree with all of that.

BURWELL: What I would like -- and what can -- would hope that we can do is build on the progress that we have seen. And that progress is that 11.4 million people...

LANCE: You're claiming my time. Do you believe that the Supreme Court is likely to rule unanimously on this decision?

BURWELL: As I've indicated we believe that the court will rule in our favor.

LANCE: Do you believe the suit is bogus or frivolous?

BURWELL: With regard to characterization, what I think is valuable is that we believe that our position is the position that will stand and that we believe we're right. The people in the State of New Jersey should not have their subsidies taken away be they do or don't have a marketplace when people right across the border in New York will get those subsidies.

LANCE: I believe, Madam Secretary, in equal justice under law as is inscribed across the street in the Supreme Court building, I believe this is a very serious case. I think it's closely contested. Under no circumstances do I believe that plaintiff will win nine to nothing. I think there are good arguments on both sides. I have read the briefs, all of the briefs. I've read the Solicitor General's brief. I've read the brief of the plaintiff. I think it's a very serious case and you and I may disagree on the case. I respect that and I understand that.

It's frustrating to me that here in Washington, there cannot be an intellectual argument as to pros and cons and I certainly would encourage the administration to have a contingency plan and to work with us in Congress including the Republican majority in both the House and the Senate should the court rule for plaintiff.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

BURWELL: Congressman, with regard to the question of our authorities, what you just ended with was the issue of legislation and I want to make sure that I touch on that. As we have said all along we are willing and look forward to working with the Congress on any legislation that would work on those three things we talked about -- affordability, access and quality and preserves the economy as supports working middle class. That's how we look at legislation. We want to do that now and we want to do that (inaudible).

LANCE: And I was part of a group that had an alternative piece of legislation that didn't see the light of day put forth by the Tuesday lunch group of whom I'm a member of that group. It was different from the Affordable Care Act but it was an alternative piece of legislation and, of course, it didn't see the light of day in any way, shape or form in 2009 and 2010.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

PITTS: The Chair thanks the Gentleman.

I now recognize the Gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. Kennedy five minutes for questions.

KENNEDY: Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, thank you very much for being here. You touched on a moment ago that legislation that you said you were eager to work with Democrats and Republicans, have you seen any such legislation?

BURWELL: With regard to legislation that would promote and move forward on those three things, the issues of the -- making sure we're expanding that insured population, I have not seen things that would work towards that.

KENNEDY: Madam Secretary, are you aware of how many bills were passed and signed -- bills that were passed by the 113th Congress?

BURWELL: I don't know the exact number.

KENNEDY: Give or take a few, 931, ballpark sounds about right.

UNKNOWN: That was one and a half (inaudible). KENNEDY: Any idea on how many of those bills were signed into law, 296 sounds about right. Any idea how many times in my first term in Congress we repealed all or part of the Affordable Care Act, 55 sounds about right. Any idea how many times those were signed into law?

BURWELL: None.

KENNEDY: Any times -- are you aware of how many times we voted on some sort of replacement bill to the Affordable Care Act that we voted to repeal 55 times to provide Americans with quality, affordable access and financial assistance to access the health care that they deserve? None.

BURWELL: I think the number is none.

KENNEDY: OK. I would agree with you. So, I think given all of the discussions we've had over the course of the past several hours about contingencies, about other options and the time that I have been in Congress over 55 times in my first term including another time in my second term to repeal all or part of the Affordable Care Act and under the time that I've been here on a Republican leadership not a single bill have seen the House floor to vote on an alternative to provide quality, affordable accessible health care to millions of Americans, I would respectfully ask as my colleagues have for the administration to work with Democrats and republicans to work on any such legislation should they decide to bring that to the light of day.

BURWELL: And in our budget I would just like to mention we actually do have a proposal to improve the small business provisions of the Affordable Care Act to try and both simplify and make the tax credits better for small businesses. That's feedback we've received about that and that is something that is included in our budget.

KENNEDY: Now, turning to a couple of I think hopefully more substantive questions that I could get it with you, Madam Secretary. I was pleased to see that the Democratic (inaudible) Authorization bill that the president's budget was -- included in the president's budget extended the Medicaid primary care payment increase.

That rate of increase was -- that it was initially included in the ACA has been absolutely critical and for the last two years it's boosted payments to doctors who treat the most vulnerable populations making access an attainable goal no just an aspirational target.

According to our recent report from the Urban Institute, however, the expiration of that payment (inaudible) at the end of last year will result in Medicaid provider payments that are going to be cut on average of 43 percent and over 50 percent in some states. The impact on wait times could be drastic and immediate.

I was hoping, Madam Secretary, you might be able to comment on the importance of the parity between Medicare and Medicaid payment to our primary care providers and when they have to choose between seeing some of our most vulnerable populations like seniors, pregnant women and children, why would there possibly be a reimbursement discrepancy.

BURWELL: So, I think as your indicating why we have proposed the continuation of these payments is because we believe that it is making a difference and it's making a difference to the access and coverage that people are getting in the system.

And so, we proposed it as a continuation and we hope that that's something that the Congress will consider and support.

KENNEDY: Thank you. The second topic that I want to touch on today actually my colleague Mr. Murphy touched on it quite extensively in his comments but it's about substance abuse and mental health.

Back in Massachusetts, Madam Secretary, I see communities on the front lines of a growing and extraordinarily devastating opiate abuse crisis and we're looking to the federal government for some support as prescription drug abuse and a number of heroin overdoses continue to mount.

Madam Secretary, as a prosecutor before I ran for office, I saw the impacts of this on a daily basis not just in terms of addiction and people needing treatment but in terms of property crimes, personal crimes for folks that are looking to try to find a way to get help but the treatment options just aren't there.

There are not enough doctors. There are not enough beds as Mr. Murphy indicated. There's not enough wrap-around services. There's not enough care. And I was hoping that you might be able to touch on the importance of actually creating these incentives through Medicaid largely which is our largest mental health provider to actually make sure that not just another grant program but to make sure the incentives are in place to allow that marketplace to provide that care.

BURWELL: So, the bad news as you indicated there were 259 million prescriptions for pain killers, opioids during 2012. That's more than more than one per adult in the nation. That's the bad news. The good news is that I believe that there is bipartisan support for us to do something and I believe that that's both in the executive and the legislative branch here in Washington D.C. as well as with the governors who I met with over the weekend on this issue.

I think with regard to payment it is an important place but there are three fundamental things that we believe we need to work with the Congress and work with the governors to do. One is in terms of the prescribing that's at the root of much of the problem. We've seen progress in states like Florida where they are watching the prescribing, the plans that states can put in place to oversee that is an important part but we have a part, too.

Second is the issue of things like naloxone and access to those which I think gets to some the payment issues. And the third is making sure there's medical treatment and I think that was the third part of what you're mentioning.

Those three elements, I think is base -- that's the basic agreed upon and whether it's Senator Portman and Senator Wyden or Mr. Rogers (ph) or it's across the board there's bipartisan support because states from Massachusetts to Kentucky and West Virginia, my own home state, are suffering in devastating ways.

And the one piece you didn't mention which -- you know, is the economic impact. And having come from a large employer like Walmart, what it means in terms of having an employee (inaudible) that can pass a drug test.

KENNEDY: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

BURWELL: Thank you.

PITTS: The Chair thanks the Gentleman.

The Chair will note that we've just been joined by a group of students from the Houston area. The Ranking Member has informed me. You want to say anything, Gene?

GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I would like to recognize a number of our chiropractic students from the Houston area and Dr. Mossad (ph) who actually retired as a president of our Chiropractor College in

Pasadena Texas. And I invited him last night because I wanted to show how health care policy is made in the Health Care Subcommittee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

PITTS: Thank you. You're certainly welcome to be here.

The Chair now recognizes the Gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Griffith five minutes for questions.

GRIFFITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that. I appreciate the students being here. We may have some disagreements today but I will tell you that the Ranking Member, Mr. Green and I worked very hard on the health care bill that was -- that was signed into law last year. So, no matter what you may see today, we do get along more often than the press let you know.

All right, that being said, Madam Secretary, in response to a previous question, you indicated you weren't aware of any of the laws being signed in. I'm sitting here with the CRS report -- Congressional Research Service -- indicating that there are 12 bills that repealed parts of Obamacare that were in fact signed into law. You're not aware of that, is that correct in relationship to your previous answer.

BURWELL: With regard to the specifics to the answer those were repeal questions I thought.

GRIFFITH: Yes. And this was part...

BURWELL: Full repeal. Full repeal (inaudible).

GRIFFITH: ... he said -- he said full or part. So, you were mistaken, you weren't aware of these 12 that were partially repeals.

BURWELL: I was referring to the issue of full repeal (ph).

GRIFFITH: But you were aware of this?

BURWELL: With regard to that, I'd have to look and see (inaudible).

GRIFFITH: OK. And if I could have this entered into the record, I'd appreciate it.

PITTS: Without objection, so ordered.

GRIFFITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Also, are you familiar with my H.R. 130?

BURWELL: I apologize. I don't know what that bill is. Maybe if it's described I might (inaudible).

GRIFFITH: And are you -- it's a bill that deals with the black lung provisions of Obamacare.

BURWELL: I'm not familiar with that.

GRIFFITH: I appreciate that. Are you familiar with my H.R. 790 which is the Compassionate Freedom of Choice Act?

BURWELL: I'm not familiar with the specific names of the legislation (inaudible).

GRIFFITH: And I appreciate that. And are you familiar with H.R. 793 which deals with Preferred Pharmacy Networks in Part D?

BURWELL: Depending on (inaudible) that may.

GRIFFITH: Another one of mine. And so, the reason I asked those questions is very well orchestrated today from my political standpoint, the other side of the aisle has asked you repeatedly are you

aware of Republican legislation that deals with the issues that we're dealing with related to Obamacare, I would submit to you that in some way or another the three points that you pointed out, each one of those bills did, you're not intimately familiar with them and I understand that. And I'm not blaming you because you've been put into that unenviable position that sometimes happens where there's a difference between negative evidence and a lack of evidence.

And what you presented today is a lack of evidence and I appreciate that. That doesn't mean that these bills don't exist just as I gave you the numbers on those three. It doesn't mean that there aren't bills that other members have that are out there that are Republican proposals to take care of the American citizen while we are in the process of repealing Obamacare. And so, you're just submitting that you are not aware of it. But there are in fact bills out there that may be doing that ad also further discussions behind the scenes that may be doing that you're unaware of. Isn't that correct?

BURWELL: Would welcome the Veterans Bill -- there was a Veterans Bill that we all agreed on. The firefighters I haven't seen the legislation.

GRIFFITH: I'm just saying though that when you say -- when you say though in answer to many number of members on the other side of the aisle that you aren't aware that doesn't mean they don't exist. It just means you're not aware, am I correct? Yes.

All right. We'll move on. The president's fiscal year 2016 budget calls for $92 million for the Office of National Coordinator, ONC, for purposes including the transition to a governance approach for health information exchange.

In 2012, an HHS request for information noted that Congressional authorities granted to the ONC in the 2009 HITECH Act would support this governance mechanism. Madam Secretary, I hold in my hand the copy of a Congressional research report dated January 7, 2015 that suggests ONC does not have the authority to support the ONC governance structure outlined in the president's budget. Don't you agree that when agencies take action, they should be supported by Congressional authorization?

BURWELL: I'm not familiar with the report, would welcome seeing it. With regard to the Office of the National Coordinator, I think you know we just came out with the plan to continue moving us towards electronic medical records. We backed that up with specific things. We continue to work on something that cuts across many of the issues and whether (inaudible).

GRIFFITH: But you would agree with the principle that there ought to be Congressional authority for an agency to take action, would you not, yes or no?

BURWELL: I would agree that we need authority.

GRIFFITH: Yes, ma'am.

And. Mr. Chairman, if I can also have that Congressional research service report placed into the record (inaudible).

PITTS: Without objection, so ordered.

GRIFFITH: As a part of its governance push, ONC awarded a contract to RTI (ph) to develop its health IT safety center. RTI said at the time of the award that it would define the focus, functions, governance and value the national health IT safety content. I'm just concerned as I pointed out a minute ago that when you have these comments being made and we haven't seen it yet and the report that I just had entered into the record shows they haven't seen the final analysis of what they're going to do.

But when you have comments that they're planning to work on governance and they don't have that authority, I am concerned when the experts are telling me both legal and otherwise that this agency is going beyond its scope of authority, that this is a problem in this administration and that we should

be careful that we have any agency moving forward without Congressional authority. I'm going to ask you to work with me as we -- as we move forward on this. I'm going to follow up with some questions and some other things and ask that you work with me to make sure that the ONC does not overstep its authority granted to it in legislation by this Congress.

BURWELL: Would want to work with you to understand and understand what these concerns on governance are. This is new to me and so would like to understand further what the concern is.

GRIFFITH: Yes, ma'am. And I appreciate that and I yield back.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

PITTS: The Chair thanks the Gentleman.

I now recognize the Gentlelady from California, Ms. Capps five minutes for questions.

CAPPS: I thank my colleague for yielding any time and I do have a different topic to discuss with you, Secretary Burwell. But my colleague from Texas has asked for 10 seconds.

UNKNOWN: I'll do my 10 seconds. I want to thank the Congressman from Virginia. But I think the clarification is that up until Congressman Kennedy, all our statements were repeal the Affordable Care Act without an alternative. Now, there were bills that were passed and none of us at least up until Congressman Kennedy.

BURWELL: That's right.

UNKNOWN: But, you know, there's no repeal and replace. There's only repeal for (inaudible) 56 times. And thank you for my 10 seconds.

BURWELL: And that's why I responded to full repeal. It was...

CAPPS: Thank you. You know, I want to go back to the president's budget this year which I think on the whole strikes an important balance between controlling spending and promoting public health. And this public health topics are what I want to bring to your attention. I was pleased to see that there was continued support for nursing work force development. I believe and I know you do, too, a strong nursing work force improves the health of our communities as well as the quality of the health care system.

And we now have the significant challenge in our nation of caring for a growing patient population with limited resources. And I'm a nurse so I know that we can't reach our health care goals without a strong health care workforce made up of a range of health care professionals.

And these are the development programs such as Title VIII that are proven to be a solution that can help address this challenge. So, would you please discuss briefly because I have two more topics what this budget request does to make sure that we have a diverse health care workforce well equipped and large enough to meet our needs. BURWELL: I will just be very brief...

CAPPS: Sure.

BURWELL: ... which is I think one of the core and anchor places that we do that is making sure that we are funding our national health service corps and the increases that we've asked for are very important part of that across, and it's especially important because we serve that group of people, 30 percent are diverse in that group.

CAPPS: Yes.

BURWELL: And in the nation as a whole, the number is 10 percent so we are over-indexing for that and that we think that's a very (inaudible).

CAPPS: Right (ph).

BURWELL: (inaudible) there are other things but I want (inaudible).

CAPPS: Right. And because this one that I'm going to mention is near and dear to my heart and that is the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, such bang for the buck that you get with this who have ever seen it and I -- as I have and part of one. It's such a proactive and preventive service and there is an increasing commitment in this home visiting program in the budget for 2016. These are evidence based, as you know, bipartisan programs helping to ensure that all children across the board get an opportunity to be healthy and successful.

And they are so critical to improving health outcomes for both women and children and families. So my question is how increased funding for these programs is going to address disparity and improve the health. How can we make it better?

BURWELL: So with regard to the issue because I am a mother of a five and a seven-year-old I have lived the importance of that information very recently in terms of being able to give your children what they need. And so the program that you're describing why we think it's important to continue on the pace, it is an evidence-based program.

CAPPS: Yeah.

BURWELL: We have seen the results in terms of reading and other analytical skills up to 12 years old in terms of the benefits that's as far as it's been tested. And we see what that's happening when we give mothers and parents that opportunity to get the information they need in a home (ph). When you go to them, it is making the difference.

And so, we believe this is a very important part and part of a continuum that you see in the budget. That home visiting, next comes to that early childcare and making sure that we fund childcare so working Americans can be a part of that and then the issues of Head Start and improving Head Start both in terms of the length of day, the time of year and the quality that we require. So it is continuum in terms of making sure we're taking care of those children along the way for working families and pressing ourselves to improve quality.

CAPPS: And to build on that in the focus on children and family. This question was asked about graduate medical education, but I want to focus on children's hospital GME because children's hospitals programs are so critical for training pediatricians, pediatric specialists and pediatric researchers.

It's less than one percent of hospitals. They train 51 percent of all pediatric specialists and the Children's Hospital Graduate Medical Education Programs currently receive much less funding than other, you know, children don't lobby.

And we have to do this work on their behalf and would explain the proposed changes to funding for Children's Hospital Graduate Medical Education Programs and what steps are being taken to ensure that we are meeting the demand for pediatric care.

BURWELL: We want to meet that demand and we want to meet that demand for both primary care and the specialties where we don't necessarily have the number of practicing physicians that we need.

And so, the proposal that we have tries to respond to the criticisms that we received last year with our proposal and that there is a $100 million that is dedicated firmly to the children's programs.

In addition to that, they are able to compete. Right now, what we do is we cover the direct costs but we don't continue to cover the indirect cost.

CAPPS: Thank you very much.

PITTS: The Chair thanks the Gentlelady.

I now recognize the Gentleman from Texas Dr. Burgess for five minutes for questions.

BURGESS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Again, Madam Secretary, my apologies for being out of the hearing at another hearing. And I also apologize for not having the president's here with me this morning.

But the president did outline a number of savings in the Medicare space in the presidential budget. Is that correct? Do I understand that correctly?

BURWELL: Yes. That is correct.

BURGESS: And in general, as the head of HHS, are you supportive of those proposals by -- in the president's budget?

BURWELL: Yes. BURGESS: Let me ask you a question then, you know that one of the things -- I mean, I have just been pounding my head against the wall for 12 years on the sustainable growth rate formula. We're very close last year.

We almost crack them up, but we didn't quite get there. But I thought we had a good proposal and we're very close to introducing the same policy language again in this Congress. Offsets (ph) have been -- have been difficult as everyone would expect.

So let me just ask you, those savings that the president identified -- those Medicare savings that the president identified in the presidential budget, do you think it would be a good idea to apply those savings for the permanent repeal of the sustainable growth rate formula?

BURWELL: With regard to how we pay for it in the president's budget, we pay for it -- it is within the baseline and we include it that way. With regard to the specific question of just using our approach to the Medicare, those savings are part of a broader context.

It is a budget and we put the budget together in its entirety. We view that those savings need to be paired with other elements of the budget.

BURGESS: But to the extent that those savers are identified, and those offsets are identified in the budget, it seems to me that is -- would perhaps be a reasonable place to begin the discussion of what are the offsets that are used to put in place for the permanent universal, complete, forever repeal of the sustainable growth rate formula.

BURWELL: First, I want to disagree with the content that we're talking about. In my opening remarks, I specifically said that we support the bipartisan bicameral concepts that were put forward. And so, on that we agree.

With regard to the question of offsets, why I started with how we do it, which is building it into the baseline is because that's the way we believe it should be done and that uses the balance of things that we use to pay for things in our entire budget.

So in terms of where we start and what we believe, we believe that it needs to be a range of things and not simply focused on those.

BURGESS: Yes, but at the same time, as you know, the difficulty with the sustainable growth rate formula is the budget baseline and the fact that it was built in years ago and it accumulates over time isn't ever corrected even though a number of patches (ph) have been passed by Congress, we basically paid for this damn thing at least 1.4 times over the past 12 years.

BURWELL: (inaudible) -- yes.

BURGESS: Again, I just want you to know that I like the fact that the president put forward cost savers in his budget. A fair warning to you that these are where I am going to go, the lack of participation in people who are willing to come forward and talk seriously about offsets leads me to go to the president's budget as the only place I can go for democratic ideas for an offset.

And that is -- that is one of the critical missing piece in getting this SGR settled. Let me ...

BURWELL: I think your colleague, actually though mentioned -- your colleague Mr. Pallone actually mentioned his specific idea for this one. He spoke to this issue. It was (inaudible), but -- and you may disagree with that, but that was (inaudible) in terms of contributing to the debate.

BURGESS: And my door is always open to Mr. Pallone, I await his invitation. I'll be glad to come to his office. Let me ask you a question. I know -- I know you probably are tired of hearing the King versus Burwell, but I'll bring it up to you one more time, since I haven't been here, it's not exhausting to me yet.

And the whole concept around contingency plans and the American Academy of Actuaries is concerned because insurance companies are supposed to disclose the data upon which they're basing their rates in May, but there could be something that changes the equation in June, so to the extent that the insurance companies are having to deal with this unsettled future, I mean, they are going to have to deal with contingency plans are they not.

Why should the department not have a contingency plan as recommended by the American Academy of Actuaries?

BURWELL: So with regards to things that I have authority to plan for, I will plan for. In the budget -- the current budget you see in front of you, the unaccompanied children issue one that I know is a difficult issue and that there's controversy around. We have put in monies to plan up to 60,000, have asked for contingency funding case.

We don't believe it will, but in case the numbers were there are places that I can plan, we will. With regards to this issue, that's why the letter was simple, it actually gets to the core and the fundamental.

We do not believe we have administrative authority if the court makes a decision and as I went -- I always repeat, we don't believe the court will decide this way, but if the court makes a decision that says and rules for the plaintiffs and says that those subsidies are not available, the question of we don't believe we have an authority to undo the damage that would then occur which is subsidies go away, individuals can no longer pay. They go off of their insurance. They become uninsured. It drives premiums up in that marketplace. They become uninsured. There's indigent care, it goes up.

We don't believe that we have an authority if the court makes that decision at that level that we have an authority to do it and therefore that's why you're not hearing (inaudible) plaintiffs because we don't have an authority. BURGESS: Well, I think you have to agree, it will change the structure of the risk pools for the insurance companies. And Mr. Chairman, for that reason I'd like to submit the letter from the American Academy of Actuaries for the record and I yield back.

PITTS: Without objection, so ordered.

BURWELL: I do think though that is why one does see those companies filing their briefs that they have filed in the case that articulate the point you're making.

PITTS: The Gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes the Gentleman from Maryland, Mr. Sarbanes for five minutes for questions.

SARBANES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Madam Secretary. First, thank you for stepping into public service as you've done your tenure at OMB and now at HHS is I think a real service to the country.

I wanted to talk about this concept of full repeal which has been a drumbeat for years it seems now from the other side of the aisle to understand the implications of a full repeal. And so I wanted to go through some of the things that were part of the ACA and ask. And it may not be that every one of them is jeopardized for a full repeal. But I think, certainly, some of them are.

So the ACA included a measure that would allow young people to stay on their parents' health care up to age 26. And I think upwards of 3 million younger adults have benefited from that. If there was a full repeal at the ACA, would that benefit and provision be in jeopardy

BURWELL: It was part of the original act, so yes.

SARBANES: Then there was an effort to begin closing the doughnut hole on prescription drugs under the Part D program, which has bedeviled many of our seniors who kind of fall into that doughnut hole often at a critical stage in terms of being -- needing to access prescription drugs. And the ACA reform included an effort that's began, is under way to close that doughnut hole, would that be in jeopardy if there was a full repeal?

BURWELL: It would in the $15 billion in savings that their seniors have received to date would stop.

SARBANES: Right. Then there was terrific provisions in terms of reimbursement that benefits in reimbursement, so on the benefit side, for Medicare beneficiaries, you had more preventive care being covered fully, eliminating copayments for certain kinds of preventive care, screening for annual wellness visits, et cetera. That was part of the ACA. A full repeal, I imagine, would jeopardize that reform as well.

BURWELL: Yes. And we actually just were able to have the numbers. And we have seen an increase in the number of seniors that are using that preventative care and the percentage of seniors that are using at least one preventative service continues to go up. SARBANES: Excellent. We put in some enhanced payment in reimbursement for primary care physicians recognizing that we need to make sure we're incentivizing that part of the profession in terms of getting into the pipeline. And also, having the opportunity to spend more time with their patients and having there be some economic reward for that, which the patients themselves also want, I presume that that would -- that would be imperiled with a full repeal as well.

BURWELL: A full repeal would imperil.

SARBANES: What about the provisions that have eliminated discrimination based on preexisting conditions, of course, we started right out of the gate eliminating that discrimination in the case of children, now that's been expanded more broadly. But I imagine that also would be undermined by a full repeal.

BURWELL: It would and having had the chance to meet a young woman who had cancer when she was seven -- when she was 12-years-old, she first had colon cancer and then had thyroid cancer later. And now is in her 20s and was engaged, but not continuing her graduate education or getting married because her focus was paying for her health care. And now the opportunity to have affordable care, because she had a preexisting condition, obviously, is now allowing her to go on with her life.

The issues of health security are very important, but for many individuals, the financial security is as well.

SARBANES: Thank you for those comments. The medical loss ratio requirement that now requires insurance plans to direct more of the insurance premium dollar to care as opposed to overhead cost and so forth, that was part of the ACA, adhering to that particular standard, that would be eliminated. I (inaudible) expecting a full repeal.

BURWELL: A full repeal.

SARBANES: Subsidies and tax credits for small businesses who want to do the right thing and provide health care coverage for their employees was part of the ACA, so small businesses would be impacted by a full repeal in terms of their ability to offer that kind of benefit to their workers. Isn't that correct?

BURWELL: It would take away the tax credits if there were a full repeal.

SARBANES: So even before we get to a discussion of the pros and cons of the health exchanges, which have now offered a coverage to millions of Americans. There are so many other reasons in addition to that that we wouldn't want to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

Thank you very much for being here. I appreciate your testimony.

BURWELL: (inaudible).

PITTS: The Chair thanks the Gentleman. I recognize the Gentleman from Florida, Mr. Bilirakis for his questions. BILIRAKIS: (inaudible) so much for your testimony. Thanks for your appearance. Welcome. I want to talk about Medicare Advantage. According to 2012 data, there were about 145,000 seniors in my district, about 40 percent of them are on Medicare Advantage, a little higher than the national average.

They love their plans and they want to keep their plans. They love their benefits and their choices. Unfortunately, this administration may not love Medicare Advantage as much as my seniors.

This -- the actuarial firm of Oliver Wyman did an analysis of the proposed 2016 Medicare Advantage rate notice, reading the report I'm troubled to learn that it estimates the combined impacts of cuts from 2014 to 2016 will cost seniors on an average of $60 to a $160 a month or as much as $1,920 a year.

Many of the seniors in my district live on a modest income, fixed income. Why is the administration forcing many seniors to pay more than $100 a month to keep the plan they like?

BURWELL: So with regard to the issue of Medicare Advantage, first I want to say, we think the program is a good program. During the period when changes have been enacted, we've seen the program expand by, I think well over 40 percent. We've seen the number of Medicare Advantage plans that have the top two ratings go from 17 percent to 67 percent and we have seen that premiums have not been increasing in terms of the changes that we've done to date.

Why are proposing these changes is they have been recommended by MedPAC and others with regard to overcoding that's occurring and as part of our efforts to make sure we're using the taxpayer dollar wisely, we want to promote the program. We want to keep the program healthy, but we also believe that there are opportunities for those who may be not using the system as well as they might. And that's what our changes are about and that's what we're trying to do, preserve and build the system, but make sure we do it in a fiscally responsible way.

BILIKARIS: Thank you, Madam Secretary. Many seniors who like the Medicare Advantage program they have are going to lose it in the following years. In fact, a recent (inaudible) report details a nearly fourfold increase in the number of U.S. counties that no longer have Medicare Advantages as an option growing from 55 counties in 2012 to 211 counties in 2015.

Isn't it concerning to you that seniors are losing the ability to choose a Medicare plan that provides high quality in coordinated care? This is a very successful program and again this is extremely important to my constituents.

BURWELL: I agree that it is a very important program and we want to make sure that it continues. When I see the studies and the underpinning of that, the most recent numbers that I have seen are that 99 percent of beneficiaries have access. And so, those numbers may not align with that most recent study. I just want to understand what the difference in that is. BILIKARIS: Thank you, Madam

Secretary. One more question. The impact of seniors of Medicare Advantage according to Oliver Wyman could result in seniors losing access to their current coverage or facing higher premiums, reduced benefits and changing, again, changes to the network as a result of the cuts, the proposed cuts.

When I talk with seniors in my district about Medicare Advantage, again, they believe Medicare Advantage, the model offers high quality coordinated care. Yet, further cuts will disrupt the benefits upon which millions of seniors rely.

Your agency likes to tout the so-called the affordable premiums and better consumer choices under the Affordable Care Act, when it comes to Medicare Advantage wise administration pursuing policies that would increase premiums and reduce choices for seniors and again, it's very concerning.

BURWELL: I think the responses with regard to the issue that what we have seen with the changes we've done to date have not had the premium pressure that's described. We want to continue to watch and monitor. And also that we have seen more people enter in and the quality improve. And so, that's what we've seen to date. We want to continue to work and monitor. We want the program to succeed. We want to support it and we want to try and do it in the way that's the most fiscally responsible.

BILIKARIS: Well, thank you, Madam Secretary. I appreciate it.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

PITTS: (inaudible) Gentleman. I recognize the Gentleman from California, Mr. Cardenas for five minutes for questions.

CARDENAS: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate the opportunity to have this public dialogue for the benefit, not only of the members but for the public as well. Preserving access to prescription drugs that work for every senior is important. I think everybody on this dais and I think every person who cares about a senior in this country which probably makes everybody. So my question has to do with what proposals in the president's budget would increase access for seniors?

BURWELL: With regards to the specific access for seniors, across the board on prescription drugs, I think in terms of the programs, whether that's the way we use some of the programs we've just been discussing, but I also think one of the most important things that has happened is that seniors have access to preventative services that they historically may not have.

And just announced on Tuesday that what we are seeing is because the seniors have that access to those preventative services, they're increasing that -- the use of that. I think throughout our budget, one of the things we're attempting to do is work very hard to do a system -- delivery system reform which means getting better quality, at a better price for the nation. And I recently announced about three weeks ago that in the Medicare space, we're going to try and move to 30 percent of all Medicare payments will be in new payment models, payment models that are about improving net quality and reducing net cost. And so those are some of the areas that I think the budget focuses on this.

CARDENAS: Now, that effort, is it likely to create an environment, individual by individual that's likely to increase their quality of extended life versus, because when we're talking about access to preventative care that means that if you catch something at its early stages, we all know with today's modern medicine and opportunities, you can actually thwart it or actually overcome it versus finding something at latent stages, it might even take your life. Correct?

BURWELL: And across the department there are number of investments to get to that. And whether that's the NIH investments in research or in the Center for Innovation in Medicare and Medicaid, one of the things where we have out, a proposal that we're getting response to have to do with hospice

and curative care and how to combine those two in a way that will maximize for the quality of the patient. And so, it's throughout the budget, these issues of cost and quality are things that we focus on.

CARDENAS: Thank you. On that note, I'd also like to add, for the record, if you would allow me unanimous consent, Mr. Chairman, to submit the -- a letter for the record from my office that lays out the issues that we're discussing at the moment.

PITTS: Without objection, so ordered.

BURWELL: Thank you.

CARDENAS: I keep hearing a lot from some of my colleagues about their constituents losing choices. But then again, one of the things that -- it's my understanding, please clarify that when people are talking about losing choices, they may be describing policies that were, in fact, more expensive on the front end and perhaps didn't have minimum benefits standards to the person paying. Is that many cases what people are describing when people are losing choices?

BURWELL: It can be, I would want to understand the specific (inaudible) within the marketplace ...

CARDENAS: And that's why I say the word, "maybe, maybe," yes.

BURWELL: Within the marketplace there are 25 percent more issuers, which mean more choice. The essential health benefits do important things, I think as you're reflecting. And they get to some of the issues that, Mr. Murphy and Ms. Matsui on mental health and having those benefits be clear and incorporated is extremely important. So without understanding the specific case, I think it's a little hard to know.

CARDENAS: But there are, in fact, in some areas where certain kinds of policies are not allowed, but that was -- that is based on a new minimum standard, correct?

BURWELL: That is correct.

CARDENAS: And one of the things that I've discussed with some of my constituents and my staff and some of the providers and experts that we pulled together, we registered at least over 1,000 families.

And I personally tried to speak to as many of those individuals as possible. And with that is many of them were even scared to be there. They were thinking about this big Obamacare dragon that was going to obliterate either their finances or their health care, but what almost a person, every person that got up from once, they sat down and figured out what was available to them or what have you, had a big smile on their face.

And they were very pleased and very relieved and glad they came. And in one instance, I was talking to a Gentleman who was paying $60 a month. He was making $9 an hour, single-income family. He had a wife and a daughter. And I met all three of them.

And when he was done, he had a big smile in his face. He almost got up and left when he met me. But when he was done, he actually realized that he now was able to provide for his family, without having to spend $60 a month and now his entire family has coverage. So I think that's a perfect example of what this is, what's good in the Affordable Care Act.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back my time.

PITTS: Thanks, Gentleman. I recognize the Gentleman from Indiana, Dr. Bucshon for five minutes for questions.

BUCSHON: Thank you, Secretary Burwell and thanks for coming. And first of all, I want to thank you for working with Governor Mike Pence of Indiana of helping the Indiana Plan 2.0, which will help to cover 350,000 low-income Hoosiers in a state based program that I think has been shown historically to not only save money, but it is very popular with the enrollees, so thank you very much for that -- for that work.

Before I came to Congress, I was a cardio-thoracic surgeon and I treated most of my patients for many weeks after their surgery. And as you probably know that falls on under a global payment, a 90-day global surgical payment by CMS. Now, CMS wants to repeal that rule and eliminate global payments for surgical services, why?

BURWELL: With regard to our understanding of how the global payments are used, the reason that we want to do this is make sure that while we are promoting quality care that we do it in the way that is most cost-effective for the tax payer. Most of the changes that we do in the Medicare space are focused on those two things and trying to balance those two things.

BUCSHON: OK. And has HHS or CMS looked into the administrative cost the new system we'll have on doctors and CMS? The reason I ask is in my practice, I'll give you some examples of how this actually won't work or won't work if you do it. We would bill a global payment for everything including follow up visits and now doctors will be billing for the surgery, every hospital round that they make, every follow up appointment, all separately, let me finish, and not only would the medical practice have to pay employees to submit all of these what I have considered excessive claims, but then, CMS will have to process each claim and how can that not cause CMS more money not less, that's my first question.

BURWELL: With regard to the global payment issue and one of the things Dr. Patrick Conway, we try and have physicians who are practicing at the table as we have these conversations. I want to understand the point that you're making in how we believe - I want to look into this one in terms of the specific answer to your question.

BUCSHON: It will be a dramatic increase. Let me tell you why, if I did an open heart surgery on a patient I would see them in the ICU anywhere from three to five days every day and then, probably two to three follow up appointments. That's all under global. And so now that those numbers will be submitted as individual bills, from a surgeon's perspective I see this is - and I think seniors should be paying attention to these comments. This is going to be a dramatic pay cut for surgeons across this country. And that's -- in my view, that's where any potential savings will be coming from.

So as you look at this you better - you should really - I would encourage you to pay attention to that because what will happen is you're going to have to re-evaluate, there's going to be a re- evaluation of every code, re-evaluation of every follow up appointment, you're going to have to discern whether there's duplicative billing. For example, if I see a patient post-op in the ICU and a critical care physician is also seeing my patient that day, who gets paid, who doesn't get paid, there will be increased denials. My point is this global payments were put in place to save money administratively and also simplify and I think improve quality of healthcare.

And I think going backwards away from that is regressive - regressing backwards. Yes, it will save money, this will save money by dramatically cutting provider reimbursement, and if that's the intent that's unfortunate because what will also result is access issues for seniors for healthcare services and I would argue less quality healthcare. And so, you know, most of these bundles are re- examined every few years by (inaudible) and so, you know, the argument that overbilling is occurring. If that were to be true, then, you know, these bundles are looked at every couple of years and re-evaluated. So, on that subject I would encourage you to take a really hard look at global payments. They save money. They don't cost money. The savings will be at the - on the backs of seniors' access to healthcare and quality in my opinion.

The other thing is the president's budget would seek to save 20.9 billion in savings over the next ten years by strengthening the IPAD (ph) board, a board of unelected members selected by the president to cut - in my view, to cut Medicare payments to providers. I understand the president has not yet nominated, anyone who sits on the IPAD (ph) board, so it would not - you could not recommend a

Medicare cuts this year. So, in what year under the president's budget will IPAD (ph) begin to make recommendations on Medicare cost?

BURWELL: In the current president's budget, IPAD (ph) would not kick in until 2019.

BUCSHON: 2019.

BURWELL: That's correct.

BUCSHON: OK. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

PITTS: The chair thanks the Gentleman. Now, I recognize the Gentleman from New York, Mr. Collins for five minutes for questions.

COLLINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, secretary, for being here today. I'm from western New York which is a very rural community. We have one of the highest enrollment of Medicare Advantage.

I know prior to the Affordable Care Act I would say that without a doubt one of the bright spots in the delivery of healthcare in the United States was Medicare Advantage, dealt with the doughnut hole. It was a lot of comfort for the seniors to be able to go in much likely do at HMOs and great program and yet as was brought out earlier I want to get into this.

It seems as though the president and the administration in HSS views Medicare Advantage with some level of distain in that it's the piece that keeps getting cut. And as I look through some of the data and I'm kind of a data driven guy, the interesting thing I found about Medicare Advantage, there's over seven million enrollees who represents almost 30 percent of the Medicare population would indicate get works.

Number two, when you look at who uses it, lower income beneficiaries have a higher enrollment in Medicare Advantage than do wealthier individuals which means it's serving best some of the lower income populations. We've also seen that when I look at the rural plans, again, in rural America, which I represent, a higher percentage of folks from rural America area using it.

So, I'm just asking the question as - and the interesting thing too that that information we got today was from (inaudible), they said the current 0.9 percent, the 0.9 percent cut that's coming now in the subsidy to insurance companies for Medicare Advantage is going to add another $20 a month to beneficiaries either in higher premiums or reduced benefits. Could you speak to just the opinion of older Americans on Medicare that they are being used as the funding source for the extension of Medicaid and all of those increased cost in the back of seniors who depended on this great program through all these years? A frustration level exists within that population.

BURWELL: I appreciate that and as I responded to your colleague with regard to the issues of Medicare Advantage I would say we support the program, I believe the program is a good program, but I also believe that our responsibility where we think there are things that are happening whether that's upcoding or other things that we try and take care of that. The changes that we've done, we've tried to transition those changes. We try to do those changes slowly so that we watch and monitor. We've seen an increase in the number of people in Medicare Advantage. We have seen premiums hold steady, we've seen an increase in quality.

So the negative impacts that were articulated at the beginning of those proposals, we have not seen. We want to continue to monitor and make sure that we don't see some of the negative impacts that you are talking about. We value the program. We think the changes. They've been recommended by MedPac (ph) and others. We understand the concerns, but trying in a world, and with regard to the other issues that you mentioned I would just say across the board and whether it's the issue that your colleague just mentioned with regard to providers or the $780 million we do in discretionary cuts, we try to spread these things across the entire parts of our budget.

COLLINS: But are you aware that there are now over 200 counties in the United States that don't have a Medicare Advantage plan at all to offer their seniors as a direct result of the cuts you've made? So when you say it hasn't had this impact, there are seniors in 200, over 200 counties in the United States that can't even buy the coverage.

BURWELL: So 99 percent of the nation has coverage in terms of the beneficiary's accessibility.

COLLINS: But yet the number who don't has increased from 55 counties before the ACA to over 200 today. So, there's a direct impact, I mean, the numbers, the data is the data, you can't make it go away.

BURWELL: With regard to those numbers as I've said I have the number of the current coverage and would want to understand the change...

COLLINS: Yes, what I'm trying to point out is it has had - the reason you're looking for this funding is to pay for the expansion of Medicaid. I mean, whether it's the health insurance tax or the individual mandate or whatever, the big cost driver has been this huge expansion of Medicaid would be my observation.

BURWELL: What I would observe is some of the comments that have been stated about the question of overall entitlements and the growth, we have a bulge, a population we have a large group of people who are elderly in Medicare. The Medicare cost, even though we've controlled per capita cost for Medicare over the period of what we're seeing, because more people of from the baby boom are retiring and older, that's an issue that we as a nation are going to have to look at and deal with. Medicare costs are going to continue to increase because of volume even if we can control per capita cost.

And so with regard to the questions of what will be costing the nation money over periods of time, the issue of Medicare is one on a - because we're going to have the baby boom and the echo come through, we're going to continue to have to make good on the commitments we've made and that will cost us because even if you control it per capita, volume is greater. COLLINS: Thank you for the answer. My time has expired. I yield back.

PITTS: The chair recognizes the Gentleman from New Mexico, Mr. **Lujan** for five minutes for questions.

LUJAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and I would yield to our Ranking Member, Mr. Green for a quick response as well.

GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would respond to my colleague from New York. I don't - I've not had any of my seniors question the expansion of Medicaid based on what's happening with Medicare. The Affordable Care Act was totally paid for and, in fact, Medicare was improved under the Affordable Care Act. And Madam Secretary, if you just - this is the first I've heard that seniors are complaining that the Medicaid expansion is being paid out of Medicare. That's just - that's just not, in fact, that I hear about. Did you have any information on that?

BURWELL: That is the first that I've heard that anyone felt that that was an issue with regard to the federal budget, because I assume that's what they're referring to.

GREEN: Yes. The Gentleman would yield...

LUJAN: I'm reclaiming my time. Thank you, Madam Secretary for your testimony today. I want to reiterate what many of my colleagues have said, that we must repeal the SGR but not on the backs of seniors and that a strong CHIP extension must be included with the SGR in March as well.

Also that the Affordable Care Act is working despite in attempt of over 50 Republican repeal attempts. The ACA has had a positive impact on New Mexico, in my home state, in my home district,

25,000 people now have quality affordable health coverage because of the Affordable Care Act, it didn't before. And overall, the numbers of uninsured has declined by 17 percent.

With the law now fully in effect the Americans can never be discriminated against because of pre-existing conditions, women can never be charged more per coverage because of their gender and Americans will never be sold health insurance policies that disappear when they need coverage the most, when they hit those lifetime caps and suddenly coverage just goes away.

I think that it's time that we come together and work to strengthen the law and stop playing political games that will strip millions of Americans of their health coverage that they depend on. As my father would say, enough is enough. Madam Secretary, in your opinion has the Affordable Care Act had a positive impact on places around the country including my home state of New Mexico?

BURWELL: Yes. And I think it has in three areas, affordability, access, and quality. With regard to the issues of quality, you touched upon a number of the areas where I believe there's been an improvement in quality. And those are the fact that people can have their children covered up to 26, the quality that you don't, if you have a pre-existing condition, you can't be kept out or thrown off of your healthcare. The fact if you take your child in for their wellness visit, there isn't co-insurance so you don't have to pay in terms of that preventative care. So, increases in quality, we've also seen increases in quality through partnerships we're doing with physicians and we've seen a 17 percent reduction in harms.

Those are things like infections and falls and hospitals. That's also about saving lives but it's also about money. With regard to the issue of affordability and the progress that we've made on affordability, while we can all still continue to make more, we have in that space and what we've seen is that in the years 2011, '12, '13, we have seen a record in terms of per capita health care cost growth. It's one of the lowest that we've seen on record and we've seen that. That's in the broader marketplace. With regard to the individual market what we've seen is that people, the vast majority, over eight in ten folks in the marketplace can find coverage using a subsidy that is a $100 or less than a month. That's affordability in that marketplace.

With regard to affordability in the taxpayer, CBO estimates pre the Affordable Care Act would have estimated that spending in Medicare would have been $116 billion greater, affordability for the taxpayer.

Lastly, access, the question of access and the fact that 11.4 million people have come through the marketplace this time, but let's even use last year's number where we saw a 10 million person drop in the number of uninsured. So, against the three fundamental measures, that's how I would think about it.

LUJAN: I appreciate, Madam Secretary, thanks for your response there and I do want to raise an issue that's great concern to my constituents and to myself back in New Mexico. It's now been over 18 since the state of New Mexico claimed credible allegations of fraud or their allegations of fraud against 15 behavioral health providers resulting in the eventual closure or replacement by five Arizona behavioral health providers.

This transition and turmoil has raised significant concerns across access to care, especially in light of recent reports that the new providers are financial unstable. In fact, one provider is already pulling out of New Mexico. The recent elected New Mexico Attorney General has also released the audit that led to the suspension and it shows a lack of underlying basis for many of the allegations of fraud.

My staff has had several meetings with CMS and I'm very concerned that we are making progress. When payment suspensions are put into place what can CMS do to ensure states are acting in good faith and what is the CMS doing to stop the reoccurrence of this happening both in New Mexico and other states? And can I have your commitment that we can work together on this particular issue to meet with the delegation?

BURWELL: We do want to work with you on this issue. You know it is one of concern in terms of making sure that people have access to those benefits.

LUJAN: I appreciate that. Thank you very much. I yield back the balance of my time.

PITTS: The chair thanks the Gentleman. I recognize the Gentlelady from North Carolina, Ms. Ellmers for five minutes for questions.

ELLMERS: Thank you. And thank you, Madam Secretary, for being with us today. I'm sorry, do you get some water there? We should get you some water. I do want to address before - because I have three different very different questions to ask you about, but I do want to address the issue of Medicare and our seniors who are concerned. It is my recollection and, you know, there again I'm just going back to history that over $700 billion was taken out of Medicare in order to pay for Obamacare, about 300 billion of that was Medicare Advantage. So the question of whether or not our seniors are concerned about that, I would say yes, they are concerned about that and they want to make sure that they will be able to continue to get the good care that they deserve.

I do want to start off by talking about Medicare reimbursement in relation to the 2 percent sequester cuts that were put in place a number of years ago dramatically affecting our chemotherapy drugs and our other part B drugs. As you know this has this has - this has affected our industry, back in January 14th of 2013 the Office of Management and Budget put out a letter basically asking federal agencies to "use any available flexibility to reduce operational risks and minimize impacts of the agency's core mission and service of the American people" and it goes on.

Some of the adverse things that have happened as a result of the 2 percent cut, over 16 months after CMS started applying the 2 percent cut, we basically ended up with 25 community oncology clinics closing. One of which, a very large clinic in my own district and 75 others merged with hospitals. CMS's own numbers showed that it cost $6,500 more per year per patient on oncology services if they become part of the hospital system versus the clinic setting or outpatient setting and about $650 more out of pocket. How can, you know, why hasn't CMS taken the recommendation of OMB and addressed that situation?

BURWELL: Congresswoman, we agree with you about sequester and in this budget we fully get rid of sequester both on the mandatory side and on the discretionary side. We believe there are other choices that are better choices and so I agree with you, this is not an approach, when you use an approach like this you'd end up doing things like the types of things you're talking about. And so what we want to do is fully replace it and that's what our budget does. We are willing to make other choices in terms of how we get those savings.

ELLMERS: Thank you. And I'll just go on in this - there again, a very important question having to do essentially with our tobacco products. And I - my question for you is do you agree with Mitch Zeller, the director of FDA Center for Tobacco Products that if smokers and I'm going to quote him, "who are otherwise unable or unwilling to quit were to completely switch to smokeless tobacco product it will be good for the public health." Do you agree with the statement?

BURWELL: I would have to understand the context in which he made that statement. With regard to the question, I think, you know, we want to promote the public health, we want to make sure we're doing the right research to understand that and put the right guidelines and regulations to do it.

ELLMERS: Well, thank you for that and I do want to add there that there are no government websites that help promote or, you know, address this issue including CDC, FDA, NIH. It would be helpful again for the public to understand that there are the non-tobacco products available and that this is an approach that we need to make. And I would welcome the ability to continue to work with you and in your office on any way that we can, you know, better help to get that information out and address the need from a scientific basis and using the scientific research that's out there.

I do want to switch gears a little bit to our vaccines and to BARDA. Right now BARDA maintains a stock pile of roughly $1.7 billion worth of pandemic influenza vaccine. This year's budget I believe was about $20 million in order to take care of that stockpile and maintain it. Does the 2016 budget increase that amount and into the future how does BARDA plan on dealing with those issues, especially when we know that we are in our situation where this is - its a very timely issue.

BURWELL: Across the board our budget has worked to do a couple of things with regard to the preparedness, making sure that that vaccine stockpile and that the issues that BARDA handles which are making sure that we have what we have on hand and stock pile and that we have the ability to work with manufacturers to bring new products online where that's appropriate for different types of issues that we as a nation may face, either manmade or otherwise.

But we also have paired that with things in our budget which are about the preparedness in our communities and we've seen that front and center certainly in our own time period. We are implementing the dollars we appreciate from Congress as part of in terms of Ebola that also broader preparedness where we have been given that authority by the Congress.

ELLMERS: Thank you, Secretary Burwell, for being here today. I truly appreciate your input. Thank you.

PITTS: The chair thanks the Gentlelady. That concludes the questions of the members of who are present. I'm sure we'll have lots of follow up and written questions from some of the members. So, we'll get those to you promptly, we ask that you please respond to the questions promptly. I remind the members that they have 10 business days to submit questions for the record and that means they should submit their questions by the close of business on Thursday, March the 12.

Thank you very much, Madam Secretary, for your attendance today and your answers. And without objections the subcommittee is adjourned.

END

LOAD-DATE: March 2, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 66535

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

JOURNAL-CODE: PTTW

Copyright 2015 ProQuest Information and Learning
All Rights Reserved
Copyright 2015 Roll Call, Inc.

Targeted News Service

February 27, 2015 Friday 5:14 PM EST

Rep. Lujan Introduces Bill to Support Coordination Among STEM Efforts in States

BYLINE: by MERLY LAPIG, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 199 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Feb. 27 -- Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., has introduced legislation (H.R. 1081) to "assist coordination among science, technology, engineering, and mathematics efforts in the States, to strengthen the capacity of elementary schools, middle schools, and secondary schools to prepare students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics."

The bill was introduced on Feb. 25 and has three co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., Steve Pearce, R-N.M., and Tony Cardenas, D-Calif.

The legislation was referred to the House Education and the Workforce Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.php. For more information about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information, contact Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; targetednews.com.

22LapigM 150227 23NaragK-1193533

LOAD-DATE: February 27, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

183 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

February 27, 2015 Friday 5:14 PM EST

Rep. Lujan Introduces Bill to Strengthen Indian Education

BYLINE: by MERLY LAPIG, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 156 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Feb. 27 -- Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., has introduced legislation (H.R. 1082) to "strengthen Indian education."

The bill was introduced on Feb. 25 and has two co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., and Steve Pearce, R-N.M.

The legislation was referred to the House Education and the Workforce Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.php. For more information about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information, contact Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; targetednews.com.

22LapigM 150227 23NaragK-1193534

LOAD-DATE: February 27, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

184 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

February 27, 2015 Friday 5:13 PM EST

Rep. Lujan Introduces Bill to Limit Penalties to States That Does Not Meet Maintenance of Effort Level of Funding

BYLINE: by MERLY LAPIG, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 173 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Feb. 27 -- Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., has introduced legislation (H.R. 1080) to "amend the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in order to limit the penalties to a State that does not meet its maintenance of effort level of funding to a one-time penalty."

The bill was introduced on Feb. 25 and was co-sponsored by Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M.

The legislation was referred to the House Education and the Workforce Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.php. For more information about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information, contact Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; targetednews.com.

22LapigM 150227 23NaragK-1193532

LOAD-DATE: February 27, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

185 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 26, 2015

LUJAN ON DHS FUNDING: ?TIME FOR CONGRESSIONAL REPUBLICANS TO STOP PUTTING THEIR POLITICAL SECURITY AHEAD OF NATIONAL SECURITY';
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 476 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor this morning on importance of passing a clean funding bill to prevent the Department of Homeland Security from shutting down. Below are his remarks.

"Mr. Speaker, we are only days away from a shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security. When Republicans took control of the House and Senate they pledged to avoid more government shutdowns. Instead, we've sadly learned that Speaker Boehner and Leader Mitch McConnell went nearly two weeks - two weeks - without talking and their failure to govern has us once again on the brink of a shutdown.

"I have been shocked and disappointed to hear some of my Republican colleagues say that a shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security would not be a serious issue and try to minimize its impact on people, minimize its impact on workers, and even try to minimize its impact on America.

"In my home state of New Mexico, a border state where we have many men and women who proudly serve our country as employees of the Border Patrol, the TSA, and other agencies, getting furloughed or working without a paycheck is a serious issue. If Republicans continue down this path paychecks will stop but rent and mortgages and utility bills for these workers will not.

"Time and again House Republicans have failed to govern, moving only from one crisis to the next. Sadly, the failure to fund DHS is the latest manufactured crisis that will have a real impact on working families in New Mexico and across America, while needlessly putting our national security at risk.

"It's time for Congressional Republicans to stop putting their political security ahead of national security and pass a clean bill. It's time for House Republicans to stop catering to the extreme anti-immigration wing of their party that is willing to sacrifice our nation's security in order to attack DREAMers who are going to college and serving our great nation.

"Mr. Speaker, the eyes of the American people are watching this Republican-led Congress, and so far all they have seen is gridlock and dysfunction.

"Mr. Speaker, the United States Senate is moving forward to fund the Department of Homeland Security. House Democrats are ready to support a clean bill. The only ones standing in the way of preventing a Department of Homeland Security shutdown are House Republicans. For our country's sake let us hope that changes.

"Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the House bring up H.R. 861, the clean Department of Homeland Security funding bill that will keep the Department open so it can carry out its mission of keeping the American people safe."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-on-dhs-funding-time-for-congressional-republicans-to-stop-putting-their-political-security-ahead-of-national-security1/

LOAD-DATE: February 27, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

186 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Copyright 2015 CQ Transcriptions, LLC
All Rights Reserved
CQ Transcriptions

All materials herein are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of CQ Transcriptions. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.

REP. JOE PITTS HOLDS A HEARING ON THE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT BUDGET REQUEST FOR F.Y. 2016

February 26, 2015 Thursday

EVENT DATE: **February 26, 2015**

TYPE: COMMITTEE HEARING

LOCATION: WASHINGTON, D.C.

COMMITTEE: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH

SPEAKER: REP. JOE PITTS, CHAIRMAN

WITNESSES:
REP. JOE PITTS, R-PA. CHAIRMAN
REP. MICHAEL C. BURGESS, R-TEXAS
REP. GENE GREEN, D-TEXAS RANKING MEMBER
REP. DORIS MATSUI, D-CALIF.
REP. FRED UPTON, R-MICH. EX OFFICIO
REP. FRANK PALLONE JR., D-N.J. EX OFFICIO
REP. KATHY CASTOR, D-FLA.
WITNESSES: SYLVIA MATHEWS BURWELL, SECRETARY, THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
REP. JOE L. BARTON, R-TEXAS
REP. ELIOT L. ENGEL, D-N.Y.
REP. BRETT GUTHRIE, R-KY.
REP. JAN SCHAKOWSKY, D-ILL.
REP. EDWARD WHITFIELD, R-KY.
REP. JOHN SHIMKUS, R-ILL.
REP. TIM MURPHY, R-PA.
REP. KURT SCHRADER, D-ORE.
REP. LEONARD LANCE, R-N.J.
REP. JOSEPH P. KENNEDY III, D-MASS.
REP. MORGAN GRIFFITH, R-VA.
REP. LOIS CAPPS, D-CALIF.
REP. JOHN SARBANES, D-MD.
REP. GUS BILIRAKIS, R-FLA.
REP. TONY CARDENAS, D-CALIF.
REP. LARRY BUCSHON, R-IND.
REP. CHRIS COLLINS, R-N.Y.
REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M.
REP. RENEE ELLMERS, R-N.C.

TEXT:

PITTS: The subcommittee will come to order. The Chair will recognize himself for an opening statement.

I would like to thank Secretary Burwell for appearing before the Subcommittee to discuss the administration's FY2016 budget request for the Department of Health and Human Services. Earlier this year, Madam Secretary, you stated that, quote, "The hallmark of effective leadership is instilling a culture of transparency, ownership, and accountability," end quote.

These are all laudable goals and I appreciate your verbal commitment to these principles. However, your Department's actions have failed to adhere to the same standard. For example, we have only heard silence from the White House on how the administration is preparing for an adverse ruling in King v. Burwell.

We did receive a reply from you, and I thank you for that courtesy. But your letter contained no substantive answers to our questions. During your testimony to the Senate Finance Committee, you were again asked about the administration's plans. And, again, you repeatedly declined to provide a direct answer.

And, you know, this is not the transparency that we had hoped for. Understandably, we were very frustrated with Administration witnesses artfully dodging the questions we ask here. And so I'm asking you today, please let your guard down a little and give us direct and complete answers to our questions.

In 2009, the president correctly said, quote, "The real problem with our long-term deficit actually has to do with our entitlement obligations," end quote. Since then we have had the Simpson-Bowles Commission, a supercommittee, sequestration, and a government shutdown, and never once in all this time did the administration propose a plan to get the nation's fiscal House in order by recommending reforms to entitlements.

The 2014 Medicare Trustees Report, which you signed, tells us that Medicare will be bankrupt very soon. We recently had Senator Joe Lieberman and former OMB Director Alice Rivlin here. And they told us much the same. We stand ready to do the hard work of saving and strengthening Medicare. But we need a willing partner.

Once again, the president's budget fails to propose serious entitlement reform. The proposals in the budget related to Medicaid amount to saving just 15 days worth of program spending over the next 10 years. The plan, apparently, is to let Medicare expenditures continue to grow without any of the structural reforms needed to strengthen and save this critical program. And this is not taking ownership.

If we are going to save and strengthen our safety net programs for the most vulnerable, we have to do better than the president's budget. Both parties have to work together. You, we, and the president need to work together to save our entitlement programs to make them sustainable. So we ask that you please work with us.

On another subject, you may also remember that, in early November of last year, we spoke on the phone about why HHS has so far failed to hold California accountable under federal law. As you know, on August 22, 2014, the California Department for Managed Health Care --DMHC, issued a directive mandating that all plans under DMHC authority immediately include coverage for all legal abortions.

This is in direct violation of the Weldon Amendment, a civil rights statute that prohibits federal taxpayer funding for Federal agencies and state or local governments that discriminate because a health care entity does not provide, pay for, provide coverage of, or refer for abortions.

What California is doing is clearly illegal. It is also morally wrong, and violates the fundamental principles of freedom and conscience that our democracy is founded on. And it is your job to stop them, and so far that hasn't happened.

I'll have more to say about this when we get to questions. In the mean time, Madam Secretary, we look forward to your testimony. We hope that you will stay to answer all of our questions, and, with only five minutes of questions per member, we respectfully ask that you keep your answers concise and to the point.

And Dr. Burgess, do you want the remaining time?

BURGESS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's very kind of you.

And Secretary, thank you for coming to our humble little subcommittee. I am frustrated over the administration's lack of transparency and the ability for Congress to get information that realistically, we've been asking for the last four or five years, but specifically around ACA-created entities -- the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation, the Prevention in Public Health Fund, the Consumer Information -- the Office of Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight and the Patient Center for Outcomes and Research Initiative.

Year after year, they have failed to achieve their mission of reducing health care cost and improving quality. We can't hold them accountable if we don't know how you're spending the dollars, so we, you and I have talked about this. And I do look forward to our responses in being able to finally get that information regarding those agencies under your (inaudible).

PITTS: The Chair thanks the Gentleman.

And I recognize the Ranking Member, Mr. Green, five minutes for an opening statement.

GREEN: Good morning and thank you, Secretary Burwell for being here today to discuss the president's FY '16 budget proposal for the Department of Health and Human Services.

The budget is more than a line of items on a page. It's a reflection of the priorities of our country. Our commitment must be to protect the progress that we made and to make strategic investments so that progress will continue in the future.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the creation of Medicare and Medicaid. Since the Children's Health Insurance Program was created to ensure America's children have insurance, most recently Congress passed the Affordable Care Act, dramatically expanding access to health coverage and high quality care.

The Affordable Care Act took historic steps toward laying the foundation for a better and more efficient health care system and expanding access to cover for millions of Americans for whom it was previously out of reach.

It also took important steps to restore the fiscal solvency of our health care system. According to the most recent estimates by the Congressional Budget Office, the Affordable Care Act will reduce the deficit by more than $100 billion for the first decade and by more than $1 trillion in the second decade.

As we have seen through the second enrollment period, the Affordable Care Act has already succeeded in ensuring every American can have access to high quality affordable coverage.

Thanks to the ACA nearly, 30 million Americans got covered. These are people who would otherwise be uninsured. We have made great progress, but the work is not done. I thank the agency for implementing the landmark health reform law and continuing to work with us so that they can build on these successes.

It's -- in addition to prioritizing essential services and programs, I was pleased to see that the budget makes strategic investments to improve our health care system and clear the way for the progress into the future. This includes funding to support training of the next generation of health care providers, national preparedness against threats to public health, biomedical research, drug safety and mental health services.

The budget invests in community health centers to support the care that provide for 22 million patients in their role at providing an accessible, reliable source of primary care in underserved communities. Health centers will continue to be a critical element in our health system. The president's proposal takes a critical important step by including four years of funding for the children's healthcare insurance program.

Currently, more than 10 million children get health care insurance through CHIP. Additional funding for CHIP must be authorized so that there is no disruption in coverage and the states are able to continue operating their programs.

The budget proposes the increase in NIH funding, since its creation NIH is fostered new remarkable advancements in human health, but for the past decade, NIH has suffered inadequate funding. Without significant funding increases, the U.S. will lose its status as a global real leader in science and innovation. Additional resources will help defeat our nation's most harmful diseases and ensure that the United States continues to lead biomedical research and scientific breakthroughs.

The budget proposal strengthens national preparedness for threats to public health including naturally occurring threats and deliberate attacks. It also includes funding to reinforce our nation's ability to move quickly to detect infectious disease outbreaks through a new Advanced Molecular Detection initiative, maintaining strong expertise at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

These are just a few highlights of what is included in the proposed HHS budget. I look forward to hearing more about the administration's proposal during today's hearing.

Thank you, Madam Secretary for your -- joining the committee to discuss the HHS budget. And if someone would like about a minute and 20 seconds -- my colleague from California, Ms. Matsui.

MATSUI: Thank you very much for yielding me time. I welcome Secretary Burwell. I appreciate the goals the president and you have laid forth in the fiscal budget 2016, Department of HHS services budget.

Building on the improvements made by the Affordable Care Act we're seeking to move our nation's health system by rewarding volume and forgetting about the waste business. So -- what we try to do this is working to achieve the triple aim in health care -- better care, better outcomes, and reduced cost.

We do this by making health insurance more affordable, by emphasizing prevention and public health, by encouraging scientific and clinical research, by taking advantage of the benefits of technology and building up our nation's mental health system.

Many of the proposals in the budget find savings in the Medicare Medicaid programs, by streamlining processes and realigning systems to ensure that patients get the right service at the right time.

The budget will make the SGR fix permanent, which we need to do to provide stability for doctors and for seniors and people with disabilities in the Medicare program. The budget will also extend its Children's Health Insurance Program or CHIP, that provides much needed pediatric coverage to our nation's children.

To conclude, I want to emphasize the Affordable Care Act is working. Over 11 million Americans signed up this year, including 500,000 in California alone. The Administration just announced that since law was enacted in 2010, 9.4 million with Medicare have saved over $15 billion in prescription drugs. This is what we set out to do and appreciate working with you as we move forward.

Thank you. I yield back.

PITTS: The Gentlelady yields back.

The Chair now recognizes the chairman of the full committee, Mr. Upton for five minutes for opening statement.

UPTON: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Burwell, welcome.

Today marks your first official appearance before the Health Subcommittee, but I know that this is not your first time in this room, as you participated in one of our 21st Century Cures roundtables last year. And we very much appreciate that participation.

Your testimony does come at a very pivotal point in health policy, from our exciting cures effort to next week's Supreme Court oral arguments. We look forward to hearing the administration's perspective on the many important issues facing the American people.

You have said during your tenure at HHS that transparency, ownership, and accountability are important values for the department to demonstrate, which we certainly welcome. In that spirit, we look forward to gaining straightforward answers here today about implementation of the president's health care law.

There have been quite a few red flags raised in recent weeks on the continued struggles to implement key pieces of the health law. Just in the last week, 800,000 Households learned that key

tax forms sent out by the administration contained major errors. Those Americans were asked to delay tax filing, therefore also delaying their refunds. A recent analysis from H&R Block estimates that the majority of Obamacare customers are being forced to pay back some of those subsidies.

Millions of Americans are also now learning about the law's IRS fines for failing to comply with the individual mandate. The backlash has been so intense that the administration has resorted to yet another special enrollment period to quell some of the anger of those who are just coming to learn about the individual mandate penalty.

And just last week, the healthcare,gov CEO Kevin Counihan suggested that the back-end functions of the exchanges would undergo a two-year development plan. That means this key part of the law will not be fully complete until President Obama leaves the White House.

Collectively, these revelations suggest that the health care law is still not working. Our constituents deserve better. We know that. That is why I have worked on introducing the Patient CARE Act, a health care reform blueprint with my colleagues in the Senate, Chairman Hatch, and Mr. Burr. I look forward to working with my colleagues about these ideas to improve health care in America by empowering states and families, not Washington.

Yes we have concerns with the president's signature law. But there are other important health areas that we believe are fertile for collaboration. For the past year, almost a year and a half, this committee has undertaken the bipartisan 21st Century Cures initiative to accelerate the pace of the discovery, development, and delivery of new treatments and cures for American patients.

I would like to thank you for your personal engagement on the 21st Century Cures initiative. As you know, this is a top priority for our committee this year. Patients and families in my district in Michigan and as well as across the country are looking for hope, and that's what we seek to instill.

And this effort is also important to many job creators as well, whether itbe Stryker, Perrigo or Pfizer in southwest Michigan. I also want to thank the staff throughout the administration, particularly at the FDA and the NIH, for their work, their time, and effort to help us improve the ideas released by our committee at the end of last month. We've established a very good foundation, I think, for bipartisan success. And I will yield to other Republican members on this side. Seeing none.

PITTS: (inaudible) none.

UPTON: I yield back.

PITTS: The Chair thanks the Gentleman. I now recognize the ranking member of the full committee, Mr.Pallone for five minutes for opening statement.

PALLONE: Thank you, Chairman Pitts and welcome Secretary Burwell. Thank you for being with us today.

Today, we're going to hear about the president's fiscal year 2016 health and human services budget proposal. And there are many important provisions in the president's budget that we in Congress must work to support.

I was pleased to see that the budget proposed a funding increase of $1 billion for the NIH investing in early stage basic research is one of the most promising ways that we can accelerate the discovery of new treatments and cures.

And support for NIH is critical to building our economy as well. Every dollar of NIH funding generates over $2 in local economic growth. Yet, we have let NIH purchasing power decline by over 20 percent since 2003, and that's why finding a way to significantly increase funding for NIH will be my top priority as the 21st Century Cures initiative continues. I was also pleased to see that the budget fully funds a four-year extension of the Children Health Insurance Program or CHIP. We must act on this proposal immediately with more than four-fifths of state legislatures adjourning by the end of June.

Lack of action and clarity from Congress will make budgeting and planning virtually impossible. By every measure, CHIP has become enormously successful and always has had strong bipartisan support. So extending CHIP funding should be the top priority of this committee to ensure consistent coverage for the millions of children who depend on this program. And I think we can all agree that no child should be left worse off because of the actions or lack thereof of Congress.

The budget also adopts the framework of the bipartisan bicameral SGR repeal and replacement legislation the Congress agreed to last year. I believe that because the sustainable growth rate is the result of a budget gimmick and we already spent $169 billion paying to fix the problem, that offsets especially those within our health programs are not necessary.

And if we must include offsets, the war savings which are known as the Overseas Contingency Operation Funds, could be used. I know some on the other side of the aisle don't share this view. What I do hope is that we can -- we can agree that first SGR should be paid off, should not be paid off on the backs of the beneficiaries.

Beneficiaries have already paid for their share of the cost of SGR repeal through higher premiums and half of all of the beneficiaries live on less than $23,500 per year. And that's why some of the proposals in the president's budget concern me.

The President's budget proposes to further increase Part B and Part D premiums, increase the Part B deductible for new enrollees and impose a new surcharge on the part B premium for beneficiaries with certain Medicare policies and also institutes a $100 copayment per home health episode.

And this increases out of pocket cost on beneficiaries and I think that, you know, we've had -- we've seen enough of that, beneficiaries may forego necessary services and as a result use more high cost acute care services, and such policies will disproportionately affect lower and middle income beneficiaries who are not poor enough for Medicaid nor have access to employer-sponsored retiree health care.

So I urge the president and my colleagues to be extremely cautious when proposing cuts to Medicare and consider the impacts on our seniors. The last thing I wanted to mention is, well, first to commend you, Secretary, for your agency's hard work implementing the Affordable Care Act. Because of your efforts, 19 million uninsured Americans will be covered in this year 2015. And I recognize the challenge your agency faces in implementing this law with limited resources. However, despite what I call Republican obstructionism, the Affordable Care Act is working.

In sum, I think this is a sound budget. And I look forward to hearing from you today. And I would yield the remainder of my time to the gentlewoman from Florida, Ms. Castor.

CASTOR: Well, I thank the ranking member for yielding time.

And I welcome Secretary Burwell. We're very excited to hear about the budget, the investments in medical research, in children's health insurance, improvements in Medicare and the Centers for Disease Control, but I couldn't help but ask Mr. Pallone for a minute to highlight the Florida enrollment numbers under the ACA.

It's remarkable. And I know you've seen them. And we've talked about it. As of February 15th, over 1.6 million Floridians have signed up for health insurance in the federally facilitated marketplace. We were surprised. This exceeded all of our expectations to beat California and Texas, especially in a state that had many fits and starts over, whether to assist our neighbors in signing up.

But I wanted to highlight a couple of stories, that a 24-year- old, third year law student at the University of South Florida got assistance from the navigator. His income is about $16,000 a year in scholarships. He was able to find insurance for approximately $10 per month, zero deductible. It's his second year enrolling in the marketplace. He's very happy with his coverage. There are stories like that again, and again, and again, so I look forward to talking about it. Thank you.

PITTS: The Gentlelady yields back. That concludes the oral opening statements. As usual, all the written opening statements of members will be made a part of the record. And so, we'll go now to Secretary Burwell.

First of all, thank you for appearing for us today, Madam Secretary. Your written testimony will be made a part of the record. You'll be given five minutes to summarize your testimony. And we certainly appreciate you being here this morning. And you're recognized for five minutes for your summary.

BURWELL: Thank you, Chairman Pitts, Chairman Upton, Ranking Member Pallone, and Ranking Member Green, and members of the committee. I appreciate the invitation to be here today.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to discuss the president's budget for the Department of Health and Human Services. I believe firmly that we all share common interests, and therefore we have a number of opportunities for common ground, from preventing and treating substance abuse to advancing the promise of precision medicine, to building an innovation economy and strengthening the American middle class.

The budget before you makes critical investments in health care, science, innovation and human services. It maintains our responsible stewardship of the taxpayers' dollars. It strengthens our work together with the Congress to prepare our nation for key challenges both at home and abroad.

For HHS, it proposes $83.8 billion in discretionary budget authority and this is a $4.8 billion increase, which will allow our Department to deliver impact today and lay a strong foundation for tomorrow.

It's fiscally responsible budget, which in tandem with accompanying legislative proposals would save taxpayers a net estimated $250 billion over the next decade. In addition, it is projected to continue slowing the growth of Medicare.

It could secure 200 -- $423 billion in savings as we build a smarter, healthier, better system. In terms of providing all Americans with the access to quality affordable health care, it builds upon our historic progress in reducing the number of uninsured and improving coverage for families who already have insurance.

We saw a recent example of this progress with the about 11.4 million Americans who either signed up or reenrolled in this past open enrollment. It extends CHIP for years. It covers newly eligible adults in the 28 states plus D.C. which have expanded Medicaid and then improves access to health for Native Americans.

To support communities throughout the country, including underserved communities, it invests $4.2 billion in health centers and $14.12 billion to bolster our nation's health workforce. It is -- it's more than 50,000 National Health Service core clinicians, serving nearly 16 million patients in high-need areas across the country.

With health center mandatory funding ending in 2016, we estimate that more than 7 million Americans may lose access to essential cost- effective primary care. And this could approximately result in 40,000 jobs lost.

To advance our common interest in building a better, smarter, healthier delivery system, the budget supports improvements to the way care is delivered, providers are paid and information is distributed.

On an issue for which there is bipartisan agreement, it replaces Medicare's broad sustainable growth rate formula and supports a long- term policy solution to fix the SGR. The Administration supports the type of bipartisan bicameral efforts that the Congress took last year.

To advance our shared vision for leading the world in science and innovation, it increases funding for the NIH by $1 billion to advance biomedical and behavioral research. In addition, it invests 215

million for the precision medicine initiative, an effort to focus on developing treatments, diagnostics and prevention strategies tailored to individual genetic characteristics.

To further our common interest in providing Americans with the building blocks for success at every stage of life, this budget outlines an ambitious plan to make affordable quality childcare available to every working class, middle class family.

To keep Americans healthy, the budget strengthens our public health infrastructure with $975 million for domestic, an international preparedness including critical funds to the global health security agenda. The budget will support CDCs critical infrastructure and crosscutting research to facilitate rapid response to public health emergencies and public health threats like the recent measles outbreak.

It also invests in behavioral health sciences and substance use prevention. Finally, as we look to leave our Department stronger, the budget invest in our shared priorities of cracking down on waste, fraud, and abuse initiatives and are projected to yield $22 billion in gross savings for Medicare. We're also addressing our Medicare appeals backlog with a variety of approaches and we're investing in cyber security.

As I close, I want to make one final point and that is I am personally committed to responding quickly and thoughtful to the concerns of Congress and members. Since I was confirmed, I've made a top priority of our Department to respond promptly and thoroughly and work with you as we can. I also just want to take one moment to thank the HHS employees for all their work on Ebola, unaccompanied children and all the other issues.

With that, I look forward to your questions. Thank you.

PITTS: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

I will begin the question -- and questioning and recognize myself five minutes for that purpose. Let me start with the King v. Burwell, in a few short days, the Supreme Court will be hearing oral arguments in the King v. Burwell case that could have a major impact on Obamacare.

In January, we sent you a letter asking for any actions, analysis or -- and/or contingency plans that HHS has undertaken to prepare if the IRS rule is overturned. And while we received a letter from you earlier this week, your response failed to actually answer our question. The letter simply stated that you believe no administrative action by HHS could reverse the effects of a decision in favor of the plaintiffs.

Madam Secretary, your statement of opinion in the letter does not answer our simple question, so let me ask you the question this way. Have you or senior department officials instructed counselors within HHS to prepare any potential actions or approaches if the Supreme Court rules against the IRS?

BURWELL: Mr. Pitts and Mr. Chairman, with regards to what is in the letter, one of the things that I think is important to reflect that is in the letter is the analysis of what would happen. That is a part of the letter.

And in terms of what would happen, and I first should state, we believe that the court will decide in favor of the position we hold, which is we believe that this law says that people who have traveled across the country, people in Texas should have the same subsidies as people in New York, so important starting point.

But with regard with what would happen, because I think that's an important part of answering the question, first, what would happen is when those subsidies go away, 11.4 million people, that was the number I gave you. As of January 30th, when we did our most recent analysis, 87 percent of the individuals in the marketplace are eligible for subsidies. Those subsidies are on average estimated to be $268 per individual per month. Those subsidies, number one, would go away.

PITTS: Yeah.

BURWELL: That would lead to a number ...

PITTS: Madam Secretary, I understand that. I'm asking if you know of any plan to respond to approaches if the Supreme Court rules against the IRS, has the White House, has the OMB or other administration officials directed or asked you about any approaches in response to King v. Burwell or the work with the Treasury Department on potential responses? That's my question.

BURWELL: So in order to respond to the question, Mr. Chairman, in order to think about the question of a plan, one needs to, I think analyze the problem, which is what I was articulating in terms of the three major things that would occur if the court decides with the plaintiffs.

PITTS: Let me ask it at a different way. I would like to provide you some more information, that's why we expect you answer from you today. The committee received recently specific information from a source within your department about the existence of an approximately 100 page document related to potential actions HHS may take if the Supreme Court rules against the administration in King vs. Burwell, are you or senior staff at HHS or whatever this document?

BURWELL: Mr. Chairman, this is not a document I am not aware of. With regard to the question that you have asked, as I've said in the letter, we believe and I think it's very important to understand the damage because it is related to the answer. The damage comes in the number of uninsured that would occur. Number two, it occurs, and what happens in the individual market place where a group of less healthy individuals come in and that drives premiums up in that market place. And number three, the indigent care that occurs from the uninsured and what that means in both those states in terms of their economies as well as what it means for employer base. Those are the ramifications.

With regard to those things which we believe are the damage, as I state in the letter, we believe we do not have any administrative actions and therefore, there is not...

PITTS: All right, let me ask - going to another issue, I as you know as we discussed over the phone, I'm deeply concerned about the lack of HHS action regarding California and the DMHC authority to immediately include coverage for abortion. And this mandate, California mandate is a clear violation of the Weldon amendment which provides civil rights protections and prohibits funding to government entities discriminating against healthcare entities for following their conscience. Do you agree that the Burwell plan prohibits funding for states that mandate abortion coverage in insurance plans?

BURWELL: We take the Burwell amendment very seriously and since you spoke with me, Mr. Chairman, and we received those letters, we have opened an investigation in the office of civil rights at HHS to investigate the concerns that you and others have articulated. We take this seriously and are trying to move through that investigation is expeditiously as possible (inaudible).

PITTS: Since it's clear that California is in violation of federal law, can you project a date by which you expect the violation to be stopped?

BURWELL: With regard to the issue of the investigation, Mr. Chairman that's not something I need to let the investigation go and I have asked the team to make sure they do it as expeditiously as possible. But in order that I stay away from the investigation in terms of my interference in any way I want to let them go forward, but I have asked for due speed.

PITTS: OK. We'll follow up. Thank you. The chair recognize the Ranking Member Green for his questions.

GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Secretary, it's been almost five years since the Affordable Care Act was passed and I have yet to see any legislation introduced by my Republican colleagues to replace the Affordable Care Act even though we've had at least 56 votes on the House floor to repeal it. Given all these talk of repealing the Affordable Care Act, are you aware of any requests for

technical assistance from Republicans on legislation that would replace the Affordable Care Act with a credible proposal to provide comprehensive health coverage to millions of Americans?

BURWELL: I am not aware of those requests.

GREEN: Madam Secretary, over the last couple of days we've heard a lot about contingency plans, if the millions of American's who received financial help through the Affordable Care Act would lose them. Are you aware of any Republican legislative proposals that would provide millions of Americans with the financial assistance that help them with affordable health care coverage?

BURWELL: I am not aware.

GREEN: Secretary, I want to get your input on an issue that I know your concern and I appreciate you're addressing in your opening remarks that myself and a lot of members of our committee, there's a funding cliff that's facing our community health centers. Health centers serve nearly 22 million patients and are projected to serve 28.6 million patients over - in over 9,000 locations across the country in the Fiscal Year of 2016. Because of the patient demographics and statutory mandate to locate in underserved areas or to serve underserved populations, health centers are well positioned to provide health care service to millions of newly insured Americans.

They are particularly important in our district. It's federally designated underserved community in Houston, Texas. Secretary Burwell, I was pleased to see the present budget included multi-year extension of mandatory funding for health centers. As you know the health centers' patients face a major loss of access in the few months. If we don't act or to prevent the funding cliff caused by the exploration of the mandatory funding at the end of the fiscal year. Can you speak about the importance of community health centers within our health system as we look at the issues of access, quality and cost?

BURWELL: We believe that they are our fundamental underpinning and not just in terms of health care in communities, but they are also an important part of the economics of communities when you think about the fact that we could lose up to 40,000 estimated jobs in terms of - if we don't extend. But as you think about the numbers thinking that one in 15 Americans actually are served by these health centers. How integral they are to providing primary care throughout the country.

And so, I think it's extremely important to continue that so that we can as we've reduced the number of uninsured, we also want to make sure that those people are having care and those that had care before still have access to that care, especially in our underserved communities across the country, not all, but many of which are very rural.

GREEN: Can you comment on the impact of the funding cuts would have on patients' access to care? Can you estimate how many fewer people would be able to receive services at our local health centers?

BURWELL: Are estimates are that if we aren't able to extend that it could be up to seven million patients who would no longer be able to have access to that care. We estimate that perhaps over 2,000 of the centers would shut down without that and that, then there are the patients who would not be served because people would have to scale back in the number of the centers with reduce funding.

GREEN: In those 2,000 centers do you know how many jobs we'd lost?

BURWELL: Approximately, the estimates are up to 40,000.

GREEN: OK. Thank you. The health centers are a crucial part of our nation's primary care infrastructure for 50 years and have long had a truly bipartisan support. And last year along with my colleagues on both sides including Representative Lance, support for reiterating our support for health centers in calling for a bipartisan solution, we had 250 co-signers including 31 members of our committee. A similar letter in the Senate gathered 66 votes and more than hundred national

organizations have called for a fix. Consensus is something that must be done and we have to act as soon as possible.

This issue is a top priority of mine and I know a lot of other members literally Republican and Democrat across the country to look forward to working with you and our colleagues on the committee on a bipartisan basis to find the solution to avert that funding cliff.

Mr. Chairman, I have 43 seconds left and I'd like to yield for somebody for that 43 seconds on our side. Anybody want about 30 seconds now? OK. Well, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

PITTS: Thank you. The chair now recognizes the chairman of the full committee Mr. Upton, five minutes for questions.

UPTON: Thank you again, Mr. Chairman. Secretary Burwell, there are a number of healthcare law implementation issues that continue to trouble us, in the interest of time I'd ask that you submit answers to the following questions in writing within two weeks.

The CEO of healthcare.gov recently stated that there is a two- year development plan for the backend of the healthcare.gov. If you could provide us an estimate of when the backend will finally be fully automated will be great. Second one is HSS recently announced that 800,000 Americans enrolled in coverage through healthcare.gov received inaccurate tax forms under the ACA.

We'd like a detailed assessment on what - on when the department expects these taxpayers will have accurate information in hand so that they can file their taxes. And third, many Americans were automatically re-enrolled in exchange plans, raising concerns that individuals and families may be getting unexpected premium bills or inaccurate exchange subsidies in 2015. We would ask that you submit specific data on the number of Americans who have been automatically re-enrolled in those exchange plans, that'd be helpful.

BURWELL: I'd be happy to.

UPTON: Now, I'll return to 21st Century Cure and again, I appreciate your personal assistance with this and I - for the record, I want to certainly thank Dr. Collins (ph), Commissioner Hamburg (ph), Dr. Woodcock (ph) and Dr. Shuren (ph), countless others at your department for the help on 21st Century Cure. Because of that participation and participation of folks from across the country we've been able to learn more about the status of innovation in this country and we hear about ways to accelerate the discovery, development, and delivery of cures and treatments for patients.

As we heard at our first round table, there are over 10,000 diseases and we have only cures and treatments for about 500. So, we have a great deal of work ahead to do. We released a discussion document last month and I've been working with the Congresswoman to get, Mr. Ranking Member Pallone, Mr. Green, other members of our committee on both sides of the aisle to improve that document.

One area that includes a placeholder is precision medicine, something that the president talked about in the state of the union address and subsequently a White House event a couple of weeks ago. We put that place - we did put that placeholder into the draft and we look forward to continuing to work with you and the White House, the administration on that important issue. Could you give us some background on the administration precision medicine policy and what we should look forward to?

BURWELL: Thank you and thank you for the partnership as we work through these issues and it's exciting to have the energy around these issues including the precision medicine, which I think a subset of the broader issues you're looking at.

Our precision medicine initiative is $215 million with regard to as we think about it from a budget perspective, but I think thinking about it from the pieces and what it's doing, one part of the initiative is creating a very large database of a million people through NIH, but we will access that through

other channels so that we're drawing from existing databases to get the information we need. Because as we're talking about what this is, precision medicine or personalized medicine is getting the information so that we can do treatments that are to the individual. I was at NIH recently. I had the opportunity to both see the tumors and meet the cancer patient of a kidney cancer patient where he had had a group of tumors removed, they came back.

But then, using precision medicine, which meant looking specifically at the genetic makeup of his tumors that could be treated in a different way, I met him. That happened months ago and now he - the patient was there discussing with me and is in a very different place.

So, one, that large database, two, specifically focusing in the area of cancer because we already are seeing some progress there and we believe that place is ripe for it. The other thing we need to do is FDA to make sure that as we think about precision medicine we regulate and think about how to approve these things in ways of a different type of medicine. And then, finally, we need the health records, the office of national coordinator for health - electronic health records to be a part of making sure this will do with payments and how clinicians will use. Those are the elements.

UPTON: But I just want to say that's very helpful and we're excited as well. And though I've been out to the NIH a number of times in the past number of years I want to remind members here that we've got a committee trip, we've invited I think all the members on this sub-committee to go out to the NIH next Monday morning.

Dr. Collins has been very interested in having us out to kick the tires like you saw yourself and I know that because we have votes tomorrow Friday and again on Monday and perhaps over the weekend, there may be more of us here over the weekend than originally thought. So, I want to remind members that they're invited to join with us and not miss votes Monday on a trip there and I yield back. Thank you very much.

PITTS: Sure. Thanks, Gentleman. I recognize the Ranking Member of the full committee, Mr. Pallone. Five minutes for your question, sir.

PALLONE: Secretary Burwell, you know, I'm sure you can sense that I'm very proud of the Affordable Care Act and concerned about Republican efforts to repeal it or now take it to court in the case of King versus Burwell. Are you aware of any Republican bill that would reduce the number of uninsured in this country by 11 million people or I said 11, it's actually 19 million people, the way that the Affordable Care Act does? I mean, obviously, I'm saying this because I don't see them coming up with any alternative.

BURWELL: You know, we haven't and I think it's important to reflect historically, when one looks at the history and actually I've gone back to Teddy Roosevelt and the quotations from Teddy Roosevelt forward to both Republican and Democratic administrations. We see whether it was President Bush, President Nixon, you know, Republican and Democrat, plus President Clinton. The conversation about how we make this next step forward with regard to reducing uninsured is something that we struggled with as a nation.

And this is the first time and someone reflected on the anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid - Medicare, in that 50 year anniversary, this is the first time that we have seen that. And so the plan that we have in place, the implementation of the Affordable Care Act has done that, but we have not seen any alternatives.

PALLONE: All right, let me ask you about CHIP all the Democrats on the committee recently introduced the bill to extend the CHIP program and I want to emphasize again that we have to act on this legislation immediately when we considered SGR which expires at the end of March. Well, funding may not expire until the end of September for CHIP. In fact, 20 states will finish their legislative sessions by the end of April and more than half by June 1st.

So it's clear that Congress needs to act swiftly to ensure states can budget appropriately for CHIP and to avoid any disruptions in children's coverage. So given the bipartisan history of this program I

see no reason why Congress can't act very soon. Can you comment on the impact on states if the CHIP funding isn't extended soon?

BURWELL: I would comment on that from two different perspectives, one as a former director of OMB and the issues of predictability of funding and the issues of management and ability to manage. And so for the states to be able to do that, this is something that's important when we had predictability in our own budget system. We've seen the benefits of that economically throughout the past years, two years.

And the other thing I would say is having just spent a lot of time with the governors this weekend when they were in town. This is a very important issue to them. We have seen that letter that 40 governors have signed with regard to knowing that they have that predictability of a program that is providing great benefits to the children in their states.

PALLONE: Now, the Senate and House Republicans have released the CHIP proposal this week. However, this proposal would institute a 12- month waiting period, needlessly forces low income children off of Medicaid and on to CHIP and reduces or completely discontinues coverage for children above 250 percent of the federal poverty level despite the choice of 28 states around our nation to cover those kids. Can you discuss the impact of policies like this on some of our most vulnerable children?

BURWELL: So I think, we think that the CHIP program ss a program that was a bipartisan program and a program that is working in delivering results in terms of that quality healthcare for those children. And it has worked, we believe that it's in our budget, a four-year extension of the program is a very important thing and that we need to do that in the timely fashion to both make sure those children are covered and receive the care that they need. But also in addition to that have predictability for states, especially those states that are in their legislative process right now.

PALLONE: And I know you mentioned that four year extension, the budget includes a four year extension of the CHIP program. Can you talk about why that full extension of four years is so critical for the kids that depend on this health coverage and maybe also mention as part of the extension, the budget includes a permanent extension of express lane eligibility, if you'd talk about the success of express lane eligibility as an option for states.

BURWELL: So the express lane eligibility and those issues, we - folks ask us to try and figure out ways to simplify, to make things easier and that's making things easier in two ways, when hear from folks, it's about both the customer in terms of when they came in as well as the states. And we believe this is a program that's been successful in getting to that simplicity and the simplicity often can work to create either, a, better quality or, b, lower cost and so, we think that's important. With regard to the four years we believe that is a good amount of time and the right amount of time for us to do this extension. There will be interaction with the Affordable Care Act, we know that and we believe that the four year period is the right period for us to understand and look at that.

PALLONE: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to submit for the record two CHIP articles, the first is an op ed published in the New York Times this month by Former Secretary Hilary Clinton and Former Senator Bill Frist (ph) discussing the long term bipartisan history of the program and the importance of a four year extension. And the second article was published in New York Times last month shows how health coverage for children pays for itself and all the research showing that when children have health coverage future earnings are boosted, if I could...

PITTS: Without objection ordered.

PALLONE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

PITTS: The chairman yields - the Gentleman yields back - the chair recognizes the chair emeritus to the full committee, Mr. Barton for five minutes for questions.

BARTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Madam Secretary, for being in here. As I have talked to you before there are a lots of problems that we have deal with, you in your position and the

committee in our position. But there are some opportunities for bipartisanship and one of them is a piece of legislation that we call the ACE Kids Act. The original co-sponsors are Ms. Castor of Florida, Ms. (inaudible) of California, Mr. Green of Texas, myself on the Republican side along with several other members of this committee on the majority side.

You've said in your opening statement that the Medicaid is going to be about $345 billion this year, an increase of I believe of over 16 billion. Well, there is one piece of legislation we could pass on a bipartisan basis that would actually save money in Medicaid and that's the ACE Kids Act. It creates a home for families that have medically complex children based on an anchor hospital concept with the major children's hospitals in America, I think there are about 60 of them.

So if a parent has a child that's medically complex and qualifies for the program, that child gets access to the network on kind of a one-stop shop, all the specialties, all the various procedures are provided. Medicaid is billed one time. We think there are 12 million children that would qualify for the program and we believe that it will save billions of dollars over a ten year period.

It's been introduced in the Senate. The identical bill with three Republican co-sponsors, three Democrat co-sponsors, so here's a rare piece of legislation that both sides that I will support, the Republican leadership supports it, Chairman Upton supports it, Chairman Pitts supports it. Does your department have a position on the bill and if so could you explain to the committee what that position is?

BURWELL: So with regard to the specific legislation, I don't think we as the administration have issued a (inaudible) but I would say is all of the concepts we agree and we welcome the opportunity. The idea that we can improve both quality and cost for these children who are very complex and who are moving state to state and the current system doesn't afford us the opportunity both with regard to making sure we don't have duplicative payments, we obviously do not want that from a fiscal responsibility. And we want that ease that the parent can have the child at the right place with the right care even if it's across state lines. So I would just say we look forward to working with you.

Welcome the opportunity if there are questions and ways that we can provide, technical assistance and other things as part of this, we welcome that opportunity because we agree with the fundamental of what we're trying to do here and believe this is something that can improve both cost and quality.

BARTON: Well, I would encourage you and your department to take a look at the bill. It's not illegal or immoral for the administration to issue a letter of support and this is one that I think with Chairman Upton and Chairman Pitts and the ranking member and the full committee and sub-committee and leadership on both sides of the aisle in the House, this bill could go.

It could be a part of Chairman Upton's 21st Century effort or it could be a standalone bill. I also in the brief time I have want to concur with Ranking Member Green said about community health centers. I hope we can work together in a bipartisan fashion to find an answer to keep those funded. I know there's a funding issue this year that we need to address and reauthorize the program. I have a number of those health centers in my Congressional district and they are very helpful providing indigent care.

And finally, I wasn't going to ask this question but I'm a little bit puzzled when Chairman Pitts asked you the question about this report that deals with planning in case the health exchanges at the state level under the Affordable Care Act are found to not be legal the way they're currently funded, if there was a plan and if you had seen the plan. I'd take you at your word that you haven't seen the plan, but you don't think it's prudent that there should be a plan? I mean I hope I don't have a primary opponent. I hope I don't have a general election opponent, but I have a plan in case I do. I know you hope that the court upholds your position, but shouldn't the - shouldn't the administration and your agency have a plan in case it fails?

BURWELL: Congressman, what we seek in the letter and what we believe is if the court decides, which we don't believe they will, but if the court decides on behalf of the plaintiff, if the Supreme Court of the United States says that the subsidies are not available to the people of Texas, we don't

have an administrative action that we could take. So the question of having a plan, we don't have an administrative action that we believe can undo the damage. And that's why when I was answering the chairman, I think, it's important to understand what the damage is because then it comes to the question of we don't believe we have any administrative...

BARTON: So my time has expired, but if the court strikes it down, the administration is just going to hold up your hands and say we surrender?

BURWELL: What we believe is - we believe the laws as it stands is how it should be implemented.

BARTON: I understand.

BURWELL: And with regard to when the Supreme Court speaks, if the Supreme Court speaks to this issue, we do not believe that there is an administrative authority that we have in our power to undo it. And so that's something we don't believe we have.

BARTON: That's puzzling but I accept that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your courtesy and the minority for letting me have the extra time.

PITTS: Sure. Thanks, Gentleman. And now I recognize the Gentleman from New York, Mr. Engel, five minutes for your questions.

ENGEL: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and welcome Secretary Burwell. Let me piggyback on backup plan. You know, I was part of this committee, I participated in months in months of deliberations for the Affordable Healthcare Act. We had weeks of markups, this committee did, and not once was the mention of subsidies not being available to individuals in states that did not set up their own exchanges.

I've heard a lot of complaints on the other side of the aisle about the law but never was this issue discussed until they lost at the Supreme Court in 2012. Some of my friends signed on to amicus and wasted incredible time forcing votes on the full repeal of the law, yet they're upset that the administration doesn't have a back up plan should the Supreme Court ruling threaten the availability of subsidies for 8.6 million Americans, and I think it's somewhat ironic that my Republican friends are demanding that this administration fix problems that they themselves created and have shown zero interest in fixing.

Should the Republicans get what they want and the Supreme Court rules in favor of King, I would urge my colleagues if that should happen to pass legislation to ensure that Americans have continued access to affordable coverage through the federal facilitated exchange just as Democrats intended. Next month the Affordable Care Act will have been the law of the land for five years. It's not a perfect law and there are issues that need to be changed with it, but I would like to see those issues addressed, unless both of us in a bipartisan way turn our focus on improving the law and enabling more quality coverage options for our constituents instead of trying to kill it, repeal it, take it to court and things like that. So, I just wanted to say that I'm sure that you agree with what I just said.

BURWELL: Yes. We look forward to moving forward and we do want to make improvements as we can.

ENGEL: Thank you. And I want to use my home state of New York as a great example of what's possible when the federal government has a willing and enthusiastic partner in the affordable healthcare implementation. As a result of our successful exchange and Medicaid expansion more than 2.1 million New Yorkers have quality healthcare coverage. Our state's uninsured rate has dropped to only 10 percent and there is clear evidence we are reaching the right people too, since 88 percent of people who obtain coverage through the exchange reported being uninsured at the time they enrolled.

So, it's really working in New York. And the health insurance options available through New York State of health are on average 50 percent cheaper than the comparable coverage available before the exchange was established. So, I want you to know, I'm sure you know it, that the ACA is working and working well in New York and that's why I really think it's terrible that I've been forced to take more than 50 votes to repeal some or all of this law. We should fix what's wrong, but in my state, it's really been a tremendous success.

BURWELL: And fortunately, I've had the opportunity to travel the country and see the individuals, those are the numbers and the individuals and whether it's Laura in Florida, 26 years old, married to someone who's a truck driver who does not have coverage. She is training to be an X-ray tech. They have two children. They did not have insurance. She now has insurance with a premium of $41 a month. Or a woman who had a MS in the State of Texas and for 17 years she had not had health insurance. And so how people go about - she treated her MS through the emergency room and she has four children and she works. And so when it would get bad enough, that's what she would do. And so the stories of what it means to people in terms of their financial and health security I think are - the numbers are important but it is those stories which really make this real.

ENGEL: And, you know, Secretary Burwell, I understand that we have seen robust exchange enrollment nationwide even in states where Republican governors refused to set up a state exchange or expand their Medicaid programs, isn't this true?

BURWELL: So the numbers and I spoke to this yesterday when we've been able to look at the numbers, 53 percent of the enrollees in the marketplace this year, in the federal market place are new enrollments. And so I think that is indicating the demand for the product and the need for the product.

ENGEL: Thank you. I want to second Mr. Pallone's positive discussions about CHIP. I've always been a strong supporter and as of July, 2014 an estimated 476,000 children were enrolled in this affordable coverage option for their care in New York. And so, I think that that is really, really important. I was pleased therefore to see that the budget proposal for FY 2016 included funding - included funding for CHIP for the next four years to FY 2019. So can you elaborate on what you believe increasing tobacco taxes is a viable means for funding this program while we sort out the transition issues associated with the Affordable Care Act?

BURWELL: We believe - one of the things we're trying to be physically responsible and indicating how we are paying for things. We believe that this is a legitimate way to pay for things, especially in the context of we are providing health care and something that we'll hopefully crate a deterrent and help healthcare in terms of the issue of the tobacco tax. As one analyzes across the department and whether it's a CMS or CDC the impact that tobacco has on health in our nation and the cost of healthcare in our nation is one that we think is a fair place to go to pay for this care for the children.

ENGEL: I agree with you and finally, I want to talk about graduate medical education because I was concerned that the administration's proposal to cut indirect GME funding, one in six positions in America obtains training in my home state of New York and we have some of the finest academic and medical centers in the country. So it requires significant funding and time to develop the infrastructure and expertise necessary to ensure quality care is available. So how do we ensure stability for these academic and medical centers and the patients they serve if we put GME funding at risk?

BURWELL: We believe and hope that our proposal does not do that and meets the objectives of making sure we are training appropriate physicians for both primary care and specialties where we don't have as many as we should, at the same time making sure that we target it. There's $100 million for pediatric, and then a wider pool for competition. It's an issue that we want to meet the same objectives, at the same time we do it in a fiscally responsible way.

ENGEL: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

PITTS: Thank the Gentleman, I will recognize is the vice- chairman from the subcommittee, Mr. Guthrie for five minutes for questions.

GUTHRIE: Thank you, Madam Secretary for coming, and I really look forward on 21st Century Cures, and all the things that we can work on over the next few years as vice-chair.

But first I'd like to direct your attention to the Cost Share Reduction Program contained in the ACA, specifically Sections 1402 and 1412. Does any part of this budget request -- or does any part of this budget that we're talking about today request any new authority, including any transfer authority to pay insurers under the Cost Share Reduction Program?

BURWELL: With regard to the program, which is a program as you know is about making sure that the cost of healthcare to those individuals that are coming into the marketplace is something that they can afford. That's what's it's about. And we believe that we do have the authorities to do the cost sharing.

GUTHRIE: Is there any new authority requested in this budget?

BURWELL: No new language.

GUTHRIE: There's no new language? And so, we do know it's up and running. I think we spent $3 billion already on the Cost Share Reduction Program that has been to insurers from taxpayer funds.

The budget that's been submitted estimates $11.2 billion over 2015, 2016. And CBO says $175 billion over the next 10 years is what they've estimated. And could you cite where the appropriations authority is -- as I said you do believe you have the authority, can you cite where that is?

BURWELL: We do believe we do and I'm sure you know that right now that this is an issue that is under litigation, and a court case that has been brought. And so, with regard to that, that is an issue that I will let our colleagues at the Justice Department speak to because of the place it is in litigation.

GUTHRIE: I understand that but we're doing oversight here. I'm not an attorney. And so, you had -- when you were at OMB -- at OMB in 2014 there actually was a request in the 2014 budget for direct appropriation. And that didn't happen for whatever reason but we're spending money.

So whether we spend a penny or 100 -- this is a $175 billion over a 10-year program. I mean, we feel like we -- this is an oversight hearing, not a -- and so, we feel like it's our responsibility to make sure to our taxpayers that we have good answers is on where this is coming from. So we're just asking for where the appropriation comes from -- authority...

BURWELL: I understand and I appreciate -- and I appreciate the question and I'm sorry that it is in litigation. I wish we weren't in a place where we are in litigation but when something has entered into that place it does create a difficult circumstance. I respect the issue of oversight but because the litigation has been brought by the House on this issue we're in a place where I think that is the appropriate place for this conversation...

GUTHRIE: I'm just not aware of any pending litigation exception in oversight hearing questions. And is there like a legal case or authority, or did the Justice Department tell you, you don't have to...

BURWELL: With regard to issues that are being litigated, generally, those are matters that we refer and let the Justice Department continue on.

GUTHRIE: And I am sure that you're aware that we've never been able to get an answer from the administration from where the language -- nobody has been able to point to us where that appropriation language comes from. And it was -- and you previously had requested appropriation.

Let me ask you another question. Recently you received -- I think 18 employers groups sent you a letter urging that small groups be maintained at 50 employees. And they were citing an actuarial

analysis that showed when they go to 50 to 51 they -- the acturial analysis said that it would estimate it that two-thirds of the members, that they would receive an increase of 18 percent. And I honestly don't believe that these small employers, 51 to 100 employees can accept an 18 percent increase in their premiums.

Also the promise that if you like the plan you can keep it, because if they have -- if the 51 to 100 have to go into the new plan they'll have to meet the requirements of the healthcare law that essential benefits and the other things that have caused other people to lose their -- the plans that they like if they could keep -- and due to this impact would you support allowing states to keep their market at 50 or below, and not go to the 51 to 100?

BURWELL: This is an issue that we are looking at and examining because we have a number of comments on it. And I would say is I would welcome -- I would welcome the opportunity to see the piece of work that you're talking about and referring to so that we can see and understand that. I think what we want to do is understand the facts around this type of thing. So I would welcome the opportunity to see this study and piece of work that you're articulating.

GUTHRIE: OK. My understanding it has been submitted, a letter from this 18 employers, but we'll make sure that that -- that is forwarded.

BURWELL: OK.

GUTHRIE: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I yield back.

PITTS: Sure. And I thank the Gentleman.

And I now recognize the Gentlelady from Illinois, Ms. Schakowsky for five minutes for questions.

SCHAKOWSKY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here today. I wanted to ask you if you are aware of any Republican legislative proposals that would keep insurance companies from denying coverage from people with pre-existing conditions like cancer or dropping someone from coverage because they got in an accident or got sick.

BURWELL: I'm not aware of a piece of legislation that would take care of that issue.

SCHAKOWSKY: And are you aware of any Republican legislative proposal that would provide access to preventive services like cancer screenings, yearly wellness exams and do that at no additional out-of- pocket cost to consumers?

BURWELL: I am not aware of a piece of legislation that would do that in the fulsome way that the ACA does.

SCHAKOWSKY: Thank you. I wanted to talk a little bit about something that's a growing concern and that's Alzheimer's Disease, and the cost that it is in our personal lives and also in funding. So, scores of public agencies, including many HHS agencies, as well as numerous private and nonprofit organizations are trying to address this challenge of preventing Alzheimer's, serving those who have dementia today, finding a cure. Shouldn't the federal government be coordinating a plan on Alzheimer's?

BURWELL: In terms of the issue of coordination there is a body and advisory group that includes both people from the federal government, as well as external folks to be a part of putting together our thoughts and strategies. And this is -- it informs that we are doing investments. There are members of the federal government, across the government, as well as external bodies that are a part of that.

With regard to the work at the department, the work cuts across a number of different areas, NIH and research is generally what comes to mind from those people, but where the biggest dollars are spent is actually in CMS, and making sure that we're thinking through the issues and in that space because that's where the dollar is.

The other thing is the administration for community living is where we work on and think about things like those that are caregivers, and those that are going through that process of dementia and how they deal with it. So at the department we work through all of those. There are these overall advisory groups that we have externally and includes internal members.

SCHAKOWSKY: So, the population is aging rapidly obviously and Alzheimer's is taking a much bigger toll than ever on families, on healthcare systems, on people who have the disease. And the number of people living with dementia will continue to grow as Baby Boomers age. So you had mentioned that the research is going on, so what is HHS, NIH is doing to find a cure?

BURWELL: In this budget you see a 24 percent increase to funding for Alzheimer's which is much greater than the percentage increase even within the other NIH. So, focusing deeply on doing that is also part of the brain initiative as we think through their specific issues.

But we were also making progress on something called Teal (ph), which is a protein that is indicative of Alzheimer's. That's one of the pieces of research that's going on. And if we can make progress there -- the other piece of research is seeing if there are ways that we can slow the progression by understanding how the neural channels move and what's happening in the disease. Those are pieces of research that we're starting.

We believe that with the funding we're asking for, that we can move that research. We can broaden it and we can make it faster.

SCHAKOWSKY: So, dementia is a major focus of work in the United Kingdom and other developed countries. Are we keeping up with the rest of the world in research activities and investments?

BURWELL: You know, we believe that we are with regard to that. And I have been in touch with my colleagues and the secretary or the minister in the U.K. and continue to have those conversations.

So we make sure that we are learning and staying connected to our colleagues especially -- that's a particular example where I have been in touch Minister Hunt (ph) and we'll continue to do that so that we'll make sure that we're learning everything we can from our colleagues and in places where we can work together and see if we can leverage the efforts that are going in each of our countries. And that's both across the research, the regulation, as well as the more social issues.

SCHAKOWSKY: And who is on the Alzheimer's Advisory Committee? I'm asking that because shouldn't there be a person with Alzheimer's as part of the group?

BURWELL: I want to get back to you directly but it is my understanding that there is a person, that there is a slot, and that there -- either there is or will be a person that that does have -- but that is part of the committee. And I want to get back to you on that very specifically.

SCHAKOWSKY: Well, I thank you for the focus and as the co-chair of the senior task force of the Democratic Caucus I really want to work with you on that because this is a problem affecting so many families and individuals. I appreciate it.

And I yield back. Thank you.

PITTS: The chair would like to thank the Gentlelady.

And I recognize the Gentleman from Kentucky Mr. Whitfield, five minutes for questions.

WHITFIELD: Thank you.

Secretary Burwell, well, I also want to thank you for being with us today and I want to just follow up on my colleague Brett Guthrie's question.

We're concerned about this cost reduction program because -- Cost Sharing Program because it's a $170 some billion over a number of years. And we understand that that's one of the issues involved in the lawsuit. But all we're asking you is since you all are dispersing the money what is your opinion as to where the appropriation is designated that you're working from?

BURWELL: This is an issue -- and as I said I understand the question. We believe we have the authorities. With regards to the specifics of that, because we are in litigation...

WHITFIELD: But you can't tell us where the money is coming from?

BURWELL: With regard to having that conversation that is what...

WHITFIELD: Were you instructed by DOJ not to answer that question?

BURWELL: With regard to that specific issue that is at the root of the litigation.

WHITFIELD: Were you instructed by DOJ not to answer the question?

BURWELL: With regard to -- when (inaudible) litigation like this , this is our standard...

WHITFIELD: Well, you know, yesterday we had Jenny McCarthy (ph) here and we were talking about 111-D (ph), which is before the Supreme Court right now. And she gave us her theory of why she thought she was right.

We're not saying that we're right or you're right, we're simply asking what is your theory, where does the money come from in your view?

BURWELL: That is something, as I said -- why don't I work to get back to you on where we feel comfortable with where the litigation is and I'd like to come back on that.

WHITFIELD: Well, I must say I have been impressed with your facility to use numbers. You were -- you're really tuned in to the budget, responding to Mr. Pitts, responding to Mr. Green about the community health centers.

I was at a Rotary Club meeting recently and I was asked the question. They said, "Congressman, can you tell us what dollar amount has been incurred by the federal government as a result of state expansion of Medicaid programs pursuant to the Affordable Care Act because we picked up a larger percentage of the normal cost."

And I would ask you that question. I didn't know the answer. But could you tell me what is the total dollar amount incurred by the federal government by the expansion of the state Medicaid programs a result of the Affordable Care Act?

BURWELL: In terms of the federal dollars versus the state dollars?

WHITFIELD: Yes, just the additional dollar amount incurred by us.

BURWELL: Let me go back and look because the question of being able to de-segregate whether a person came in because of expansion, or we're under the old rules. I think I would want to make sure that we can understand...

WHITFIELD: But you don't have a -- you don't have a dollar amount for that?

BURWELL: I'm not -- I don't know. I will check with the department if we do. The one thing that I think...

WHITFIELD: We would think that you all would definitely know that because that -- you know, we can all talk about the advantages and disadvantages of this program, but there is a big additional cost to the federal government. And we're simply asking, I'm asking what is that total dollar amount incurred?

BURWELL: I think the question that I am not sure is how one breaks out the actual number from expansion because when people come through...

WHITFIELD: Well, let me ask you this question...

BURWELL: That's where...

WHITFIELD: And what year does -- the states were encouraged to expand Medicaid which is fine because the federal government is picking up more of that dollar amount. But at some point in the future the federal government is not going to be picking up those additional costs.

What year is that?

BURWELL: What year that is, is we never go below -- the federal government never goes below a 90 percent of the payment of the additional...

WHITFIELD: Until when?

BURWELL: And that is 2020...

WHITFIELD: 2020...

BURWELL: And so, 2016 is the year through which there is a 100...

WHITFIELD: OK.

BURWELL: And in your own state...

WHITFIELD: Well, do you have any projected cost over that period of time for the federal government.

BURWELL: No, you have those incorporated in our budget. But one of the things in terms of these cost issues that I think are important in the state of Kentucky...

WHITFIELD: OK. Well, that's OK. Listen, you can't answer the question but I appreciate it anyway.

And then let me ask you this. I noticed that you all made $2.5 billion in loans in the coops. And Kentucky has a good coop program as well.

We sent a letter last year and we were concerned about the solvency of some of these coops. And the federal government, as I said, its loan is $2.5 billion. We now see that in Iowa and in Nebraska those coops are in bankruptcy.

Have you all done any analysis to project -- are there other states that there is a chance that these coops are going to bankruptcy, or are you looking at that?

BURWELL: We are looking at the coops that -- the one thing that I think is very important to note is the cuts, the deep cuts in the funding for coops. When the program was originally designed and the passage of the Affordable Care Act occurred, the amount of money for the coops to do the loans -- and the loans that states like Iowa would have made a difference -- at the end because those monies were cut, they were cut as part of sequestration, they were cut in '12. They were cut in '11. They were cut in '13.

WHITFIELD: So are you saying that bankruptcy occurred because of sequestration?

BURWELL: What I am saying is that had we had more funding in order to provide the additional loans to the coops it could have made a difference. With regard to the fundamental of your question which is are we looking at the coops? And there are two things that we want to do, understand whether they are stable. And then the second is where we can provide technical assistance.

WHITFIELD: Well, those questions that you couldn't answer or were not familiar with , I do hope that you will get back with us with those answers soon...

BURWELL: I would be happy to...

WHITFIELD: Within seven days if possible. Thank you.

BURWELL: I will -- I want to make sure that we will get back as quickly as...

WHITFIELD: Because I got to -- have to be back at that Rotary Club next week.

BURWELL: As a neighboring state I appreciate that.

PITTS: The Gentleman yields back.

The chair recognizes the Gentlelady from Florida Ms. Castor for five minutes.

CASTOR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, thank you again on behalf of the 1.6 million Floridians that were able to buy affordable health insurance in our exchange. I will give you due credit and to everyone at HHS. But I think the real credit goes to our terrific navigators that were on the ground, hospitals across the state of Florida, community health centers and family members that probably put in a good word for their sons and daughters, or aunts and uncles to sign up. You probably want to give them a pat on the back yourself this morning. I'd encourage you to do that.

BURWELL: I do. I want to express appreciation. I've seen the local stakeholders. I've met with them across this country and it was the communities coming together. It was individuals. It was people in the community health centers. As was mentioned it was the business people. It was everyone when I would visit, the hospitals would be there. Everyone would be around the table working on this issue together. And it was that kind of work, and then the individuals that I visited on the Second Sunday (ph) and in Texas.

Actually I was given the opportunity to speak at one of the churches and it was all about coming together to give this information to people so that they could make choices, and have that financial and health security.

CASTOR: So in Florida we have a very competitive marketplace as well. Consumers could choose from 14 different issuers in the marketplace this year. That was up from last year where we had 11.

And Florida consumers could choose from an average of 42 health plans in their county for 2015 coverage. So with 1.6 million now enrolled it really demonstrates the high stakes involved with the Supreme Court case that the court will hear next week. I cannot imagine that the Court would rule to take that away from over a million and a half Floridians and then millions more all across the country.

And just like Representative Engel said -- I was here during the hearings in advance of the Affordable Care Act adoption, during the mark-up, during the amendment process, during negotiations with the United States Senate, never in those discussions was there any dichotomy between a state exchange and a federal exchange, and the availability of tax credits.

Have you seen any evidence to the contrary in your review of the record and the case that's before the Supreme Court?

BURWELL: With regard I would let the Justice Department who has reviewed everything. But the thing that I agree with is that we don't think that that was -- we just don't believe that that's what the law says, or what was intended by the law either.

CASTOR: Yes. And I can say straightforwardly as a member of this committee what the legislative intent was, and it was for those tax credits to be available to every American, no matter if they're in the state marketplace or a federal marketplace.

But I would say if the Court rules otherwise they're going to create chaos and they're going to strike right at the heart of the economic security of so many of my neighbors in Florida and many Americans. So, I know that they will study the legislative intent and I hope they rule the right way and we don't have to address that chaotic situation.

But I think that with the Affordable Care Act the real untold story is what has happened to people who have insurance, because I can cheer on the million and a half Floridians that now have it, but most of my neighbors already have insurance, private insurance or Medicare.

And I know there's more good news that was announced for my neighbors that rely on Medicare. Just in Florida alone Floridians have saved almost a billion dollars since 2010 because of the ACA's doughnut hole discount. Three hundred, almost 350,000 beneficiaries saw savings in 2014 to the tune of about $300 million last year. The average discount per beneficiary was $884.

Then for private insurance how come we haven't been able to get the word out on how much better an insurance policy -- a consumer can't be kicked off if they get sick. In Florida alone over 200,000 young adults can stay on their parents' plan. Floridians have received millions of dollars in rebates because the law says you have new rights and protections and insurance companies cannot spend that money on profits. It has to go to -- it can't spend the profits on salaries and excessive profits, it has to go to healthcare. How come -- what else can the administration do to tell this good news story?

BURWELL: I think we can do a better job of making sure people do know. And then another area is the issue of preventative care and the importance of the fact that your childhood visits and those things will no longer require co-pays or cost sharing in terms of when you go in for that or measles. An important thing, I think, right now, and timely thing. And so, I think we need to do a better job of making sure people know about those improvements to quality.

CASTOR: Thank you. I yield back.

PITTS: The chair thanks the lady.

And I recognize the Gentleman from Illinois Mr. Shimkus for five minutes for questions.

SHIMKUS: Thank you.

Secretary Burwell, thank you. I talked to your staff prior and I appreciate your outreach trying to call. It was a crazy day and I talked to them before you came to the table. And I do have great respect for that. But I also want to make sure that, you know, this happy-clap talk about how great the healthcare is and the Affordable Care Act is moderated by real concerns out there.

Remember the bill that passed and signed to the law we had nothing to do with it on the House side. It was a Senate health bill that came over to us that we passed, right? So that's the healthcare law that we have today. And the language of law is pretty clear. And I'm concerned also that the Supreme Court will rule that the federal exchanges in states are not authorized to receive subsidies and we just need -- we need to be prepared for that here. And I would hope the administration would be too.

I promised two ladies from my Congressional district that I would mention their names. Angie Eskar (ph) from Teutopolis who is pro- life, of strong family and she cannot buy a policy that does not have abortion or abortion coverage. And for millions in America this is a really important issue. And she -- and this is an emotional -- just like on the other side you know how this debate is. And I -- and I think part of the agreement from some of my pro-life Democrats was to ensure that that option would be available and it's just not for her.

The other one is Debbie McKinney-Huff (ph) from a town called Highland (ph). She's a Democrat. Her premiums went up astronomically last year. This year they've gone up another $2,000 with a $10,000 deductible. And she can't afford it. So for all the happy dancers there are -- there are challenges out there that we don't do our constituents service if we don't understand that there are problems that have to be resolved.

There are some budget requests that I want to talk about. And so, I'm going to move forward but I would just put that in the record. I'm a big supporter of Medicare Advantage. You know, I was here when we passed it. Seniors didn't have any prescription drug coverage. It's been very successful. It's very popular. The budget request makes a reduction again in that where the enrollment is going up, favorable are high and 670,000 people weren't able to access Medicaid Advantage. And if you are from rural parts of this country that option is very limited, if not -- or it doesn't exist. So I would ask that we re-look at that so that seniors who want to have this option can choose that. And our concern is your budget hurts the ability for that to happen.

BURWELL: So with regard to the first issue in terms of your two constituents I want to make sure that we understand that. On the issue of abortion in that....

SHIMKUS: And then let's just -- let's just answer this question because I got two more on the budget that I'm trying to address...

BURWELL: That we just focus on the Medicare Advantage issue.

SHIMKUS: Thank you.

BURWELL: With regard to that we want to make sure -- the program during the period of changes that we have had we've seen a large increase in the number of people in Medicare Advantage claims. I want to understand your 670 because 99 percent of beneficiaries have access to MA plans. And there may be something. And so, I'd like to understand that 670 better.

The third thing is that we know that those number of plans quality that have gone from four stars -- you know, gone to the higher ratings we've gone for 67 percent in the two highest rating categories at 17 percent to 67 percent. So we're improving quality.

More people are coming in this system and there is premium control. So, I want to understand the 670.

We want to make sure and are listening. We author our plans as we hear concerns, that's why I want to understand that 670 because we believe that we can continue making these changes.

It comes back to some of the points raised with regard to deficits and making sure that we're being responsible.

SHIMKUS: OK.

BURWELL: MedPAC and the GAO recommended that there is up-coding and we need to work on it.

SHIMKUS: OK. Thank you.

Are you aware of any efforts by FDA to accelerate the next round of user fee negotiations? And our concerns is if they are and they're not doing due diligence about the fees and the return on investment we would hope that they would not accelerate it until due diligence is done.

And the last thing I wanted to address was the Biologics Price Competition and Innovation Act -- stakeholders have to be involved in that. And that's really part of this 21st Century Cures debate. Not just having bureaucrats or panels but bringing patient, bringing physicians and bring in the like -- and our concern is that's not happening on this -- on the Biologics Price Competition and Innovation Act and those -- and those concerns.

And so, if you take that suggestion and if you want to come back and follow up on a lot of these issues we'd be happy to talk with you.

Again, I do appreciate you reaching out personally and I look forward to working with you.

BURWELL: And I do appreciate this issue of stakeholder input. We think it's important to making sure that we get this right.

SHIMKUS: Thank you very much.

PITTS: The chair thanks the Gentleman.

The chair now recognizes the Gentlelady from California Ms. Matsui for five minutes for questions.

MITSUI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Burwell, thank you for being here. I want to talk about mental health. When we think about health we need to consider the whole person. Mental health has historically taken a backseat to physical health, but the head is connected to the body and one affects the other.

I have been working for years with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and both sides at the capital to make changes, to fix our broken mental health system. And as you know a demonstration project based on The Excellence in Mental Health Act that I co-authored with my colleague here Congressman Lance into law last year.

And I look forward to working with you as -- and the administration to make sure that this is implemented properly and in a way that states can demonstrate success.

I also look forward to working with you to make further changes and improve our mental health system. I was pleased to see that the budget will eliminate Medicare's 190 day mental health services -- more in line -- and to keep that more in line with the physical for which no limit exists.

Can you briefly talk about that policy and how it will benefit seniors and people with disabilities who need psychiatric services?

BURWELL: Our overall approach in the mental health space and it's one that we consider a priority is to try and get us in terms of both care and payment to parity with how we think about other health issues.

And there are steps that we are taking throughout the budget and whether it's implementation of the piece of legislation that you referred, and the issue that your colleague just raised about stakeholder engagement and making sure that we're getting that input as we implement it.

And so, we're implementing and thinking about the policies to promote behavioral and mental health through our payment system and making sure that there is parity. That seems to be something that's been important.

We're trying to focus on access because many people, the question of access to the right types of providers in terms of behavioral health, that's something you see in some of our analysis at that time. Budgeting work in terms of making sure that SAMHSA (ph) and others are ensuring that we have providers.

And then there's access, and that's an issue for all people of all ages but especially young people getting the access that they need.

And so, as we think about all of the pieces working together about the funding, about the access and then -- that there are providers that can provide.

MITSUI: I appreciate that. And as we move forward there is a continuum of mental health issues that we need to address. And it's a complicated issue and we certainly would like to work with you as we move forward on that.

And I would like to also talk about seniors because that's a special interest area (ph) of mine too. And as we consider changes to the Medicare program our first priority should always be senior, especially knowing spend about 14 percent of their Household income on healthcare costs compared to five percent of Households who do not have a Medicare beneficiary.

And we need to find ways to save money in the Medicare program and we have been, but not by cutting benefits but by realigning incentives to improve outcomes in patient care. If a senior gets the right care at the right time it's not only better for the senior but it also saves the system a lot of money.

And now I appreciate some of the provisions in the budget and I would like to discuss this further with you. The budget seeks to save money by restoring trial (ph) rebates for the dual eligible population in Medicare.

Secretary Burwell, can you please elaborate on that?

BURWELL: In terms of the dual eligible policy?

MITSUI: Yes. Right. The drug rebates and dual eligible population.

BURWELL: One of the things that -- the dual eligible population has two elements to it. It is both a very complicated populated because there are people who have a number of different conditions that are being treated in different ways. It's also a very expensive population.

And as we work to improve both the quality and affordability of the care that's what we're trying to do as we look at these proposals. And it's all a part of the broader issue of delivery system reform which you touched on a little bit. And we have set out clear goals.

For the first time ever we have said that in the area of Medicare, that by 2016 we have set a goal that 30 percent of all payments will be in different payment systems, where we are not paying for volume but paying for value. And as a part of -- we move forward to this changed system, we want to do that. That's about price but it's also about quality. And this is a proposal that we're trying to move forward on both.

MITSUI: And I know that this is going to be difficult because there are areas where you have to look at the budget. But as we look at this we also have to look at the seniors and that's really why when we look at this -- I know you seek to increase sort of the skin in the game for Medicare beneficiaries.

However I would argue that seniors already have a lot of skin in the game and Medicare and that additional cost sharing will not bring down costs in the program. And as you know as they have increased costs -- you look at -- most of them are supported by Social Security and then that -- what they do is shift over the cost to pay for their healthcare from Social Security. And so, I think it's something that we really have to look at more holistically.

So, thank you very much for everything that you're doing.

PITTS: And I thank the Gentlelady.

And now I recognize the Gentleman from Pennsylvania Dr. Murphy for five minutes for questions.

MURPHY: Welcome here, Madam Secretary. I appreciate you being here. I also want to associate myself with the comments of my friend Ms. Matsui of California about mental health, and I look forward to working with you on those things. In a related area we've had a number of hearings here regarding mental health and among them has been the Substance Abuse and the Mental Health Service Administration. We've asked them repeatedly for information over almost a year for getting some records.

Chairman Upton and I have asked for these things. We have not gotten those documents. And we're concerned about their delays. I wonder if you could help us get some assurance that we'll get those documents from SAMHSA (ph)?

BURWELL: As you and I had the opportunity to discuss this, this is something that we are working on. And I'm hopeful that very soon you'll have some of those documents and we'll continue to work with you on it.

MURPHY: Thank you. I appreciate your teamwork on this.

On another question when we passed the SGR patch, I think it was last year, there was also a demo project, which is what Ms. Matsui was also referring to, for certified community behavioral health clinics to improve access.

Now as part of this we also attach something for AOT, assisted outpatient treatment for counties and communities to also have access to some grants to facilitate that as long as they also were -- so those community behavioral health clinics would get those -- to also help for those who are cycling through with a history of violence, prison, homelessness, et cetera, those, that small one percent of one percent, or persistent chronically and mentally ill and going through this system.

One thing is I want to make sure and find out from you is the way this was designed is to make sure that only those counties that really have AOT would be eligible for those grant programs if they're going to attach those to those community health centers. Is that something that you are aware of, and could you work with us to make sure that those grant programs are available in that sense?

BURWELL: We do want to work with you on that and, yes, we are working on that and we would like to work with you to make sure that we do have the standards in place.

MURPHY: Thank you.

Another one has to do with a program that was discussed by SAMHSA (ph) which is called I-CARE (ph) which is to help with those going into emergency rooms to deal with those in crisis. One of the concerns I have and certainly we have seen headlines and tragic sad cases such as that with Virginia Senator Creigh Deeds and his son Gus. The problems that there are thousands of times that this occurs in this country every year where there's just simply aren't enough psychiatric hospital beds.

And so, people languish in emergency rooms, often in a five point tie-down and given chemical sedatives until a room opens up. It could be hours or days, or weeks in some cases. We wouldn't have this problem if we had more psych beds. And so, I'm hoping that since the demand for psychiatric beds exceeds the current supply of inpatient psychiatric beds, is that something else that you can work as in legislation to say we ought to have a place for those in crisis to get stabilized and not go to jail, not sit in a jail cell and languish there, or sit in an emergency room. But work with us on that -- would you be willing to work with some of that too?

BURWELL: Yes.

MURPHY: Thank you.

BURWELL: Looking forward to that.

MURPHY: And another issue then related to the Assisted Outpatient Grant Program is a standalone thing. I want to show you, I think I have a poster here of -- I just want to show you some of the outcome measures.

This comes out of a Duke University study. When you have assisted outpatient treatment -- so working with someone from the court or judge, working with the person saying you need to stay in treatment for a number of months, outpatient treatment, not inpatient, take your medication and see this person, or report back like with a mental health court or something, they saw an 87 percent reduction in incarcerations, and 83 percent reduction in arrest, 77 percent reduction psychiatric inpatient hospitalizations, and a 33 percent reduction in ER hospitalizations.

So I just want to show that too. And by the way costs are cut in half for these folks too. But it is one in that -- and working with the issues of CBO scoring et cetera, we're really going to have to, I think, team up together in this and say there ought to be some options for people to be in outpatient care. And this is psychiatry, psychology, peer support, social workers, people helping with job training, housing, all those things together. But there has to be this coordination program. Would you work with us on this too?

BURWELL: We will. And I think it's part of the broader issue of delivery system reform and how we deliver quality. You're focused in a very important in mental health. When we look at diabetes and the clinics that I've visited across the country, when we get these adherence numbers up and people participating and that usually has to do with coordinated care and the type of interaction and communication you were talking about, we get adherence, we get less of the disease or problem, and we get lower cost because that happen when we have the bad things that go wrong when people aren't adhering.

MURPHY: Yes. It's going to require that different view of things. And I think you may be familiar with the hearing that we had in the Oversight Committee two weeks ago where a GAO report said and identified -- I was amazed by this, a 112 federal agencies and programs scattered across eight departments that deal with mental illness. And they said the Inter-Agency Coordination Program supporting individuals with serious mental illness is lacking.

It was really -- to me it's really dizzying and a sad description of the process here. I hope you will also work with us and it's a work to coordinate these programs. And can I have that assurance from you as well?

BURWELL: We will and we do coordinate -- we coordinate them across the over-arching issue and then within their areas like veterans homelessness and the issues that related -- and so, I want to have the conversation about how we think about and where we can strengthen those things.

MURPHY: Thank you. Let's continue working on that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

PITTS: The chair thanks the Gentleman.

And I recognize the Gentleman from Oregon Mr. Schrader from Oregon for five minutes for questions.

SCHRADER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for being here, Madam Secretary.

BURWELL: Thank you.

SCHRADER: Last year healthcare spending grew at this lowest rate on record since 1960. Healthcare pricing inflation is at its lowest rate in 50 years. And ACA has gotten a lot of attribution by CBO from making a big difference in that result.

Have you seen a Republican legislative language that would give us that same result?

BURWELL: We haven't seen a proposal that would continue us on our path with regard to some of the changes that we've put in place.

SCHRADER: Seniors have also benefitted dramatically from the ACA. Prescription drug costs are a big issue for them. Eight million, over eight million seniors have actually benefitted from and saved over $11 billion, as I understand it, on prescription drugs since the enactment of the ACA.

Is there a Republican proposal out there that does a similar thing?

BURWELL: We haven't seen a proposal about that would take care of this issue, the doughnut hole. And actually on Tuesday we actually were able to update our numbers in that space. And it is now $15 billion in terms of the savings, and on average in the country that's about $1,600 per senior.

SCHRADER: I find that ironic that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle keep asking for a contingency plan from the administration on this bogus lawsuit.

And yet, you know, as a firm believer in Article I Legislative Supremacy, with all due respect, Madam Secretary. I think it's our responsibility and the majority of the party controls both chambers, and -- where the heck is their contingency plan?

That's a rhetorical question, Madam Secretary. .

One of the things that's been really good, I think, in my state is the expansion of the Affordable Care Act into the Medicaid population into the private sector. We've had some unqualified success. Emergency room visits are down by 21 percent. We've actually gotten hospital admissions complications from diabetes alone down 9 percent not to mention other diseases. COPD, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, hospital stays down almost 50 percent. Are you getting any of the same -- those same types of results from other states? What...

BURWELL: So, we are in - recently actually in the last two weeks out of the State of Kentucky we have seen a piece of analysis done by the University of Louisville and Deloitte and that piece of legislation -- that piece of analysis showed, they did it at the beginning of the expansion and then they did that analysis now.

And what the analysis showed is that the expansion will contribute to 40,000 jobs in the State of Kentucky and will contribute to their GDP by $30 billion and that's at the period up to 2021, so that is over a period of time. But we are starting to see both the economic and job impacts as well as some of the health impacts that you were describing.

SCHRADER: Well, contrary to popular demagoguery in right wing radio and TV, this is a marketplace system we set up federal government as the facilitator in that, the state hopefully those -- some of the state exchanges are also facilitator.

Like everyone I think here, we all believe in the power of marketplace competition. My own state for instance over the last year instead of seeing the double digit increases in insurance premiums on average, ours actually stayed level or decreased slightly. Now, that to me is a key indicator for the, you know, working or non-working the Affordable Care Act, our uninsured rate in Oregon went down 63 percent. I've had testimonials from hospitals and doctors about how people actually have health care access at this point in time. Could you talk about what you see nationally in increased competition?

BURWELL: So, with regard to the issue of increased competition, we saw 25 percent more issuers come into the marketplace this year and so more issuers means more plans and competition.

SCHRADER: It means they wouldn't be doing this if they weren't making some money at this and the program wasn't working, Madam Secretary.

BURWELL: And so -- and also with regards to the issue of competition, what we know is in many plans that are employer-based plans; people do not come in and shop. They just automatically reenroll. And as you know, we have that as part of the marketplace this year.

But we know that actually the majority of people came in and shopped and that I think is related to the competition and it's related to a consumer who wants to make the best choice, and that choice sometimes based on benefit, that choice sometimes based on cost and cost has a number of different elements whether that's premium or deductible.

SCHRADER: Great.

BURWELL: But we are seeing more players come in and we're also seeing the consumer behave in a way that's indicative that they want that competition in shopping.

UNKNOWN: I'd like to call out some kudos on the GME increase in the budget, the money you put in for Medicare appeals back home. We do a lot of work, of course with people having trouble navigating the system big time and the investment in primary care docs, I think that's important. A quick little comment on -- the only thing I'm a little concerned about is if we're going to bundle payments and increased competition why we are hammering on the Medicare Advantage plans a little bit?

BURWELL: As I mentioned to your colleague I think what we're trying to do is balance making sure that those plans are good and strong and we've seen that over the period of the changes we've done. We try and do the changes in a measured way that gets to things that actually have to do with what we believe is strong representation of the taxpayer in terms of places where we believe there are issues like upcoding that is occurring and that MedPAC (ph) has articulated those and others. We always want to listen in here and we want to watch carefully if we're seeing problems that occur with the changes but to date we haven't.

SCHRADER: Thank you. And I yield back.

PITTS: The Chair thanks the Gentleman. And I recognize the Gentleman from New Jersey Mr. Lance five minutes for questions.

LANCE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary regarding King versus Burwell, understand what you had said that there can be no administrative action should the plaintiff win the case. You've stated that explicitly and repeatedly and that is not my question. My question relates back to the Chairman who said in his opening line of questioning that we have a specific source within your department that there is a document related to what HHS might do should the Supreme Court rule against the administration.

I understand that your point of view is that there can be no administrative action. You have stated that explicitly. Are you aware of any such document and I'm not asking about your position on administrative action. I'm asking about a document in this regard.

BURWELL: Congressman, I would -- if there is this document and you know of it, I would -- I would certainly like to know of the document because I don't have knowledge of a 100-page document.

LANCE: I didn't say 100-page now did I? I said a document. I don't know how many pages it is. You're not aware of any document?

BURWELL: What I have -- as I've said there isn't administrative action (inaudible).

LANCE: Yes, I don't -- I made that clear that I understand your point of view on that. Is there a document as to a reaction from HHS should the case be won by the plaintiff in the Supreme Court?

BURWELL: With regard to a reaction as I've said because I've articulated that I want to be careful because I have articulated (inaudible)...

LANCE: As I have tried to be careful.

BURWELL: ... the problems with regard to the question of what will happen. We know how many people are in the marketplace, how many (inaudible).

LANCE: Yes, that's filibustering. I understand that. I'm asking whether there is any document. We have a source indicating there is a document as to what might be the response from HHS.

BURWELL: I'm not familiar with the document you're referring to.

LANCE: And let me say that a former CMS administrator Tom Scully of, I believe, the Bush administration has said that, "Of course they have a document." He said, of course, they have one. I think he referred to a document. "They should all resign if they don't." I would hope that your department, Madam Secretary, would have some sort of contingency plan should the court rule for plaintiff. Do you believe that the suit is bogus?

BURWELL: With regard to the lawsuit as I've said what I believe is that the law is clear...

LANCE: Yes, I understand that. You believe the suit is bogus?

BURWELL: That's the characterization I -- my point about the suit is what I believe is that we hold the right position in the (inaudible).

LANCE: I understand that and it will be argued next week and a decision will be made by the end of June. Formerly, when I asked questions about this not from you but regarding prior officials, there was the impression that it was a frivolous suit. Do you believe the suit is frivolous or bogus?

BURWELL: What I believe is that we should continue making progress for the American people on three things that the Affordable Care Act (inaudible).

LANCE: Yes, I'm aware of that. Do you believe the suit is frivolous or bogus?

BURWELL: May I finish, Congressman? I believe that we as the executive branch and the legislative branch should be working together on three things we agree with. That's affordability, access and quality.

LANCE: I agree with all of that.

BURWELL: What I would like -- and what can -- would hope that we can do is build on the progress that we have seen. And that progress is that 11.4 million people...

LANCE: You're claiming my time. Do you believe that the Supreme Court is likely to rule unanimously on this decision?

BURWELL: As I've indicated we believe that the court will rule in our favor.

LANCE: Do you believe the suit is bogus or frivolous?

BURWELL: With regard to characterization, what I think is valuable is that we believe that our position is the position that will stand and that we believe we're right. The people in the State of New

Jersey should not have their subsidies taken away be they do or don't have a marketplace when people right across the border in New York will get those subsidies.

LANCE: I believe, Madam Secretary, in equal justice under law as is inscribed across the street in the Supreme Court building, I believe this is a very serious case. I think it's closely contested. Under no circumstances do I believe that plaintiff will win nine to nothing.

I think there are good arguments on both sides. I have read the briefs, all of the briefs. I've read the Solicitor General's brief. I've read the brief of the plaintiff. I think it's a very serious case and you and I may disagree on the case. I respect that and I understand that.

It's frustrating to me that here in Washington, there cannot be an intellectual argument as to pros and cons and I certainly would encourage the administration to have a contingency plan and to work with us in Congress including the Republican majority in both the House and the Senate should the court rule for plaintiff.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

BURWELL: Congressman, with regard to the question of our authorities, what you just ended with was the issue of legislation and I want to make sure that I touch on that. As we have said all along we are willing and look forward to working with the Congress on any legislation that would work on those three things we talked about -- affordability, access and quality and preserves the economy as supports working middle class. That's how we look at legislation. We want to do that now and we want to do that (inaudible).

LANCE: And I was part of a group that had an alternative piece of legislation that didn't see the light of day put forth by the Tuesday lunch group of whom I'm a member of that group. It was different from the Affordable Care Act but it was an alternative piece of legislation and, of course, it didn't see the light of day in any way, shape or form in 2009 and 2010.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

PITTS: The Chair thanks the Gentleman.

I now recognize the Gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. Kennedy five minutes for questions.

KENNEDY: Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, thank you very much for being here. You touched on a moment ago that legislation that you said you were eager to work with Democrats and Republicans, have you seen any such legislation?

BURWELL: With regard to legislation that would promote and move forward on those three things, the issues of the -- making sure we're expanding that insured population, I have not seen things that would work towards that.

KENNEDY: Madam Secretary, are you aware of how many bills were passed and signed -- bills that were passed by the 113th Congress?

BURWELL: I don't know the exact number.

KENNEDY: Give or take a few, 931, ballpark sounds about right.

UNKNOWN: That was one and a half (inaudible).

KENNEDY: Any idea on how many of those bills were signed into law, 296 sounds about right. Any idea how many times in my first term in Congress we repealed all or part of the Affordable Care Act, 55 sounds about right. Any idea how many times those were signed into law?

BURWELL: None.

KENNEDY: Any times -- are you aware of how many times we voted on some sort of replacement bill to the Affordable Care Act that we voted to repeal 55 times to provide Americans with quality, affordable access and financial assistance to access the health care that they deserve? None.

BURWELL: I think the number is none.

KENNEDY: OK. I would agree with you. So, I think given all of the discussions we've had over the course of the past several hours about contingencies, about other options and the time that I have been in Congress over 55 times in my first term including another time in my second term to repeal all or part of the Affordable Care Act and under the time that I've been here on a Republican leadership not a single bill have seen the House floor to vote on an alternative to provide quality, affordable accessible health care to millions of Americans, I would respectfully ask as my colleagues have for the administration to work with Democrats and republicans to work on any such legislation should they decide to bring that to the light of day.

BURWELL: And in our budget I would just like to mention we actually do have a proposal to improve the small business provisions of the Affordable Care Act to try and both simplify and make the tax credits better for small businesses. That's feedback we've received about that and that is something that is included in our budget.

KENNEDY: Now, turning to a couple of I think hopefully more substantive questions that I could get it with you, Madam Secretary. I was pleased to see that the Democratic (inaudible) Authorization bill that the president's budget was -- included in the president's budget extended the Medicaid primary care payment increase.

That rate of increase was -- that it was initially included in the ACA has been absolutely critical and for the last two years it's boosted payments to doctors who treat the most vulnerable populations making access an attainable goal no just an aspirational target.

According to our recent report from the Urban Institute, however, the expiration of that payment (inaudible) at the end of last year will result in Medicaid provider payments that are going to be cut on average of 43 percent and over 50 percent in some states. The impact on wait times could be drastic and immediate.

I was hoping, Madam Secretary, you might be able to comment on the importance of the parity between Medicare and Medicaid payment to our primary care providers and when they have to choose between seeing some of our most vulnerable populations like seniors, pregnant women and children, why would there possibly be a reimbursement discrepancy.

BURWELL: So, I think as your indicating why we have proposed the continuation of these payments is because we believe that it is making a difference and it's making a difference to the access and coverage that people are getting in the system.

And so, we proposed it as a continuation and we hope that that's something that the Congress will consider and support.

KENNEDY: Thank you. The second topic that I want to touch on today actually my colleague Mr. Murphy touched on it quite extensively in his comments but it's about substance abuse and mental health.

Back in Massachusetts, Madam Secretary, I see communities on the front lines of a growing and extraordinarily devastating opiate abuse crisis and we're looking to the federal government for some support as prescription drug abuse and a number of heroin overdoses continue to mount.

Madam Secretary, as a prosecutor before I ran for office, I saw the impacts of this on a daily basis not just in terms of addiction and people needing treatment but in terms of property crimes, personal

crimes for folks that are looking to try to find a way to get help but the treatment options just aren't there.

There are not enough doctors. There are not enough beds as Mr. Murphy indicated. There's not enough wrap-around services. There's not enough care. And I was hoping that you might be able to touch on the importance of actually creating these incentives through Medicaid largely which is our largest mental health provider to actually make sure that not just another grant program but to make sure the incentives are in place to allow that marketplace to provide that care.

BURWELL: So, the bad news as you indicated there were 259 million prescriptions for pain killers, opioids during 2012. That's more than more than one per adult in the nation. That's the bad news. The good news is that I believe that there is bipartisan support for us to do something and I believe that that's both in the executive and the legislative branch here in Washington D.C. as well as with the governors who I met with over the weekend on this issue.

I think with regard to payment it is an important place but there are three fundamental things that we believe we need to work with the Congress and work with the governors to do. One is in terms of the prescribing that's at the root of much of the problem. We've seen progress in states like Florida where they are watching the prescribing, the plans that states can put in place to oversee that is an important part but we have a part, too.

Second is the issue of things like naloxone and access to those which I think gets to some the payment issues. And the third is making sure there's medical treatment and I think that was the third part of what you're mentioning.

Those three elements, I think is base -- that's the basic agreed upon and whether it's Senator Portman and Senator Wyden or Mr. Rogers (ph) or it's across the board there's bipartisan support because states from Massachusetts to Kentucky and West Virginia, my own home state, are suffering in devastating ways.

And the one piece you didn't mention which -- you know, is the economic impact. And having come from a large employer like Walmart, what it means in terms of having an employee (inaudible) that can pass a drug test.

KENNEDY: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

BURWELL: Thank you.

PITTS: The Chair thanks the Gentleman.

The Chair will note that we've just been joined by a group of students from the Houston area. The Ranking Member has informed me. You want to say anything, Gene?

GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I would like to recognize a number of our chiropractic students from the Houston area and Dr. Mossad (ph) who actually retired as a president of our Chiropractor College in Pasadena Texas. And I invited him last night because I wanted to show how health care policy is made in the Health Care Subcommittee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

PITTS: Thank you. You're certainly welcome to be here.

The Chair now recognizes the Gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Griffith five minutes for questions.

GRIFFITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that. I appreciate the students being here. We may have some disagreements today but I will tell you that the Ranking Member, Mr. Green and I worked very hard on the health care bill that was -- that was signed into law last year. So, no matter what you may see today, we do get along more often than the press let you know.

All right, that being said, Madam Secretary, in response to a previous question, you indicated you weren't aware of any of the laws being signed in. I'm sitting here with the CRS report -- Congressional Research Service -- indicating that there are 12 bills that repealed parts of Obamacare that were in fact signed into law. You're not aware of that, is that correct in relationship to your previous answer.

BURWELL: With regard to the specifics to the answer those were repeal questions I thought.

GRIFFITH: Yes. And this was part...

BURWELL: Full repeal. Full repeal (inaudible).

GRIFFITH: ... he said -- he said full or part. So, you were mistaken, you weren't aware of these 12 that were partially repeals.

BURWELL: I was referring to the issue of full repeal (ph).

GRIFFITH: But you were aware of this?

BURWELL: With regard to that, I'd have to look and see (inaudible).

GRIFFITH: OK. And if I could have this entered into the record, I'd appreciate it.

PITTS: Without objection, so ordered.

GRIFFITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Also, are you familiar with my H.R. 130?

BURWELL: I apologize. I don't know what that bill is. Maybe if it's described I might (inaudible).

GRIFFITH: And are you -- it's a bill that deals with the black lung provisions of Obamacare.

BURWELL: I'm not familiar with that.

GRIFFITH: I appreciate that. Are you familiar with my H.R. 790 which is the Compassionate Freedom of Choice Act?

BURWELL: I'm not familiar with the specific names of the legislation (inaudible).

GRIFFITH: And I appreciate that. And are you familiar with H.R. 793 which deals with Preferred Pharmacy Networks in Part D?

BURWELL: Depending on (inaudible) that may.

GRIFFITH: Another one of mine. And so, the reason I asked those questions is very well orchestrated today from my political standpoint, the other side of the aisle has asked you repeatedly are you aware of Republican legislation that deals with the issues that we're dealing with related to Obamacare, I would submit to you that in some way or another the three points that you pointed out, each one of those bills did, you're not intimately familiar with them and I understand that. And I'm not blaming you because you've been put into that unenviable position that sometimes happens where there's a difference between negative evidence and a lack of evidence.

And what you presented today is a lack of evidence and I appreciate that. That doesn't mean that these bills don't exist just as I gave you the numbers on those three. It doesn't mean that there aren't bills that other members have that are out there that are Republican proposals to take care of the American citizen while we are in the process of repealing Obamacare. And so, you're just submitting that you are not aware of it. But there are in fact bills out there that may be doing that ad

also further discussions behind the scenes that may be doing that you're unaware of. Isn't that correct?

BURWELL: Would welcome the Veterans Bill -- there was a Veterans Bill that we all agreed on. The firefighters I haven't seen the legislation.

GRIFFITH: I'm just saying though that when you say -- when you say though in answer to many number of members on the other side of the aisle that you aren't aware that doesn't mean they don't exist. It just means you're not aware, am I correct? Yes.

All right. We'll move on. The president's fiscal year 2016 budget calls for $92 million for the Office of National Coordinator, ONC, for purposes including the transition to a governance approach for health information exchange.

In 2012, an HHS request for information noted that Congressional authorities granted to the ONC in the 2009 HITECH Act would support this governance mechanism. Madam Secretary, I hold in my hand the copy of a Congressional research report dated January 7, 2015 that suggests ONC does not have the authority to support the ONC governance structure outlined in the president's budget. Don't you agree that when agencies take action, they should be supported by Congressional authorization?

BURWELL: I'm not familiar with the report, would welcome seeing it. With regard to the Office of the National Coordinator, I think you know we just came out with the plan to continue moving us towards electronic medical records. We backed that up with specific things. We continue to work on something that cuts across many of the issues and whether (inaudible).

GRIFFITH: But you would agree with the principle that there ought to be Congressional authority for an agency to take action, would you not, yes or no?

BURWELL: I would agree that we need authority.

GRIFFITH: Yes, ma'am.

And. Mr. Chairman, if I can also have that Congressional research service report placed into the record (inaudible).

PITTS: Without objection, so ordered.

GRIFFITH: As a part of its governance push, ONC awarded a contract to RTI (ph) to develop its health IT safety center. RTI said at the time of the award that it would define the focus, functions, governance and value the national health IT safety content. I'm just concerned as I pointed out a minute ago that when you have these comments being made and we haven't seen it yet and the report that I just had entered into the record shows they haven't seen the final analysis of what they're going to do.

But when you have comments that they're planning to work on governance and they don't have that authority, I am concerned when the experts are telling me both legal and otherwise that this agency is going beyond its scope of authority, that this is a problem in this administration and that we should be careful that we have any agency moving forward without Congressional authority.

I'm going to ask you to work with me as we -- as we move forward on this. I'm going to follow up with some questions and some other things and ask that you work with me to make sure that the ONC does not overstep its authority granted to it in legislation by this Congress.

BURWELL: Would want to work with you to understand and understand what these concerns on governance are. This is new to me and so would like to understand further what the concern is.

GRIFFITH: Yes, ma'am. And I appreciate that and I yield back.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

PITTS: The Chair thanks the Gentleman.

I now recognize the Gentlelady from California, Ms. Capps five minutes for questions.

CAPPS: I thank my colleague for yielding any time and I do have a different topic to discuss with you, Secretary Burwell. But my colleague from Texas has asked for 10 seconds.

UNKNOWN: I'll do my 10 seconds. I want to thank the Congressman from Virginia. But I think the clarification is that up until Congressman Kennedy, all our statements were repeal the Affordable Care Act without an alternative. Now, there were bills that were passed and none of us at least up until Congressman Kennedy.

BURWELL: That's right.

UNKNOWN: But, you know, there's no repeal and replace. There's only repeal for (inaudible) 56 times. And thank you for my 10 seconds.

BURWELL: And that's why I responded to full repeal. It was...

CAPPS: Thank you. You know, I want to go back to the president's budget this year which I think on the whole strikes an important balance between controlling spending and promoting public health. And this public health topics are what I want to bring to your attention. I was pleased to see that there was continued support for nursing work force development. I believe and I know you do, too, a strong nursing work force improves the health of our communities as well as the quality of the health care system.

And we now have the significant challenge in our nation of caring for a growing patient population with limited resources. And I'm a nurse so I know that we can't reach our health care goals without a strong health care workforce made up of a range of health care professionals.

And these are the development programs such as Title VIII that are proven to be a solution that can help address this challenge. So, would you please discuss briefly because I have two more topics what this budget request does to make sure that we have a diverse health care workforce well equipped and large enough to meet our needs.

BURWELL: I will just be very brief...

CAPPS: Sure.

BURWELL: ... which is I think one of the core and anchor places that we do that is making sure that we are funding our national health service corps and the increases that we've asked for are very important part of that across, and it's especially important because we serve that group of people, 30 percent are diverse in that group.

CAPPS: Yes.

BURWELL: And in the nation as a whole, the number is 10 percent so we are over-indexing for that and that we think that's a very (inaudible).

CAPPS: Right (ph).

BURWELL: (inaudible) there are other things but I want (inaudible).

CAPPS: Right. And because this one that I'm going to mention is near and dear to my heart and that is the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, such bang for the buck that you get with this who have ever seen it and I -- as I have and part of one. It's such a proactive and

preventive service and there is an increasing commitment in this home visiting program in the budget for 2016. These are evidence based, as you know, bipartisan programs helping to ensure that all children across the board get an opportunity to be healthy and successful.

And they are so critical to improving health outcomes for both women and children and families. So my question is how increased funding for these programs is going to address disparity and improve the health. How can we make it better?

BURWELL: So with regard to the issue because I am a mother of a five and a seven-year-old I have lived the importance of that information very recently in terms of being able to give your children what they need. And so the program that you're describing why we think it's important to continue on the pace, it is an evidence-based program.

CAPPS: Yeah.

BURWELL: We have seen the results in terms of reading and other analytical skills up to 12 years old in terms of the benefits that's as far as it's been tested. And we see what that's happening when we give mothers and parents that opportunity to get the information they need in a home (ph). When you go to them, it is making the difference.

And so, we believe this is a very important part and part of a continuum that you see in the budget. That home visiting, next comes to that early childcare and making sure that we fund childcare so working Americans can be a part of that and then the issues of Head Start and improving Head Start both in terms of the length of day, the time of year and the quality that we require. So it is continuum in terms of making sure we're taking care of those children along the way for working families and pressing ourselves to improve quality.

CAPPS: And to build on that in the focus on children and family. This question was asked about graduate medical education, but I want to focus on children's hospital GME because children's hospitals programs are so critical for training pediatricians, pediatric specialists and pediatric researchers.

It's less than one percent of hospitals. They train 51 percent of all pediatric specialists and the Children's Hospital Graduate Medical Education Programs currently receive much less funding than other, you know, children don't lobby.

And we have to do this work on their behalf and would explain the proposed changes to funding for Children's Hospital Graduate Medical Education Programs and what steps are being taken to ensure that we are meeting the demand for pediatric care.

BURWELL: We want to meet that demand and we want to meet that demand for both primary care and the specialties where we don't necessarily have the number of practicing physicians that we need.

And so, the proposal that we have tries to respond to the criticisms that we received last year with our proposal and that there is a $100 million that is dedicated firmly to the children's programs.

In addition to that, they are able to compete. Right now, what we do is we cover the direct costs but we don't continue to cover the indirect cost.

CAPPS: Thank you very much.

PITTS: The Chair thanks the Gentlelady.

I now recognize the Gentleman from Texas Dr. Burgess for five minutes for questions.

BURGESS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Again, Madam Secretary, my apologies for being out of the hearing at another hearing. And I also apologize for not having the president's here with me this morning.

But the president did outline a number of savings in the Medicare space in the presidential budget. Is that correct? Do I understand that correctly?

BURWELL: Yes. That is correct.

BURGESS: And in general, as the head of HHS, are you supportive of those proposals by -- in the president's budget?

BURWELL: Yes.

BURGESS: Let me ask you a question then, you know that one of the things -- I mean, I have just been pounding my head against the wall for 12 years on the sustainable growth rate formula. We're very close last year.

We almost crack them up, but we didn't quite get there. But I thought we had a good proposal and we're very close to introducing the same policy language again in this Congress. Offsets (ph) have been -- have been difficult as everyone would expect.

So let me just ask you, those savings that the president identified -- those Medicare savings that the president identified in the presidential budget, do you think it would be a good idea to apply those savings for the permanent repeal of the sustainable growth rate formula?

BURWELL: With regard to how we pay for it in the president's budget, we pay for it -- it is within the baseline and we include it that way. With regard to the specific question of just using our approach to the Medicare, those savings are part of a broader context.

It is a budget and we put the budget together in its entirety. We view that those savings need to be paired with other elements of the budget.

BURGESS: But to the extent that those savers are identified, and those offsets are identified in the budget, it seems to me that is -- would perhaps be a reasonable place to begin the discussion of what are the offsets that are used to put in place for the permanent universal, complete, forever repeal of the sustainable growth rate formula.

BURWELL: First, I want to disagree with the content that we're talking about. In my opening remarks, I specifically said that we support the bipartisan bicameral concepts that were put forward. And so, on that we agree.

With regard to the question of offsets, why I started with how we do it, which is building it into the baseline is because that's the way we believe it should be done and that uses the balance of things that we use to pay for things in our entire budget.

So in terms of where we start and what we believe, we believe that it needs to be a range of things and not simply focused on those.

BURGESS: Yes, but at the same time, as you know, the difficulty with the sustainable growth rate formula is the budget baseline and the fact that it was built in years ago and it accumulates over time isn't ever corrected even though a number of patches (ph) have been passed by Congress, we basically paid for this damn thing at least 1.4 times over the past 12 years.

BURWELL: (inaudible) -- yes.

BURGESS: Again, I just want you to know that I like the fact that the president put forward cost savers in his budget. A fair warning to you that these are where I am going to go, the lack of

participation in people who are willing to come forward and talk seriously about offsets leads me to go to the president's budget as the only place I can go for democratic ideas for an offset.

And that is -- that is one of the critical missing piece in getting this SGR settled. Let me ...

BURWELL: I think your colleague, actually though mentioned -- your colleague Mr. Pallone actually mentioned his specific idea for this one. He spoke to this issue. It was (inaudible), but -- and you may disagree with that, but that was (inaudible) in terms of contributing to the debate.

BURGESS: And my door is always open to Mr. Pallone, I await his invitation. I'll be glad to come to his office. Let me ask you a question. I know -- I know you probably are tired of hearing the King versus Burwell, but I'll bring it up to you one more time, since I haven't been here, it's not exhausting to me yet.

And the whole concept around contingency plans and the American Academy of Actuaries is concerned because insurance companies are supposed to disclose the data upon which they're basing their rates in May, but there could be something that changes the equation in June, so to the extent that the insurance companies are having to deal with this unsettled future, I mean, they are going to have to deal with contingency plans are they not.

Why should the department not have a contingency plan as recommended by the American Academy of Actuaries?

BURWELL: So with regards to things that I have authority to plan for, I will plan for. In the budget -- the current budget you see in front of you, the unaccompanied children issue one that I know is a difficult issue and that there's controversy around. We have put in monies to plan up to 60,000, have asked for contingency funding case.

We don't believe it will, but in case the numbers were there are places that I can plan, we will. With regards to this issue, that's why the letter was simple, it actually gets to the core and the fundamental.

We do not believe we have administrative authority if the court makes a decision and as I went -- I always repeat, we don't believe the court will decide this way, but if the court makes a decision that says and rules for the plaintiffs and says that those subsidies are not available, the question of we don't believe we have an authority to undo the damage that would then occur which is subsidies go away, individuals can no longer pay. They go off of their insurance. They become uninsured. It drives premiums up in that marketplace. They become uninsured. There's indigent care, it goes up.

We don't believe that we have an authority if the court makes that decision at that level that we have an authority to do it and therefore that's why you're not hearing (inaudible) plaintiffs because we don't have an authority.

BURGESS: Well, I think you have to agree, it will change the structure of the risk pools for the insurance companies. And Mr. Chairman, for that reason I'd like to submit the letter from the American Academy of Actuaries for the record and I yield back.

PITTS: Without objection, so ordered.

BURWELL: I do think though that is why one does see those companies filing their briefs that they have filed in the case that articulate the point you're making.

PITTS: The Gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes the Gentleman from Maryland, Mr. Sarbanes for five minutes for questions.

SARBANES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Madam Secretary. First, thank you for stepping into public service as you've done your tenure at OMB and now at HHS is I think a real service to the country.

I wanted to talk about this concept of full repeal which has been a drumbeat for years it seems now from the other side of the aisle to understand the implications of a full repeal. And so I wanted to go through some of the things that were part of the ACA and ask. And it may not be that every one of them is jeopardized for a full repeal. But I think, certainly, some of them are.

So the ACA included a measure that would allow young people to stay on their parents' health care up to age 26. And I think upwards of 3 million younger adults have benefited from that. If there was a full repeal at the ACA, would that benefit and provision be in jeopardy

BURWELL: It was part of the original act, so yes.

SARBANES: Then there was an effort to begin closing the doughnut hole on prescription drugs under the Part D program, which has bedeviled many of our seniors who kind of fall into that doughnut hole often at a critical stage in terms of being -- needing to access prescription drugs. And the ACA reform included an effort that's began, is under way to close that doughnut hole, would that be in jeopardy if there was a full repeal?

BURWELL: It would in the $15 billion in savings that their seniors have received to date would stop.

SARBANES: Right. Then there was terrific provisions in terms of reimbursement that benefits in reimbursement, so on the benefit side, for Medicare beneficiaries, you had more preventive care being covered fully, eliminating copayments for certain kinds of preventive care, screening for annual wellness visits, et cetera. That was part of the ACA. A full repeal, I imagine, would jeopardize that reform as well.

BURWELL: Yes. And we actually just were able to have the numbers. And we have seen an increase in the number of seniors that are using that preventative care and the percentage of seniors that are using at least one preventative service continues to go up.

SARBANES: Excellent. We put in some enhanced payment in reimbursement for primary care physicians recognizing that we need to make sure we're incentivizing that part of the profession in terms of getting into the pipeline. And also, having the opportunity to spend more time with their patients and having there be some economic reward for that, which the patients themselves also want, I presume that that would -- that would be imperiled with a full repeal as well.

BURWELL: A full repeal would imperil.

SARBANES: What about the provisions that have eliminated discrimination based on preexisting conditions, of course, we started right out of the gate eliminating that discrimination in the case of children, now that's been expanded more broadly. But I imagine that also would be undermined by a full repeal.

BURWELL: It would and having had the chance to meet a young woman who had cancer when she was seven -- when she was 12-years-old, she first had colon cancer and then had thyroid cancer later. And now is in her 20s and was engaged, but not continuing her graduate education or getting married because her focus was paying for her health care. And now the opportunity to have affordable care, because she had a preexisting condition, obviously, is now allowing her to go on with her life.

The issues of health security are very important, but for many individuals, the financial security is as well.

SARBANES: Thank you for those comments. The medical loss ratio requirement that now requires insurance plans to direct more of the insurance premium dollar to care as opposed to overhead cost and so forth, that was part of the ACA, adhering to that particular standard, that would be eliminated. I (inaudible) expecting a full repeal.

BURWELL: A full repeal.

SARBANES: Subsidies and tax credits for small businesses who want to do the right thing and provide health care coverage for their employees was part of the ACA, so small businesses would be impacted by a full repeal in terms of their ability to offer that kind of benefit to their workers. Isn't that correct?

BURWELL: It would take away the tax credits if there were a full repeal.

SARBANES: So even before we get to a discussion of the pros and cons of the health exchanges, which have now offered a coverage to millions of Americans. There are so many other reasons in addition to that that we wouldn't want to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

Thank you very much for being here. I appreciate your testimony.

BURWELL: (inaudible).

PITTS: The Chair thanks the Gentleman. I recognize the Gentleman from Florida, Mr. Bilirakis for his questions.

BILIRAKIS: (inaudible) so much for your testimony. Thanks for your appearance. Welcome. I want to talk about Medicare Advantage. According to 2012 data, there were about 145,000 seniors in my district, about 40 percent of them are on Medicare Advantage, a little higher than the national average.

They love their plans and they want to keep their plans. They love their benefits and their choices. Unfortunately, this administration may not love Medicare Advantage as much as my seniors.

This -- the actuarial firm of Oliver Wyman did an analysis of the proposed 2016 Medicare Advantage rate notice, reading the report I'm troubled to learn that it estimates the combined impacts of cuts from 2014 to 2016 will cost seniors on an average of $60 to a $160 a month or as much as $1,920 a year.

Many of the seniors in my district live on a modest income, fixed income. Why is the administration forcing many seniors to pay more than $100 a month to keep the plan they like?

BURWELL: So with regard to the issue of Medicare Advantage, first I want to say, we think the program is a good program. During the period when changes have been enacted, we've seen the program expand by, I think well over 40 percent. We've seen the number of Medicare Advantage plans that have the top two ratings go from 17 percent to 67 percent and we have seen that premiums have not been increasing in terms of the changes that we've done to date.

Why are proposing these changes is they have been recommended by MedPAC and others with regard to overcoding that's occurring and as part of our efforts to make sure we're using the taxpayer dollar wisely, we want to promote the program. We want to keep the program healthy, but we also believe that there are opportunities for those who may be not using the system as well as they might. And that's what our changes are about and that's what we're trying to do, preserve and build the system, but make sure we do it in a fiscally responsible way.

BILIKARIS: Thank you, Madam Secretary. Many seniors who like the Medicare Advantage program they have are going to lose it in the following years. In fact, a recent (inaudible) report details a nearly fourfold increase in the number of U.S. counties that no longer have Medicare Advantages as an option growing from 55 counties in 2012 to 211 counties in 2015.

Isn't it concerning to you that seniors are losing the ability to choose a Medicare plan that provides high quality in coordinated care? This is a very successful program and again this is extremely important to my constituents.

BURWELL: I agree that it is a very important program and we want to make sure that it continues. When I see the studies and the underpinning of that, the most recent numbers that I have seen are

that 99 percent of beneficiaries have access. And so, those numbers may not align with that most recent study. I just want to understand what the difference in that is.

BILIKARIS: Thank you, Madam Secretary. One more question. The impact of seniors of Medicare Advantage according to Oliver Wyman could result in seniors losing access to their current coverage or facing higher premiums, reduced benefits and changing, again, changes to the network as a result of the cuts, the proposed cuts.

When I talk with seniors in my district about Medicare Advantage, again, they believe Medicare Advantage, the model offers high quality coordinated care. Yet, further cuts will disrupt the benefits upon which millions of seniors rely.

Your agency likes to tout the so-called the affordable premiums and better consumer choices under the Affordable Care Act, when it comes to Medicare Advantage wise administration pursuing policies that would increase premiums and reduce choices for seniors and again, it's very concerning.

BURWELL: I think the responses with regard to the issue that what we have seen with the changes we've done to date have not had the premium pressure that's described. We want to continue to watch and monitor. And also that we have seen more people enter in and the quality improve. And so, that's what we've seen to date. We want to continue to work and monitor. We want the program to succeed. We want to support it and we want to try and do it in the way that's the most fiscally responsible.

BILIKARIS: Well, thank you, Madam Secretary. I appreciate it.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

PITTS: (inaudible) Gentleman. I recognize the Gentleman from California, Mr. Cardenas for five minutes for questions.

CARDENAS: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate the opportunity to have this public dialogue for the benefit, not only of the members but for the public as well. Preserving access to prescription drugs that work for every senior is important. I think everybody on this dais and I think every person who cares about a senior in this country which probably makes everybody. So my question has to do with what proposals in the president's budget would increase access for seniors?

BURWELL: With regards to the specific access for seniors, across the board on prescription drugs, I think in terms of the programs, whether that's the way we use some of the programs we've just been discussing, but I also think one of the most important things that has happened is that seniors have access to preventative services that they historically may not have.

And just announced on Tuesday that what we are seeing is because the seniors have that access to those preventative services, they're increasing that -- the use of that. I think throughout our budget, one of the things we're attempting to do is work very hard to do a system -- delivery system reform which means getting better quality, at a better price for the nation.

And I recently announced about three weeks ago that in the Medicare space, we're going to try and move to 30 percent of all Medicare payments will be in new payment models, payment models that are about improving net quality and reducing net cost. And so those are some of the areas that I think the budget focuses on this.

CARDENAS: Now, that effort, is it likely to create an environment, individual by individual that's likely to increase their quality of extended life versus, because when we're talking about access to preventative care that means that if you catch something at its early stages, we all know with today's modern medicine and opportunities, you can actually thwart it or actually overcome it versus finding something at latent stages, it might even take your life. Correct?

BURWELL: And across the department there are number of investments to get to that. And whether that's the NIH investments in research or in the Center for Innovation in Medicare and Medicaid, one of the things where we have out, a proposal that we're getting response to have to do with hospice and curative care and how to combine those two in a way that will maximize for the quality of the patient. And so, it's throughout the budget, these issues of cost and quality are things that we focus on.

CARDENAS: Thank you. On that note, I'd also like to add, for the record, if you would allow me unanimous consent, Mr. Chairman, to submit the -- a letter for the record from my office that lays out the issues that we're discussing at the moment.

PITTS: Without objection, so ordered.

BURWELL: Thank you.

CARDENAS: I keep hearing a lot from some of my colleagues about their constituents losing choices. But then again, one of the things that -- it's my understanding, please clarify that when people are talking about losing choices, they may be describing policies that were, in fact, more expensive on the front end and perhaps didn't have minimum benefits standards to the person paying. Is that many cases what people are describing when people are losing choices?

BURWELL: It can be, I would want to understand the specific (inaudible) within the marketplace ...

CARDENAS: And that's why I say the word, "maybe, maybe," yes.

BURWELL: Within the marketplace there are 25 percent more issuers, which mean more choice. The essential health benefits do important things, I think as you're reflecting. And they get to some of the issues that, Mr. Murphy and Ms. Matsui on mental health and having those benefits be clear and incorporated is extremely important. So without understanding the specific case, I think it's a little hard to know.

CARDENAS: But there are, in fact, in some areas where certain kinds of policies are not allowed, but that was -- that is based on a new minimum standard, correct?

BURWELL: That is correct.

CARDENAS: And one of the things that I've discussed with some of my constituents and my staff and some of the providers and experts that we pulled together, we registered at least over 1,000 families.

And I personally tried to speak to as many of those individuals as possible. And with that is many of them were even scared to be there. They were thinking about this big Obamacare dragon that was going to obliterate either their finances or their health care, but what almost a person, every person that got up from once, they sat down and figured out what was available to them or what have you, had a big smile on their face.

And they were very pleased and very relieved and glad they came. And in one instance, I was talking to a Gentleman who was paying $60 a month. He was making $9 an hour, single-income family. He had a wife and a daughter. And I met all three of them.

And when he was done, he had a big smile in his face. He almost got up and left when he met me. But when he was done, he actually realized that he now was able to provide for his family, without having to spend $60 a month and now his entire family has coverage. So I think that's a perfect example of what this is, what's good in the Affordable Care Act.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back my time.

PITTS: Thanks, Gentleman. I recognize the Gentleman from Indiana, Dr. Bucshon for five minutes for questions.

BUCSHON: Thank you, Secretary Burwell and thanks for coming. And first of all, I want to thank you for working with Governor Mike Pence of Indiana of helping the Indiana Plan 2.0, which will help to cover 350,000 low-income Hoosiers in a state based program that I think has been shown historically to not only save money, but it is very popular with the enrollees, so thank you very much for that -- for that work.

Before I came to Congress, I was a cardio-thoracic surgeon and I treated most of my patients for many weeks after their surgery. And as you probably know that falls on under a global payment, a 90-day global surgical payment by CMS. Now, CMS wants to repeal that rule and eliminate global payments for surgical services, why?

BURWELL: With regard to our understanding of how the global payments are used, the reason that we want to do this is make sure that while we are promoting quality care that we do it in the way that is most cost-effective for the tax payer. Most of the changes that we do in the Medicare space are focused on those two things and trying to balance those two things.

BUCSHON: OK. And has HHS or CMS looked into the administrative cost the new system we'll have on doctors and CMS? The reason I ask is in my practice, I'll give you some examples of how this actually won't work or won't work if you do it. We would bill a global payment for everything including follow up visits and now doctors will be billing for the surgery, every hospital round that they make, every follow up appointment, all separately, let me finish, and not only would the medical practice have to pay employees to submit all of these what I have considered excessive claims, but then, CMS will have to process each claim and how can that not cause CMS more money not less, that's my first question.

BURWELL: With regard to the global payment issue and one of the things Dr. Patrick Conway, we try and have physicians who are practicing at the table as we have these conversations. I want to understand the point that you're making in how we believe - I want to look into this one in terms of the specific answer to your question.

BUCSHON: It will be a dramatic increase. Let me tell you why, if I did an open heart surgery on a patient I would see them in the ICU anywhere from three to five days every day and then, probably two to three follow up appointments. That's all under global. And so now that those numbers will be submitted as individual bills, from a surgeon's perspective I see this is - and I think seniors should be paying attention to these comments. This is going to be a dramatic pay cut for surgeons across this country. And that's -- in my view, that's where any potential savings will be coming from.

So as you look at this you better - you should really - I would encourage you to pay attention to that because what will happen is you're going to have to re-evaluate, there's going to be a re- evaluation of every code, re-evaluation of every follow up appointment, you're going to have to discern whether there's duplicative billing. For example, if I see a patient post-op in the ICU and a critical care physician is also seeing my patient that day, who gets paid, who doesn't get paid, there will be increased denials. My point is this global payments were put in place to save money administratively and also simplify and I think improve quality of healthcare.

And I think going backwards away from that is regressive - regressing backwards. Yes, it will save money, this will save money by dramatically cutting provider reimbursement, and if that's the intent that's unfortunate because what will also result is access issues for seniors for healthcare services and I would argue less quality healthcare. And so, you know, most of these bundles are re- examined every few years by (inaudible) and so, you know, the argument that overbilling is occurring. If that were to be true, then, you know, these bundles are looked at every couple of years and re-evaluated. So, on that subject I would encourage you to take a really hard look at global payments. They save money. They don't cost money. The savings will be at the - on the backs of seniors' access to healthcare and quality in my opinion.

The other thing is the president's budget would seek to save 20.9 billion in savings over the next ten years by strengthening the IPAD (ph) board, a board of unelected members selected by the president to cut - in my view, to cut Medicare payments to providers. I understand the president has not yet nominated, anyone who sits on the IPAD (ph) board, so it would not - you could not recommend a Medicare cuts this year. So, in what year under the president's budget will IPAD (ph) begin to make recommendations on Medicare cost?

BURWELL: In the current president's budget, IPAD (ph) would not kick in until 2019.

BUCSHON: 2019.

BURWELL: That's correct.

BUCSHON: OK. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

PITTS: The chair thanks the Gentleman. Now, I recognize the Gentleman from New York, Mr. Collins for five minutes for questions.

COLLINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, secretary, for being here today. I'm from western New York which is a very rural community. We have one of the highest enrollment of Medicare Advantage.

I know prior to the Affordable Care Act I would say that without a doubt one of the bright spots in the delivery of healthcare in the United States was Medicare Advantage, dealt with the doughnut hole. It was a lot of comfort for the seniors to be able to go in much likely do at HMOs and great program and yet as was brought out earlier I want to get into this.

It seems as though the president and the administration in HSS views Medicare Advantage with some level of distain in that it's the piece that keeps getting cut. And as I look through some of the data and I'm kind of a data driven guy, the interesting thing I found about Medicare Advantage, there's over seven million enrollees who represents almost 30 percent of the Medicare population would indicate get works.

Number two, when you look at who uses it, lower income beneficiaries have a higher enrollment in Medicare Advantage than do wealthier individuals which means it's serving best some of the lower income populations. We've also seen that when I look at the rural plans, again, in rural America, which I represent, a higher percentage of folks from rural America area using it.

So, I'm just asking the question as - and the interesting thing too that that information we got today was from (inaudible), they said the current 0.9 percent, the 0.9 percent cut that's coming now in the subsidy to insurance companies for Medicare Advantage is going to add another $20 a month to beneficiaries either in higher premiums or reduced benefits. Could you speak to just the opinion of older Americans on Medicare that they are being used as the funding source for the extension of Medicaid and all of those increased cost in the back of seniors who depended on this great program through all these years? A frustration level exists within that population.

BURWELL: I appreciate that and as I responded to your colleague with regard to the issues of Medicare Advantage I would say we support the program, I believe the program is a good program, but I also believe that our responsibility where we think there are things that are happening whether that's upcoding or other things that we try and take care of that. The changes that we've done, we've tried to transition those changes. We try to do those changes slowly so that we watch and monitor. We've seen an increase in the number of people in Medicare Advantage. We have seen premiums hold steady, we've seen an increase in quality.

So the negative impacts that were articulated at the beginning of those proposals, we have not seen. We want to continue to monitor and make sure that we don't see some of the negative impacts that you are talking about. We value the program. We think the changes. They've been recommended by MedPac (ph) and others. We understand the concerns, but trying in a world, and with regard to the

other issues that you mentioned I would just say across the board and whether it's the issue that your colleague just mentioned with regard to providers or the $780 million we do in discretionary cuts, we try to spread these things across the entire parts of our budget.

COLLINS: But are you aware that there are now over 200 counties in the United States that don't have a Medicare Advantage plan at all to offer their seniors as a direct result of the cuts you've made? So when you say it hasn't had this impact, there are seniors in 200, over 200 counties in the United States that can't even buy the coverage.

BURWELL: So 99 percent of the nation has coverage in terms of the beneficiary's accessibility.

COLLINS: But yet the number who don't has increased from 55 counties before the ACA to over 200 today. So, there's a direct impact, I mean, the numbers, the data is the data, you can't make it go away.

BURWELL: With regard to those numbers as I've said I have the number of the current coverage and would want to understand the change...

COLLINS: Yes, what I'm trying to point out is it has had - the reason you're looking for this funding is to pay for the expansion of Medicaid. I mean, whether it's the health insurance tax or the individual mandate or whatever, the big cost driver has been this huge expansion of Medicaid would be my observation.

BURWELL: What I would observe is some of the comments that have been stated about the question of overall entitlements and the growth, we have a bulge, a population we have a large group of people who are elderly in Medicare. The Medicare cost, even though we've controlled per capita cost for Medicare over the period of what we're seeing, because more people of from the baby boom are retiring and older, that's an issue that we as a nation are going to have to look at and deal with. Medicare costs are going to continue to increase because of volume even if we can control per capita cost.

And so with regard to the questions of what will be costing the nation money over periods of time, the issue of Medicare is one on a - because we're going to have the baby boom and the echo come through, we're going to continue to have to make good on the commitments we've made and that will cost us because even if you control it per capita, volume is greater.

COLLINS: Thank you for the answer. My time has expired. I yield back.

PITTS: The chair recognizes the Gentleman from New Mexico, Mr. **Lujan** for five minutes for questions.

LUJAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and I would yield to our Ranking Member, Mr. Green for a quick response as well.

GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would respond to my colleague from New York. I don't - I've not had any of my seniors question the expansion of Medicaid based on what's happening with Medicare. The Affordable Care Act was totally paid for and, in fact, Medicare was improved under the Affordable Care Act. And Madam Secretary, if you just - this is the first I've heard that seniors are complaining that the Medicaid expansion is being paid out of Medicare. That's just - that's just not, in fact, that I hear about. Did you have any information on that?

BURWELL: That is the first that I've heard that anyone felt that that was an issue with regard to the federal budget, because I assume that's what they're referring to.

GREEN: Yes. The Gentleman would yield...

LUJAN: I'm reclaiming my time. Thank you, Madam Secretary for your testimony today. I want to reiterate what many of my colleagues have said, that we must repeal the SGR but not on the backs of seniors and that a strong CHIP extension must be included with the SGR in March as well.

Also that the Affordable Care Act is working despite in attempt of over 50 Republican repeal attempts. The ACA has had a positive impact on New Mexico, in my home state, in my home district, 25,000 people now have quality affordable health coverage because of the Affordable Care Act, it didn't before. And overall, the numbers of uninsured has declined by 17 percent.

With the law now fully in effect the Americans can never be discriminated against because of pre-existing conditions, women can never be charged more per coverage because of their gender and Americans will never be sold health insurance policies that disappear when they need coverage the most, when they hit those lifetime caps and suddenly coverage just goes away.

I think that it's time that we come together and work to strengthen the law and stop playing political games that will strip millions of Americans of their health coverage that they depend on. As my father would say, enough is enough. Madam Secretary, in your opinion has the Affordable Care Act had a positive impact on places around the country including my home state of New Mexico?

BURWELL: Yes. And I think it has in three areas, affordability, access, and quality. With regard to the issues of quality, you touched upon a number of the areas where I believe there's been an improvement in quality. And those are the fact that people can have their children covered up to 26, the quality that you don't, if you have a pre-existing condition, you can't be kept out or thrown off of your healthcare. The fact if you take your child in for their wellness visit, there isn't co-insurance so you don't have to pay in terms of that preventative care. So, increases in quality, we've also seen increases in quality through partnerships we're doing with physicians and we've seen a 17 percent reduction in harms.

Those are things like infections and falls and hospitals. That's also about saving lives but it's also about money. With regard to the issue of affordability and the progress that we've made on affordability, while we can all still continue to make more, we have in that space and what we've seen is that in the years 2011, '12, '13, we have seen a record in terms of per capita health care cost growth. It's one of the lowest that we've seen on record and we've seen that. That's in the broader marketplace. With regard to the individual market what we've seen is that people, the vast majority, over eight in ten folks in the marketplace can find coverage using a subsidy that is a $100 or less than a month. That's affordability in that marketplace.

With regard to affordability in the taxpayer, CBO estimates pre the Affordable Care Act would have estimated that spending in Medicare would have been $116 billion greater, affordability for the taxpayer.

Lastly, access, the question of access and the fact that 11.4 million people have come through the marketplace this time, but let's even use last year's number where we saw a 10 million person drop in the number of uninsured. So, against the three fundamental measures, that's how I would think about it.

LUJAN: I appreciate, Madam Secretary, thanks for your response there and I do want to raise an issue that's great concern to my constituents and to myself back in New Mexico. It's now been over 18 since the state of New Mexico claimed credible allegations of fraud or their allegations of fraud against 15 behavioral health providers resulting in the eventual closure or replacement by five Arizona behavioral health providers.

This transition and turmoil has raised significant concerns across access to care, especially in light of recent reports that the new providers are financial unstable. In fact, one provider is already pulling out of New Mexico. The recent elected New Mexico Attorney General has also released the audit that led to the suspension and it shows a lack of underlying basis for many of the allegations of fraud.

My staff has had several meetings with CMS and I'm very concerned that we are making progress. When payment suspensions are put into place what can CMS do to ensure states are acting in good

faith and what is the CMS doing to stop the reoccurrence of this happening both in New Mexico and other states? And can I have your commitment that we can work together on this particular issue to meet with the delegation?

BURWELL: We do want to work with you on this issue. You know it is one of concern in terms of making sure that people have access to those benefits.

LUJAN: I appreciate that. Thank you very much. I yield back the balance of my time.

PITTS: The chair thanks the Gentleman. I recognize the Gentlelady from North Carolina, Ms. Ellmers for five minutes for questions.

ELLMERS: Thank you. And thank you, Madam Secretary, for being with us today. I'm sorry, do you get some water there? We should get you some water. I do want to address before - because I have three different very different questions to ask you about, but I do want to address the issue of Medicare and our seniors who are concerned. It is my recollection and, you know, there again I'm just going back to history that over $700 billion was taken out of Medicare in order to pay for Obamacare, about 300 billion of that was Medicare Advantage. So the question of whether or not our seniors are concerned about that, I would say yes, they are concerned about that and they want to make sure that they will be able to continue to get the good care that they deserve.

I do want to start off by talking about Medicare reimbursement in relation to the 2 percent sequester cuts that were put in place a number of years ago dramatically affecting our chemotherapy drugs and our other part B drugs. As you know this has this has - this has affected our industry, back in January 14th of 2013 the Office of Management and Budget put out a letter basically asking federal agencies to "use any available flexibility to reduce operational risks and minimize impacts of the agency's core mission and service of the American people" and it goes on.

Some of the adverse things that have happened as a result of the 2 percent cut, over 16 months after CMS started applying the 2 percent cut, we basically ended up with 25 community oncology clinics closing. One of which, a very large clinic in my own district and 75 others merged with hospitals. CMS's own numbers showed that it cost $6,500 more per year per patient on oncology services if they become part of the hospital system versus the clinic setting or outpatient setting and about $650 more out of pocket. How can, you know, why hasn't CMS taken the recommendation of OMB and addressed that situation?

BURWELL: Congresswoman, we agree with you about sequester and in this budget we fully get rid of sequester both on the mandatory side and on the discretionary side. We believe there are other choices that are better choices and so I agree with you, this is not an approach, when you use an approach like this you'd end up doing things like the types of things you're talking about. And so what we want to do is fully replace it and that's what our budget does. We are willing to make other choices in terms of how we get those savings.

ELLMERS: Thank you. And I'll just go on in this - there again, a very important question having to do essentially with our tobacco products. And I - my question for you is do you agree with Mitch Zeller, the director of FDA Center for Tobacco Products that if smokers and I'm going to quote him, "who are otherwise unable or unwilling to quit were to completely switch to smokeless tobacco product it will be good for the public health." Do you agree with the statement?

BURWELL: I would have to understand the context in which he made that statement. With regard to the question, I think, you know, we want to promote the public health, we want to make sure we're doing the right research to understand that and put the right guidelines and regulations to do it.

ELLMERS: Well, thank you for that and I do want to add there that there are no government websites that help promote or, you know, address this issue including CDC, FDA, NIH. It would be helpful again for the public to understand that there are the non-tobacco products available and that this is an approach that we need to make. And I would welcome the ability to continue to work with you and in your office on any way that we can, you know, better help to get that information out and address the need from a scientific basis and using the scientific research that's out there.

I do want to switch gears a little bit to our vaccines and to BARDA. Right now BARDA maintains a stock pile of roughly $1.7 billion worth of pandemic influenza vaccine. This year's budget I believe was about $20 million in order to take care of that stockpile and maintain it. Does the 2016 budget increase that amount and into the future how does BARDA plan on dealing with those issues, especially when we know that we are in our situation where this is - its a very timely issue.

BURWELL: Across the board our budget has worked to do a couple of things with regard to the preparedness, making sure that that vaccine stockpile and that the issues that BARDA handles which are making sure that we have what we have on hand and stock pile and that we have the ability to work with manufacturers to bring new products online where that's appropriate for different types of issues that we as a nation may face, either manmade or otherwise.

But we also have paired that with things in our budget which are about the preparedness in our communities and we've seen that front and center certainly in our own time period. We are implementing the dollars we appreciate from Congress as part of in terms of Ebola that also broader preparedness where we have been given that authority by the Congress.

ELLMERS: Thank you, Secretary Burwell, for being here today. I truly appreciate your input. Thank you.

PITTS: The chair thanks the Gentlelady. That concludes the questions of the members of who are present. I'm sure we'll have lots of follow up and written questions from some of the members. So, we'll get those to you promptly, we ask that you please respond to the questions promptly. I remind the members that they have 10 business days to submit questions for the record and that means they should submit their questions by the close of business on Thursday, March the 12.

Thank you very much, Madam Secretary, for your attendance today and your answers. And without objections the subcommittee is adjourned.

END

LOAD-DATE: March 2, 2015

187 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

February 26, 2015 Thursday

LUJAN ON DHS FUNDING: 'TIME FOR CONGRESSIONAL REPUBLICANS TO STOP PUTTING THEIR POLITICAL SECURITY AHEAD OF NATIONAL SECURITY'

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 456 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor this morning on importance of passing a clean funding bill to prevent the Department of Homeland Security from shutting down. Below are his remarks.

"Mr. Speaker, we are only days away from a shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security. When Republicans took control of the House and Senate they pledged to avoid more government shutdowns. Instead, we've sadly learned that Speaker Boehner and Leader Mitch McConnell went nearly two weeks - two weeks - without talking and their failure to govern has us once again on the brink of a shutdown.

"I have been shocked and disappointed to hear some of my Republican colleagues say that a shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security would not be a serious issue and try to minimize its impact on people, minimize its impact on workers, and even try to minimize its impact on America.

"In my home state of New Mexico, a border state where we have many men and women who proudly serve our country as employees of the Border Patrol, the TSA, and other agencies, getting furloughed or working without a paycheck is a serious issue. If Republicans continue down this path paychecks will stop but rent and mortgages and utility bills for these workers will not.

"Time and again House Republicans have failed to govern, moving only from one crisis to the next. Sadly, the failure to fund DHS is the latest manufactured crisis that will have a real impact on working families in New Mexico and across America, while needlessly putting our national security at risk.

"It's time for Congressional Republicans to stop putting their political security ahead of national security and pass a clean bill. It's time for House Republicans to stop catering to the extreme anti-immigration wing of their party that is willing to sacrifice our nation's security in order to attack DREAMers who are going to college and serving our great nation.

"Mr. Speaker, the eyes of the American people are watching this Republican-led Congress, and so far all they have seen is gridlock and dysfunction.

"Mr. Speaker, the United States Senate is moving forward to fund the Department of Homeland Security. House Democrats are ready to support a clean bill. The only ones standing in the way of preventing a Department of Homeland Security shutdown are House Republicans. For our country's sake let us hope that changes.

"Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the House bring up H.R. 861, the clean Department of Homeland Security funding bill that will keep the Department open so it can carry out its mission of keeping the American people safe."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: February 27, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

February 26, 2015 Thursday 8:34 PM EST

Lujan on DHS Funding: 'Time for Congressional Republicans to Stop Putting Their Political Security Ahead of National Security'

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 464 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor this morning on importance of passing a clean funding bill to prevent the Department of Homeland Security from shutting down. Below are his remarks.

"Mr. Speaker, we are only days away from a shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security. When Republicans took control of the House and Senate they pledged to avoid more government shutdowns. Instead, we've sadly learned that Speaker Boehner and Leader Mitch McConnell went nearly two weeks - two weeks - without talking and their failure to govern has us once again on the brink of a shutdown.

"I have been shocked and disappointed to hear some of my Republican colleagues say that a shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security would not be a serious issue and try to minimize its impact on people, minimize its impact on workers, and even try to minimize its impact on America.

"In my home state of New Mexico, a border state where we have many men and women who proudly serve our country as employees of the Border Patrol, the TSA, and other agencies, getting furloughed or working without a paycheck is a serious issue. If Republicans continue down this path paychecks will stop but rent and mortgages and utility bills for these workers will not.

"Time and again House Republicans have failed to govern, moving only from one crisis to the next. Sadly, the failure to fund DHS is the latest manufactured crisis that will have a real impact on working families in New Mexico and across America, while needlessly putting our national security at risk.

"It's time for Congressional Republicans to stop putting their political security ahead of national security and pass a clean bill. It's time for House Republicans to stop catering to the extreme anti-immigration wing of their party that is willing to sacrifice our nation's security in order to attack DREAMers who are going to college and serving our great nation.

"Mr. Speaker, the eyes of the American people are watching this Republican-led Congress, and so far all they have seen is gridlock and dysfunction.

"Mr. Speaker, the United States Senate is moving forward to fund the Department of Homeland Security. House Democrats are ready to support a clean bill. The only ones standing in the way of preventing a Department of Homeland Security shutdown are House Republicans. For our country's sake let us hope that changes.

"Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the House bring up H.R. 861, the clean Department of Homeland Security funding bill that will keep the Department open so it can carry out its mission of keeping the American people safe."

Copyright Targeted News Services

30VitinMar 150227-5043139 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: February 26, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

February 26, 2015 Thursday

Lujan on DHS Funding: 'Time for Congressional Republicans to Stop Putting Their Political Security Ahead of National Security'

LENGTH: 479 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor this morning on importance of passing a clean funding bill to prevent the Department of Homeland Security from shutting down. Below are his remarks.

"Mr. Speaker, we are only days away from a shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security. When Republicans took control of the House and Senate they pledged to avoid more government shutdowns. Instead, we've sadly learned that Speaker Boehner and Leader Mitch McConnell went nearly two weeks - two weeks - without talking and their failure to govern has us once again on the brink of a shutdown.

"I have been shocked and disappointed to hear some of my Republican colleagues say that a shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security would not be a serious issue and try to minimize its impact on people, minimize its impact on workers, and even try to minimize its impact on America.

"In my home state of New Mexico, a border state where we have many men and women who proudly serve our country as employees of the Border Patrol, the TSA, and other agencies, getting furloughed or working without a paycheck is a serious issue. If Republicans continue down this path paychecks will stop but rent and mortgages and utility bills for these workers will not.

"Time and again House Republicans have failed to govern, moving only from one crisis to the next. Sadly, the failure to fund DHS is the latest manufactured crisis that will have a real impact on working families in New Mexico and across America, while needlessly putting our national security at risk.

"It's time for Congressional Republicans to stop putting their political security ahead of national security and pass a clean bill. It's time for House Republicans to stop catering to the extreme anti-immigration wing of their party that is willing to sacrifice our nation's security in order to attack DREAMers who are going to college and serving our great nation.

"Mr. Speaker, the eyes of the American people are watching this Republican-led Congress, and so far all they have seen is gridlock and dysfunction.

"Mr. Speaker, the United States Senate is moving forward to fund the Department of Homeland Security. House Democrats are ready to support a clean bill. The only ones standing in the way of preventing a Department of Homeland Security shutdown are House Republicans. For our country's sake let us hope that changes.

"Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the House bring up H.R. 861, the clean Department of Homeland Security funding bill that will keep the Department open so it can carry out its mission of keeping the American people safe."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

February 26, 2015 Thursday

Lujan on DHS Funding: 'Time for Congressional Republicans to Stop Putting Their Political Security Ahead of National Security'

LENGTH: 479 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor this morning on importance of passing a clean funding bill to prevent the Department of Homeland Security from shutting down. Below are his remarks.

"Mr. Speaker, we are only days away from a shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security. When Republicans took control of the House and Senate they pledged to avoid more government shutdowns. Instead, we've sadly learned that Speaker Boehner and Leader Mitch McConnell went nearly two weeks - two weeks - without talking and their failure to govern has us once again on the brink of a shutdown.

"I have been shocked and disappointed to hear some of my Republican colleagues say that a shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security would not be a serious issue and try to minimize its impact on people, minimize its impact on workers, and even try to minimize its impact on America.

"In my home state of New Mexico, a border state where we have many men and women who proudly serve our country as employees of the Border Patrol, the TSA, and other agencies, getting furloughed or working without a paycheck is a serious issue. If Republicans continue down this path paychecks will stop but rent and mortgages and utility bills for these workers will not.

"Time and again House Republicans have failed to govern, moving only from one crisis to the next. Sadly, the failure to fund DHS is the latest manufactured crisis that will have a real impact on working families in New Mexico and across America, while needlessly putting our national security at risk.

"It's time for Congressional Republicans to stop putting their political security ahead of national security and pass a clean bill. It's time for House Republicans to stop catering to the extreme anti-immigration wing of their party that is willing to sacrifice our nation's security in order to attack DREAMers who are going to college and serving our great nation.

"Mr. Speaker, the eyes of the American people are watching this Republican-led Congress, and so far all they have seen is gridlock and dysfunction.

"Mr. Speaker, the United States Senate is moving forward to fund the Department of Homeland Security. House Democrats are ready to support a clean bill. The only ones standing in the way of preventing a Department of Homeland Security shutdown are House Republicans. For our country's sake let us hope that changes.

"Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the House bring up H.R. 861, the clean Department of Homeland Security funding bill that will keep the Department open so it can carry out its mission of keeping the American people safe."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: February 28, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

February 26, 2015 Thursday

Washington: PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS -- (House of Representatives - February 25, 2015)

LENGTH: 2401 words

DATELINE: Washington

The Library of Congress, The Government of USA has issued the following house proceeding:

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. CUMMINGS (for himself, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. RANGEL, and Ms. NORTON):

H.R. 1055. A bill to improve access to oral health care for vulnerable and underserved populations; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, the Judiciary, Natural Resources, Veterans' Affairs, and Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER (for himself, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. CONYERS, and Ms. JACKSON LEE):

H.R. 1056. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for protection of maritime navigation and prevention of nuclear terrorism, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ISSA (for himself, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, and Mr. SENSENBRENNER):

H.R. 1057. A bill to amend title 35, United States Code, to provide for an exception from infringement for certain component parts of motor vehicles; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROSKAM:

H.R. 1058. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify that a duty of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue is to ensure that Internal Revenue Service employees are familiar with and act in accord with certain taxpayer rights; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

[Page: H1163] GPO's PDF

By Mr. ROSKAM:

H.R. 1059. A bill to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from asking taxpayers questions regarding religious, political, or social beliefs; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LAMALFA (for himself and Mr. GARAMENDI):

H.R. 1060. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to take actions to support non-Federal investments in water infrastructure improvements in the Sacramento Valley, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. FORTENBERRY (for himself and Ms. FUDGE):

H.R. 1061. A bill to reauthorize the farm to school program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri (for himself, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. ROKITA):

H.R. 1062. A bill to amend the Pilot's Bill of Rights to facilitate appeals and to apply to other certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration, to require the revision of the third class medical certification regulations issued by the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. BLACK (for herself, Mr. NEAL, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. SCHOCK, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. MEEHAN, and Mr. BECERRA):

H.R. 1063. A bill to amend the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States to eliminate tariffs on technological goods providing educational value for children, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. BUSTOS (for herself, Mr. LOEBSACK, and Mr. KIND):

H.R. 1064. A bill to reinstate year-round Federal Pell Grants under the Higher Education Act of 1965; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CLAY:

H.R. 1065. A bill to require that States receiving Byrne JAG funds to require sensitivity training for law enforcement officers of that State; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. COLLINS of New York (for himself and Mr. POMPEO):

H.R. 1066. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to promote the use of adaptive trial designs, Bayesian methods, and other innovative statistical methods in clinical protocols for drugs, biological products, and devices, and with respect to the requirement to conduct postapproval studies and clinical trials, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 1067. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend the temporary expansion of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, to ensure that judges of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims may enroll in the Federal Employee Group Life Insurance program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DEFAZIO (for himself and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska):

H.R. 1068. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Transportation to carry out a tribal transportation self-governance program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee (for himself and Mr. CUMMINGS):

H.R. 1069. A bill to amend title 44, United States Code, to require information on contributors to Presidential library fundraising organizations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. FATTAH:

H.R. 1070. A bill to provide for adequate and equitable educational opportunities for students in State public school systems, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. FATTAH:

H.R. 1071. A bill to amend section 1120A(c) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to assure comparability of opportunity for educationally disadvantaged students; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. FLEMING:

H.R. 1072. A bill to establish a commission to conduct a comprehensive review of Federal agencies and programs and to recommend the elimination or realignment of duplicative, wasteful, or outdated functions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on Rules, and Appropriations, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. FRANKS of Arizona (for himself and Mr. SESSIONS):

H.R. 1073. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to secure critical infrastructure against electromagnetic threats, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Ms. GABBARD (for herself, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, and Mr. TAKAI):

H.R. 1074. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to exempt certain flights from increased aviation security service fees; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. GALLEGO, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. SINEMA, and Mr. GOSAR):

H.R. 1075. A bill to designate the United States Customs and Border Protection Port of Entry located at First Street and Pan American Avenue in Douglas, Arizona, as the ``Raul Hector Castro Port of Entry``; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. KING of New York (for himself, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. HIMES, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. TONKO, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. PINGREE, and Mr. FARR):

H.R. 1076. A bill to increase public safety by permitting the Attorney General to deny the transfer of a firearm or the issuance of firearms or explosives licenses to a known or suspected dangerous terrorist; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. KIRKPATRICK (for herself, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. GALLEGO):

H.R. 1077. A bill to modify the boundary of the Casa Grande Ruins National Monument, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. LANCE (for himself, Ms. ESHOO, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. SPEIER, and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas):

H.R. 1078. A bill to amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to exempt from sequestration certain user fees of the Food and Drug Administration; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. LANGEVIN (for himself, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. COHEN, Mr. KEATING, Mr. CICILLINE, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. PAYNE, and Mr. KENNEDY):

H.R. 1079. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to provide grants to States to establish a comprehensive school counseling program; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. **BEN RAY LUJÁN** of New Mexico (for himself and Ms. MICHELLE **LUJAN** GRISHAM of New Mexico):

H.R. 1080. A bill to amend the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in order to limit the penalties to a State that does not meet its maintenance of effort level of funding to a one-time penalty, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. **BEN RAY LUJÁN** of New Mexico (for himself, Ms. MICHELLE **LUJAN** GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. PEARCE, and Mr. CÁRDENAS):

H.R. 1081. A bill to assist coordination among science, technology, engineering, and mathematics efforts in the States, to strengthen the capacity of elementary schools, middle schools, and secondary schools to prepare students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. **BEN RAY LUJÁN** of New Mexico (for himself, Ms. MICHELLE **LUJAN** GRISHAM of New Mexico, and Mr. PEARCE):

H.R. 1082. A bill to strengthen Indian education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. MCDERMOTT:

H.R. 1083. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to apply the Medicare restriction on self-referral to State plan requirements under Medicaid, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. O'ROURKE (for himself, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. RUSSELL, Ms. BORDALLO, and Mr. COLE):

H.R. 1084. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to modify the criteria for selecting communities to participate in the Small Community Air Service Development Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. PITTS:

H.R. 1085. A bill to repeal the Prevention and Public Health Fund; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ROKITA (for himself, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. FLORES, Mr. HANNA, and Mr. POMPEO):

H.R. 1086. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue or revise regulations with respect to the medical certification of certain small aircraft pilots, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

[Page: H1164] GPO's PDF

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER (for himself and Mr. ZINKE):

H.R. 1087. A bill to ensure that methods of collecting taxes and fees by private citizens on behalf of State and local jurisdictions are fair and effective and do not discriminate against interstate commerce for wireless telecommunications services; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SMITH of Washington (for himself, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. KILMER):

H.R. 1088. A bill to extend the trade adjustment assistance program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Education and the Workforce, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. TIPTON (for himself, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. COLE, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. HONDA, Ms. MICHELLE **LUJAN** GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. TAKAI, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska):

H.R. 1089. A bill to help fulfill the Federal mandate to provide higher educational opportunities for Native American Indians; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Appropriations, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. WAGNER (for herself and Mr. GARRETT):

H.R. 1090. A bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide protections for retail customers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. WILSON of Florida:

H.R. 1091. A bill to require the Secretary of Agriculture to use negotiated rulemaking to develop a rule about agriculture quarantine inspection, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Ms. WILSON of Florida:

H.R. 1092. A bill to designate the Federal building located at 2030 Southwest 145th Avenue in Miramar, Florida, as the ``Benjamin P. Grogan and Jerry L. Dove Federal Bureau of Investigation Miami Field Office``; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. BECERRA:

H. Res. 124. A resolution electing Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to. considered and agreed to.

By Ms. LEE:

H. Res. 126. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding United States efforts to promote Israeli-Palestinian peace; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. MULVANEY:

H. Res. 127. A resolution recognizing linemen, the profession of linemen, the contributions of these brave men and women who protect public safety, and expressing support for the designation of March 31, 2015, as National Lineman Appreciation Day; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: February 28, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

192 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

February 25, 2015 Wednesday

HOMELAND SECURITY SHUTDOWN LOOMS LARGE FOR NEW MEXICO;
Paychecks for workers would be disrupted

BYLINE: Copyright © 2015 Albuquerque Journal BY MICHAEL COLEMAN JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 1046 words

WASHINGTON - U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson warned Tuesday that a stalemate over the department's budget threatens millions of dollars in federal law enforcement and disaster grants in New Mexico and other states, as well as the paychecks and morale of the agency's 240,000 employees nationwide.

DHS employees deemed "essential," such as Border Patrol officers, Transportation Security Administration agents and Secret Service employees, would still be required to come to work under law, but would not be paid unless Congress agreed to make the U.S. Treasury Department cut checks retroactively. At the end of previous government shutdowns, federal workers have been issued back pay.

In New Mexico, paychecks for 2,302 full-time employees of the Department of Homeland Security would be disrupted. About 1,700 New Mexico-based DHS employees would be required to report to work without pay.

At odds over President Barack Obama's executive order granting legal status to 5 million people now in the country illegally, Democrats and Republicans on Capitol Hill remained deadlocked over the agency's $60 billion budget Tuesday, with funding for the department set to expire at midnight Friday.

The department would run out of money on Sunday and begin to shut down - at least partly - next week.

The Republican-controlled House has passed a DHS spending bill that would pay for DHS operations but also block Obama's executive action providing legal status to some 5 million people now in the country illegally. The Republican-controlled Senate does not have the votes to override a Democratic filibuster and pass the House legislation. Even if it did, Obama has threatened to veto the bill.

"Approximately 75 to 80 percent of our workforce will be required to come to work without pay for the duration of the shutdown," Johnson said during a meeting with regional reporters at the White House. "Approximately 30,000 members of our workforce will be furloughed, and that includes lots of headquarters personnel. That has a concrete effect on our ability to do the job."

Johnson also warned that millions of dollars in grants to local law enforcement and emergency management agencies could be jeopardized largely because no one would be on the job at DHS headquarters in Washington to process them.

"It makes absolutely no sense and it puts our state at risk," Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., said in a conference call with reporters Tuesday. "It put people who are in New Mexico and doing a good job on security issues in a very difficult situation."

"If DHS shuts down, it's not fair to punish employees and their families by forcing them to go without pay," Udall said, adding that he is cosponsoring a bill introduced Tuesday that would ensure DHS employees continued to receive paychecks in the event of a shutdown.

The fate of that legislation in a highly contentious Congress was unclear at best.

In New Mexico, the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Artesia would close until the budget impasse was resolved. About 350 students training at the Artesia school would be sent home, and about 450 officers and agents would go without paychecks. Federal payments to outside contractors working at the Artesia training center could be delayed.

"A delay in training would have impacts on the security of the nation's borders, aviation security, protecting our nation's leaders and diplomats, safeguarding the United States Capitol and other federal buildings, and other federal law enforcement activities," said a message posted on the FLETC website Tuesday.

Jay Mitchell, secretary-designate of New Mexico's state Department of Homeland Security, said his office is closely tracking the federal funding impasse with pronounced concerns about lost paychecks and federal grants to the state.

"The first concern of mine and of the Governor's Office is that we've got over 2,300 New Mexicans employed by DHS," Mitchell said in a Journal interview. "That's a lot of New Mexico families that will be impacted by this."

Mitchell also said he's worried that federal grants owed to New Mexico cities and towns for wildfires and flooding could go unallocated. Many of those local jurisdictions have already paid for the disaster response and are waiting for checks from the federal government.

"We will lose all of our administrative support for handling reimbursements for fires and flooding that affected a lot of small communities," he said. "These communities and contractors can't afford that."

Johnson confirmed that assertion at the White House on Tuesday. "DHS grants to state and local law enforcement around the country grinds to a halt," he said.

Shawn Moran, spokesman for the National Border Patrol Council, the employee union for Border Patrol officers, said a DHS shutdown would damage employee morale and would be counterproductive to protecting the border.

"We feel that we're a political football and we're caught in the middle of this," Moran said. "It's easy to say we're going to defund a department because you disagree with the president's actions, but that defunding has real-world consequences. Defunding the agency that provides border security is counterintuitive and doesn't make sense. To punish people who are putting their lives on the line, it's dishonorable."

Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., voted for the House bill that Obama has threatened to veto but said he does not support blocking the DHS budget.

"I do not oppose DHS funding," Pearce said. "The bill that we sent over to the Senate fully funds the Department of Homeland Security. The House responded to the people's demands, passing a DHS bill to block the president's unconstitutional executive order. The Senate does not need to pass the bill unchanged, but they must act."

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., said Republicans should pass a "clean" bill that is not tied to Obama's immigration actions.

"If Republicans continue down this path, paychecks will stop, but rent, mortgages, and utility bills for these workers will not," **Luján** said.

"The risks that are currently facing the United States are serious and we should not be playing partisan games when it comes to the security of our nation," said Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M.

Journal staff writer Lauren Villagran in Las Cruces contributed to this report.

LOAD-DATE: February 25, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: COURTESY OF FLETC The Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Artesia would be closed during a partial shutdown of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Albuquerque Journal

Cibola County Beacon (Grants, New Mexico)

February 24, 2015

Legislative roundup, Feb. 20, 2015

BYLINE: The New Mexican

SECTION: NEWS

LENGTH: 784 words

Days remaining in session: 29

Homegrown lab management: Northern New Mexico's representative in Congress called on the state Legislature to lead a movement toward homegrown management of the national laboratories in the state.

Addressing a joint session on Thursday, U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., said lucrative federal contracts to manage Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratory, in particular, present a unique economic development opportunity in the financially struggling state. He said the Legislature should explore ways to assemble a consortium capable of managing the labs.

Sandia's management contract is in the process of being rebid, and the contract with Los Alamos National Security, the private contractor that manages LANL, expires Oct. 1, 2017.

U.S. Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., addressed the Legislature on Tuesday and urged bipartisan cooperation. He emphasized the importance of oil and gas to the state's economy. On Wednesday, in another joint session of the Legislature, U.S. Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., touched on the woeful state of behavioral health care in the state.

Extracting New Mexico from its economic malaise was common theme in the congressional delegates' speeches. **Luján** said it's time for the state to chart a new economic path. "New Mexico is at a crossroads ... ," he said. "The signs of economic recovery are all around us, but yet seem to be passing us by."

Breaking fast: Native New Mexican and critically acclaimed actor Steven Michael Quezada and his wife, Cherise, ordered breakfast burritos with avocado, his with green chile, at the Roundhouse cafeteria on Thursday.

Quezada, who portrayed federal agent Steven Gomez in the series popular TV series Breaking Bad, was at the Capitol to track education issues in his capacity as a member of the Albuquerque school board.

Webcast archives killed: The House Appropriations and Finance Committee on Thursday voted down a proposal to archive internet videos of legislative committee hearings. On a party-line 7-5 vote, with Republicans in opposition, House Resolution 2, sponsored by Rep. Jeff Steinborn, D-Las Cruces, was tabled.

Currently, committee hearings are broadcast online during the legislative session, but they are not archived. Gov. Susana Martinez's office webcasts selected proceedings, including floor sessions of the House and Senate, which are archived on the governor's website.

After voting down the bill to archive committee hearing webcasts, the House Appropriations and Finance Committee approved a separate measure, House Concurrent Resolution 1, also sponsored by Steinborn, to webcast interim committee meetings when feasible, but without archiving them. That proposal received a "do pass" recommendation on a unanimous vote. Next, it moves to the House Rules and Order of Business Committee.

Stay away: The House on a 66-0 vote Thursday passed legislation that would allow rape victims to ask judges to impose permanent restraining orders against their convicted attackers.

Racheal Gonzales of Grants has been the public face of House Bill 123. Her biological father was sentenced to prison for raping her when she was a child. She has told legislative committees that for victims, the periodic expiration of restraining orders is at best inconvenient, and at worst terrifying.

The bill now moves to the Senate.

Looking ahead: The House Appropriations and Finance Committee is scheduled to consider a revised state budget proposal that reflects a downward turn in revenue expectations, driven by falling oil prices, during its meeting at 8:30 a.m. Friday in Room 307.

o U.S. Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., is scheduled to take his turn in addressing state legislators at 10:15 a.m. Friday. His office said Udall "will call on lawmakers to work together and focus on improving the well-being of New Mexico's children."

o KNME-TV's public affairs show New Mexico in Focus will air a segment Friday asking state lawmakers how they are trying to help children and families. Among scheduled guests for the broadcast, which airs at 7 p.m. on Channel 5.1 and repeats at 7 a.m. Sunday, are Rep. Gail Chasey, D-Albuquerque, Sen. Gay Kernan, R-Hobbs, and Sen. John Sapien, D-Corrales.

Quote of the day: "That's an applause line." -- U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., when a joint session of the Legislature greeted his proclaimed support for economic development initiatives with silence.

ON OUR WEBSITE

o Follow legislative coverage at www.santafenewmexican.com/news/legislature.

o Read Steve Terrell's blog at http://tinyurl.com/Roundhouseroundup and Milan Simonich's blog Ringside Seat at http://tinyurl.com/RingsideSeat

o Subscribe to our updates on Twitter @thenewmexican.

LOAD-DATE: February 27, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Cibola County Beacon.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

194 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Open Secrets - USA

http://www.opensecrets.org/news/2015/02/dccc-leads-nrcc-on-strength-of-member-dues/

24 February 2015 Tuesday

DCCC Leads NRCC on Strength of Member Dues

681 words

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan,** D-N.M., center, thanks House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., right, after she announced he will take over as head of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee from Rep. Steve Israel, D-N.Y., left. **Lujan**'s campaign transfer...

Silver City Daily Press & Independent (New Mexico)

February 23, 2015 Monday

Udall speaks against right-to-work, urges more funds for early education

BYLINE: PATRICK MALONE, THE NEW MEXICAN

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 10

LENGTH: 402 words

U.S. Sen. Tom Udall used his pulpit during a joint session of the New Mexico Legislature on Friday to weigh in on two of the most divisive issues facing state lawmakers this session.

He spoke out against so-called "right-to-work" legislation and expressed support for a measure that would let voters decide whether to tap into the state's savings to expand early childhood education.

Pointing out the state's poor rankings on child wellbeing, Udall, a Democrat, announced his support for Senate Joint Resolution 5. The measure would ask voters whether to devote a larger part of the state's multi-billion-dollar Land Grant Permanent Fund to early childhood programs.

"I support the constitutional amendment to dedicate a portion of the permanent fund to improving child well-being," Udall said. "Let's take it to the voters. Let them decide."

Some conservative Democrats have joined Republicans in the Legislature to defeat similar proposals in recent years. They have objected to depleting the state's savings.

Udall also blasted House Republican-sponsored legislation that aims to prohibit union membership as a condition of employment,

commonly known as right-to-work.

"I urge you to resist wasting time on quick fixes that sound good, but that hold back hardworking New Mexico families," Udall said. "Right-to-work laws won't make child care more available for working moms in Guadalupe; they won't build a strong high-tech workforce in Albuquerque or ensure farmers in Luna County can find a market for their chiles and wine."

Pat Garrett, spokesman for the House Republicans, fired back at Udall's criticisms of the right-to-work proposals.

"It's no surprise that a poster child of Washington dysfunction would proudly preach gridlock and call a common-sense compromise a waste of time," Garrett said.

Udall's speech concluded a week filled with joint sessions of the Legislature featuring addresses from New Mexico's congressional delegation. Already, lawmakers had heard from U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, a Republican, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and **Ben Ray Luján**, both Democrats.

Udall said partisan bickering only stands to derail the Legislature's efforts to turn around the state's economy.

"New Mexico does not have the luxury of gridlock. Trust me. You do not want to go down that road," he said. "I've seen it in Washington. The gridlock road is a bumpy road. It's not a fun road. Don't go down that road."

LOAD-DATE: February 24, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Silver City Daily Press & Independent
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

196 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

February 23, 2015 Monday

New Mexico: Lujan Delivers Address to New Mexico Legislature

LENGTH: 2168 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District addressed a joint session of the New Mexico Legislature this afternoon. Below are his remarks as prepared.

"To the distinguished members of the New Mexico House of Representatives, the New Mexico Senate, Governor Martinez, Speaker Tripp, President Pro-Tem Papen, tribal leaders, honored guests, family, and friends, thank you for welcoming me here today to discuss our shared commitment to the people of New Mexico and our common goal of building a brighter future for the New Mexico families we are so honored to represent.

"It is always a pleasure to be back in this distinguished chamber, a body that has such a special place in my heart and my family's as well. Thank you for allowing me this honor.

"Growing up and watching Dad serve in this body with my Mom always at his side, I have seen first-hand, how important it is to be the voice for those whose voices are often not heard. I saw the strength of our state and our legislature when New Mexico working families and growing the economy were at the top of everyone's priorities.

"From all around America to right here in the Roundhouse to every community across the Land of Enchantment, that should be our North Star - our mission as elected officials - fighting to grow our economy for each and every constituent we are fortunate to represent.

"As a state and a country, we cannot reach our full potential without a vibrant middle class. That means working day in and day out to ensure every New Mexican has a good-paying job, food on the table, an education for their children, living their golden years with dignity, and putting a little money in the bank at the end of the month.

"I am not naïve. I know that for too many New Mexicans, this vision feels like it's slipping away. I've sat across from many kitchen tables in many homes across New Mexico and looked into many parents' eyes and seen the hurt and fear as they struggle to provide the next meal for their children.

"Our vales demand more. I've talked to many New Mexicans who have spent too many days in search of too few jobs. We all know that New Mexicans deserve better.

"The national economy is gaining speed. The stock market is up, the private sector has added jobs for 59 straight months - the longest streak on record - but these gains are not being felt in homes across New Mexico.

"We must ask ourselves the tough questions and look within to find out why our neighboring states are growing, but New Mexico remains near the bottom. New Mexico leads the nation in child hunger and is near the bottom of childhood wellbeing. We cannot ignore these challenges. We cannot focus on small issues for political gain that sometimes distract us while the larger ones remain unaddressed.

"We cannot let our differences stand in the way of progress. Now is not the time for politics. Now is the time for helping New Mexico's families. As we begin a new Congress and work through our legislative session here at home, I hope that we can work in concert to address these challenges. I hope that we can work together on middle-class economics and offer struggling families a chance to build a brighter future here at home.

"The hard-working men and women of New Mexico are the backbone of our communities and our economy. We should be working to expand economic opportunities, create jobs and grow paychecks. To do this we must diversify our economy by taking advantage of New Mexico's unique resources.

"The federal labs are one of these resources that set us apart from states all across America. Three world-class labs in New Mexico create tremendous possibilities, but we must do more to leverage the labs to drive economic growth and job creation.

"Too many dollars that are coming to New Mexico are simply passing through and not staying here at home. An essential part of that effort is improving coordination between all the stakeholders who have an important role to play. We need a holistic approach with labs, local businesses, investors, the education community, and more all working together toward a common goal that is putting New Mexico first.

"Understanding the needs of the labs and the skills they value will help educators tailor a curriculum and job training toward those needs. Working with local businesses there can be internship and fellowship programs that provide valuable experience to prepare New Mexico's workforce. With the right focus we can attract and educate workers with the skills that then entice more businesses to set up shop in our communities - building an ecosystem around the labs that establishes a workforce pipeline and broader pool of capabilities to draw on.

"We need coordination that ensures that these efforts work in concert with our tax structure to incentivize growth in key areas. On this point I want to commend all the members of the New Mexico Legislature, the Governor, and the Jobs Council for their support of tax credits for Angel investors and research and development. That is good for New Mexico and it will put people to work. These are tools that can support startups and innovative businesses here in New Mexico that jumpstart our economy.

"At the federal level, I have been advocating for increased funding for the Small Business Innovation Research program and the Small Business Technology Transfer program. These programs encourage small businesses to engage in research and development, expanding public/private partnerships to

include joint venture opportunities for small business and nonprofit research institutions, enabling them to collaborate with federal research institutions in an effort to bring technological innovations to the marketplace.

"I am also working with the Department of Energy and the National Nuclear Security Administration to encourage them to implement programs that bring together DOE and the Department of Commerce to engage businesses, venture equity, angel investors, universities, and regional entrepreneurs to develop capabilities the labs and the region need.

"As we look to the future of the labs and the impact they have on New Mexico, I believe that we should seek a greater role in shaping that future. The Sandia Management and Operation Contract is in the process of being solicited and re-bid and Los Alamos National Lab's contract will be here before we know it.

"We as a state should set a goal of having a New Mexico-led consortium as prime contractor for one or both of our national labs. If not in this next round, then certainly in the next. It will change the way those dollars flow through New Mexico, having New Mexico at the front of what will be happening day in and day out.

"I encourage the legislature to consider a joint memorial to bring together legislative leaders, the Governor, universities, and the business community to study how we make this happen so that New Mexico can take a leadership role in the operations of New Mexico's national labs.

"In addition to our labs, New Mexico is home to a wealth of natural resources. Wind and solar hold the potential to power our economy. Building a clean energy economy that turns these resources into jobs will be vital for the future of New Mexico.

"This Congress I will introduce legislation to promote increased investments in clean energy through a renewable energy standard that reduces carbon emissions and drives clean energy deployment in states around the country. By increasing the amount of renewable energy that our neighbors use, we can create more demand to export New Mexico's wind and solar. This means making transmission a key focus and encouraging more projects like SunZia throughout New Mexico so that we can move our clean energy into new markets. We can create these opportunities and protect New Mexico's assets, and we must commit to both.

"As New Mexicans, we are blessed by our surroundings with majestic lands that are some of the most beautiful in the world. We are home to the best hunting, fishing, and hiking. This is not only a great source for recreation; it is a major economic driver creating jobs in communities across the state.

"New Mexico's farmers grow crops that are a vital part of our economy as well as our culture, from pistachios to chile. It's these lands that truly make us the Land of Enchantment and it is why we must work to preserve them and support the farmers whose value-added products are the best in the world.

"While our lands, our crops, and our Carne Seca and chile are important, the most important and most treasured resource is every man, woman, and child who calls New Mexico home, who are determined, who are resilient. With the contributions from the Hispanic, Native American, Anglo, African American, and immigrant communities, to our soldiers, veterans, and military families who make us proud, our great diversity is a strength and we must embrace and celebrate it every day.

"With deep roots and a love for our land that has been home to so many generations of New Mexicans, our people are what make our state so strong. But we must invest in our greatest resources, our people. We must educate our children from their earliest days and get them on the right path from the very beginning. I will continue to support efforts at the federal level to expand access to Head Start and other early education programs that help children during their formative years, and I encourage you to take action here in New Mexico.

"With our children ranking near the top of every bad list, we must do something to break this cycle. The Land Grant Permanent Fund was created to invest in New Mexico, to help create wealth, to pave the way for positive education. What better place than in our children's future to invest?

"The challenges we face run deep. But that can't be an excuse for inaction. In fact it calls for bold action. Universal access to education is a must.

"Affordable higher education and access to job training programs must also be part of the equation. Too many students are drowning in debt, not being able to get into their first home, and sometimes not even being able to buy their first car. This is a challenge we can attack together.

"As we grow our economic sectors, we need skilled workers who are prepared for the jobs of the future. In his state of the Union Speech, President Obama called for more access to community college. I agree with the President that our community colleges can lead the way in an effort to provide a good education to all those who want to work hard.

"This Congress I will be introducing legislation to leverage our community colleges and to help them strengthen their clean energy curriculum so they can prepare students and retrain workers for careers in clean energy. By providing grants to community colleges to expand programs that focus on workforce development in this growing field, we can give students the tools they need to get ahead.

"Investing in the people of New Mexico so that we grow the middle class and combat the cycle of poverty is the key to a brighter future. What we should not do is weaken workers' ability to advocate for good wages and safe working conditions.

"As many of you know, we lost my Father to lung cancer over two years ago. Dad was an iron worker who worked up at Los Alamos and the conditions he worked in contributed to his diagnosis.

"Worker safety, ensuring that there are protections so that workers come home safe and sound every night to their family and are not impacted decades later, is of critical importance. And it is a top priority for the unions that fight for working men and women.

"Whether its workplace safety or fair wages, a 40-hour week or overtime pay, unions fought for many protections we now take for granted. That is why undermining our workers through policies that undermine working families would do more harm than good and will take New Mexico in the wrong direction.

"I am hopeful that instead we work together on areas that will strengthen working families, rebuild our economy, and create more opportunities for the people of New Mexico.

"New Mexico is at a crossroads. We have struggled through the deepest recession in a generation. The signs of an economic recovery are all around us, yet seem to be passing us by. The choices we make today will determine if we continue along this road or if we chart a new course that puts us back on the path to prosperity.

"My Father, Speaker **Luján** said: 'We should never give up. We must preserve in our pursuit to do good, make a difference, and treat every man, woman, and child with respect and dignity.'

"To each and every one of you, I wish you well. I wish you courage and wisdom. May God bless each and every one of you and keep you safe. May God bless New Mexico and may God bless America.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

197 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

February 23, 2015 Monday

New Mexico: Lujan Introduces RECA Legislation to Expand Compensation for Those Exposed to Radiation

LENGTH: 869 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District introduced legislation in the House of Representatives today that expands compensation for those exposed to radiation while working in uranium mines or living downwind from atomic weapons tests. Companion legislation has been introduced in the Senate by a bipartisan coalition of Senators, including New Mexico Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich.

Among the provisions in the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) Amendments of 2015 are much needed changes that would build upon previous RECA legislation by further widening qualifications for compensation for radiation exposure; qualifying post 1971 uranium workers for compensation; and expanding the downwind exposure area to include Colorado, Idaho, Montana, and New Mexico, as well as any county in Arizona, Nevada, or Utah, which has been shown to be impacted by downwind contamination.

"Until this gets done - compensating and recognizing the miners, workers, downwinders and all who are suffering from the impacts of uranium mining and nuclear testing during the Cold War - we will continue to push this legislation forward," Congressman **Luján** said. "I will continue my efforts to educate my colleagues in the House on the critical need to compensate all those who played a key role in our national security during the Cold War and have suffered as a result of their efforts."

Specifically, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments of 2015 will:

o Extend compensation to employees of mines and mills employed after Dec. 31, 1971. These are individuals who began working in uranium mines and mills after the U.S. stopped purchasing uranium, but failed to implement and enforce adequate uranium mining safety standards. Many of these workers have the same illnesses as pre-1971 workers who currently qualify for RECA compensation.

o Add core drillers to the list of compensable employees, which currently only includes miners, millers and ore transporters.

o Add renal cancer, or any other chronic renal disease, to the list of compensable diseases for employees of mines and mills. Currently, millers and transporters are covered for kidney disease, but miners are not.

o Allow claimants to combine work histories to meet the requirement of the legislation. For example, individuals who worked half a year in a mill and half a year in a mine would be eligible for compensation. Currently, the Department of Justice makes some exceptions for this, but the policy is not codified in law.

o Make all claimants available for an equal amount of compensation, specifically $150,000, regardless of whether they are millers, miners, ore transporters, onsite employees, or downwinders.

o Make all claimants eligible for medical benefits. Currently, only miners, millers and ore transporters can claim medical benefits through the medical expense compensation program.

o Recognize radiation exposure from the Trinity Test Site in New Mexico, as well as tests in the Pacific Ocean.

o Expand the downwind areas to include all of Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, and Utah for the Nevada Test Site; New Mexico for the Trinity Test Site; and Guam for the Pacific tests.

o Allow the use of affidavits to substantiate employment history, presence in affected area, and work at a test site. Current legislation only allows miners to use affidavits.

o Return all attorney fees to a cap of 10 percent of the amount of the RECA claim, as was mandated in the original 1990 RECA legislation.

o Authorize $3 million for five years for epidemiological research on the impacts of uranium development on communities and families of uranium workers. The funds would be allocated to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to award grants to universities and non-profits to carry out the research.

o Allow miners, millers, core drillers, and ore transporters to file a Special Exposure Cohort petition within the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA). Other DOE workers are currently allowed to file such petitions for compensation when claims are denied and there is not enough information for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health to do dose reconstruction to determine the impacts of exposure.

To meet its responsibility to those Americans who sacrificed so much for our national security, Congress passed the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) on October 5, 1990 and later broadened the scope of the Act's coverage on July 10, 2000. The current law offers compensation to individuals who contracted certain cancers and other serious diseases following their exposure to radiation released during above-ground atmospheric nuclear weapons tests or following their occupational exposure to radiation while employed in the uranium industry. However, there are many additional individuals who are sick or dying from radiation exposure and are unable to receive the compensation they deserve.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

February 23, 2015 Monday

New Mexico: Lujan Delivers Address to New Mexico Legislature

LENGTH: 2168 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District addressed a joint session of the New Mexico Legislature this afternoon. Below are his remarks as prepared.

"To the distinguished members of the New Mexico House of Representatives, the New Mexico Senate, Governor Martinez, Speaker Tripp, President Pro-Tem Papen, tribal leaders, honored guests, family, and friends, thank you for welcoming me here today to discuss our shared commitment to the people of New Mexico and our common goal of building a brighter future for the New Mexico families we are so honored to represent.

"It is always a pleasure to be back in this distinguished chamber, a body that has such a special place in my heart and my family's as well. Thank you for allowing me this honor.

"Growing up and watching Dad serve in this body with my Mom always at his side, I have seen first-hand, how important it is to be the voice for those whose voices are often not heard. I saw the strength of our state and our legislature when New Mexico working families and growing the economy were at the top of everyone's priorities.

"From all around America to right here in the Roundhouse to every community across the Land of Enchantment, that should be our North Star - our mission as elected officials - fighting to grow our economy for each and every constituent we are fortunate to represent.

"As a state and a country, we cannot reach our full potential without a vibrant middle class. That means working day in and day out to ensure every New Mexican has a good-paying job, food on the table, an education for their children, living their golden years with dignity, and putting a little money in the bank at the end of the month.

"I am not naïve. I know that for too many New Mexicans, this vision feels like it's slipping away. I've sat across from many kitchen tables in many homes across New Mexico and looked into many parents' eyes and seen the hurt and fear as they struggle to provide the next meal for their children.

"Our vales demand more. I've talked to many New Mexicans who have spent too many days in search of too few jobs. We all know that New Mexicans deserve better.

"The national economy is gaining speed. The stock market is up, the private sector has added jobs for 59 straight months - the longest streak on record - but these gains are not being felt in homes across New Mexico.

"We must ask ourselves the tough questions and look within to find out why our neighboring states are growing, but New Mexico remains near the bottom. New Mexico leads the nation in child hunger and is near the bottom of childhood wellbeing. We cannot ignore these challenges. We cannot focus on small issues for political gain that sometimes distract us while the larger ones remain unaddressed.

"We cannot let our differences stand in the way of progress. Now is not the time for politics. Now is the time for helping New Mexico's families. As we begin a new Congress and work through our legislative session here at home, I hope that we can work in concert to address these challenges. I hope that we can work together on middle-class economics and offer struggling families a chance to build a brighter future here at home.

"The hard-working men and women of New Mexico are the backbone of our communities and our economy. We should be working to expand economic opportunities, create jobs and grow paychecks. To do this we must diversify our economy by taking advantage of New Mexico's unique resources.

"The federal labs are one of these resources that set us apart from states all across America. Three world-class labs in New Mexico create tremendous possibilities, but we must do more to leverage the labs to drive economic growth and job creation.

"Too many dollars that are coming to New Mexico are simply passing through and not staying here at home. An essential part of that effort is improving coordination between all the stakeholders who have an important role to play. We need a holistic approach with labs, local businesses, investors, the education community, and more all working together toward a common goal that is putting New Mexico first.

"Understanding the needs of the labs and the skills they value will help educators tailor a curriculum and job training toward those needs. Working with local businesses there can be internship and fellowship programs that provide valuable experience to prepare New Mexico's workforce. With the right focus we can attract and educate workers with the skills that then entice more businesses to set up shop in our communities - building an ecosystem around the labs that establishes a workforce pipeline and broader pool of capabilities to draw on.

"We need coordination that ensures that these efforts work in concert with our tax structure to incentivize growth in key areas. On this point I want to commend all the members of the New Mexico Legislature, the Governor, and the Jobs Council for their support of tax credits for Angel investors and research and development. That is good for New Mexico and it will put people to work. These are tools that can support startups and innovative businesses here in New Mexico that jumpstart our economy.

"At the federal level, I have been advocating for increased funding for the Small Business Innovation Research program and the Small Business Technology Transfer program. These programs encourage small businesses to engage in research and development, expanding public/private partnerships to include joint venture opportunities for small business and nonprofit research institutions, enabling them to collaborate with federal research institutions in an effort to bring technological innovations to the marketplace.

"I am also working with the Department of Energy and the National Nuclear Security Administration to encourage them to implement programs that bring together DOE and the Department of Commerce to engage businesses, venture equity, angel investors, universities, and regional entrepreneurs to develop capabilities the labs and the region need.

"As we look to the future of the labs and the impact they have on New Mexico, I believe that we should seek a greater role in shaping that future. The Sandia Management and Operation Contract is

in the process of being solicited and re-bid and Los Alamos National Lab's contract will be here before we know it.

"We as a state should set a goal of having a New Mexico-led consortium as prime contractor for one or both of our national labs. If not in this next round, then certainly in the next. It will change the way those dollars flow through New Mexico, having New Mexico at the front of what will be happening day in and day out.

"I encourage the legislature to consider a joint memorial to bring together legislative leaders, the Governor, universities, and the business community to study how we make this happen so that New Mexico can take a leadership role in the operations of New Mexico's national labs.

"In addition to our labs, New Mexico is home to a wealth of natural resources. Wind and solar hold the potential to power our economy. Building a clean energy economy that turns these resources into jobs will be vital for the future of New Mexico.

"This Congress I will introduce legislation to promote increased investments in clean energy through a renewable energy standard that reduces carbon emissions and drives clean energy deployment in states around the country. By increasing the amount of renewable energy that our neighbors use, we can create more demand to export New Mexico's wind and solar. This means making transmission a key focus and encouraging more projects like SunZia throughout New Mexico so that we can move our clean energy into new markets. We can create these opportunities and protect New Mexico's assets, and we must commit to both.

"As New Mexicans, we are blessed by our surroundings with majestic lands that are some of the most beautiful in the world. We are home to the best hunting, fishing, and hiking. This is not only a great source for recreation; it is a major economic driver creating jobs in communities across the state.

"New Mexico's farmers grow crops that are a vital part of our economy as well as our culture, from pistachios to chile. It's these lands that truly make us the Land of Enchantment and it is why we must work to preserve them and support the farmers whose value-added products are the best in the world.

"While our lands, our crops, and our Carne Seca and chile are important, the most important and most treasured resource is every man, woman, and child who calls New Mexico home, who are determined, who are resilient. With the contributions from the Hispanic, Native American, Anglo, African American, and immigrant communities, to our soldiers, veterans, and military families who make us proud, our great diversity is a strength and we must embrace and celebrate it every day.

"With deep roots and a love for our land that has been home to so many generations of New Mexicans, our people are what make our state so strong. But we must invest in our greatest resources, our people. We must educate our children from their earliest days and get them on the right path from the very beginning. I will continue to support efforts at the federal level to expand access to Head Start and other early education programs that help children during their formative years, and I encourage you to take action here in New Mexico.

"With our children ranking near the top of every bad list, we must do something to break this cycle. The Land Grant Permanent Fund was created to invest in New Mexico, to help create wealth, to pave the way for positive education. What better place than in our children's future to invest?

"The challenges we face run deep. But that can't be an excuse for inaction. In fact it calls for bold action. Universal access to education is a must.

"Affordable higher education and access to job training programs must also be part of the equation. Too many students are drowning in debt, not being able to get into their first home, and sometimes not even being able to buy their first car. This is a challenge we can attack together.

"As we grow our economic sectors, we need skilled workers who are prepared for the jobs of the future. In his state of the Union Speech, President Obama called for more access to community college. I agree with the President that our community colleges can lead the way in an effort to provide a good education to all those who want to work hard.

"This Congress I will be introducing legislation to leverage our community colleges and to help them strengthen their clean energy curriculum so they can prepare students and retrain workers for careers in clean energy. By providing grants to community colleges to expand programs that focus on workforce development in this growing field, we can give students the tools they need to get ahead.

"Investing in the people of New Mexico so that we grow the middle class and combat the cycle of poverty is the key to a brighter future. What we should not do is weaken workers' ability to advocate for good wages and safe working conditions.

"As many of you know, we lost my Father to lung cancer over two years ago. Dad was an iron worker who worked up at Los Alamos and the conditions he worked in contributed to his diagnosis.

"Worker safety, ensuring that there are protections so that workers come home safe and sound every night to their family and are not impacted decades later, is of critical importance. And it is a top priority for the unions that fight for working men and women.

"Whether its workplace safety or fair wages, a 40-hour week or overtime pay, unions fought for many protections we now take for granted. That is why undermining our workers through policies that undermine working families would do more harm than good and will take New Mexico in the wrong direction.

"I am hopeful that instead we work together on areas that will strengthen working families, rebuild our economy, and create more opportunities for the people of New Mexico.

"New Mexico is at a crossroads. We have struggled through the deepest recession in a generation. The signs of an economic recovery are all around us, yet seem to be passing us by. The choices we make today will determine if we continue along this road or if we chart a new course that puts us back on the path to prosperity.

"My Father, Speaker **Luján** said: 'We should never give up. We must preserve in our pursuit to do good, make a difference, and treat every man, woman, and child with respect and dignity.'

"To each and every one of you, I wish you well. I wish you courage and wisdom. May God bless each and every one of you and keep you safe. May God bless New Mexico and may God bless America.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: February 24, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

February 23, 2015 Monday

New Mexico: Lujan Introduces RECA Legislation to Expand Compensation for Those Exposed to Radiation

LENGTH: 869 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District introduced legislation in the House of Representatives today that expands compensation for those exposed to radiation while working in uranium mines or living downwind from atomic weapons tests. Companion legislation has been introduced in the Senate by a bipartisan coalition of Senators, including New Mexico Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich.

Among the provisions in the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) Amendments of 2015 are much needed changes that would build upon previous RECA legislation by further widening qualifications for compensation for radiation exposure; qualifying post 1971 uranium workers for compensation; and expanding the downwind exposure area to include Colorado, Idaho, Montana, and New Mexico, as well as any county in Arizona, Nevada, or Utah, which has been shown to be impacted by downwind contamination.

"Until this gets done - compensating and recognizing the miners, workers, downwinders and all who are suffering from the impacts of uranium mining and nuclear testing during the Cold War - we will continue to push this legislation forward," Congressman **Luján** said. "I will continue my efforts to educate my colleagues in the House on the critical need to compensate all those who played a key role in our national security during the Cold War and have suffered as a result of their efforts."

Specifically, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments of 2015 will:

o Extend compensation to employees of mines and mills employed after Dec. 31, 1971. These are individuals who began working in uranium mines and mills after the U.S. stopped purchasing uranium, but failed to implement and enforce adequate uranium mining safety standards. Many of these workers have the same illnesses as pre-1971 workers who currently qualify for RECA compensation.

o Add core drillers to the list of compensable employees, which currently only includes miners, millers and ore transporters.

o Add renal cancer, or any other chronic renal disease, to the list of compensable diseases for employees of mines and mills. Currently, millers and transporters are covered for kidney disease, but miners are not.

o Allow claimants to combine work histories to meet the requirement of the legislation. For example, individuals who worked half a year in a mill and half a year in a mine would be eligible for compensation. Currently, the Department of Justice makes some exceptions for this, but the policy is not codified in law.

o Make all claimants available for an equal amount of compensation, specifically $150,000, regardless of whether they are millers, miners, ore transporters, onsite employees, or downwinders.

o Make all claimants eligible for medical benefits. Currently, only miners, millers and ore transporters can claim medical benefits through the medical expense compensation program.

o Recognize radiation exposure from the Trinity Test Site in New Mexico, as well as tests in the Pacific Ocean.

o Expand the downwind areas to include all of Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, and Utah for the Nevada Test Site; New Mexico for the Trinity Test Site; and Guam for the Pacific tests.

o Allow the use of affidavits to substantiate employment history, presence in affected area, and work at a test site. Current legislation only allows miners to use affidavits.

o Return all attorney fees to a cap of 10 percent of the amount of the RECA claim, as was mandated in the original 1990 RECA legislation.

o Authorize $3 million for five years for epidemiological research on the impacts of uranium development on communities and families of uranium workers. The funds would be allocated to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to award grants to universities and non-profits to carry out the research.

o Allow miners, millers, core drillers, and ore transporters to file a Special Exposure Cohort petition within the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA). Other DOE workers are currently allowed to file such petitions for compensation when claims are denied and there is not enough information for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health to do dose reconstruction to determine the impacts of exposure.

To meet its responsibility to those Americans who sacrificed so much for our national security, Congress passed the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) on October 5, 1990 and later broadened the scope of the Act's coverage on July 10, 2000. The current law offers compensation to individuals who contracted certain cancers and other serious diseases following their exposure to radiation released during above-ground atmospheric nuclear weapons tests or following their occupational exposure to radiation while employed in the uranium industry. However, there are many additional individuals who are sick or dying from radiation exposure and are unable to receive the compensation they deserve.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: February 24, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by Tribune Content Agency

February 22, 2015 Sunday

EDITORIAL: Addressing poverty needs to grab legislative focus

BYLINE: The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: COMMENTARY

LENGTH: 652 words

Feb. 22--Occasionally, an outside perspective is necessary -- and that includes the workings of the New Mexico Legislature. Last week, several of New Mexico's congressional representatives gave their traditional speeches during the session, imparting wisdom that legislators should take to heart.

U.S. Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, in particular, needs to be heard, as she powerfully distilled the state's many challenges into one: poverty.

"It's time that you declare war on poverty in New Mexico. It is time that the New Mexico Legislature flat-out declare war," **Lujan** Grisham said, reminding everyone that poverty is the underlying issue with every problem in the state. "There's not a single member here, from the House or the Senate, Republican or Democrat, who doesn't have poverty issues that you're working to address in the neighborhoods that you represent. There's not a single elected leader here today who doesn't have a hungry child or a school with a nutrition program that's in trouble."

When she made this challenge to the Legislature, **Lujan** Grisham earned a standing ovation. (It's the kind of speech she could be making around the state in a few years, should she transfer her political interests from Washington, D.C., to the state level. A second Latina governor, perhaps?)

What makes this speech important -- because after all, words are just words -- is that it gives us a lens through which to see the current legislative session and all its machinations.

Imagine if legislators asked of every bill, every time, "Will this create a job?" "Will this help put food on the table?" "Will this make families more secure?" So much clutter of the session could be removed, to focus on improving the state from the ground up.

U.S. Rep. Steve Pearce, the lone Republican in the congressional delegation, encouraged lawmakers to focus on jobs. With gas and oil prices falling, he told legislators that New Mexico should boost technology and agriculture, and perhaps revive the timber industry. "What people want is not complex at all. They just want financial security and independence," Pearce said. That's certainly sentiment both parties can endorse.

Similarly, U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, Santa Fe's congressman, had this to say: "As a state and a country, we cannot reach our full potential without a vibrant middle class.

"I am not naïve. I know that for too many New Mexicans, this vision feels like it's slipping away. I've sat across from many kitchen tables in many homes across New Mexico and looked into many parents' eyes and seen the hurt and fear as they struggle to provide the next meal for their children."

He connected the recovering national economy to what's happening on the ground here in New Mexico. "I've talked to many New Mexicans who have spent too many days in search of too few jobs. We all know that New Mexicans deserve better," **Luján** said. "The national economy is gaining speed. The stock market is up, the private sector has added jobs for 59 straight months -- the longest streak on record -- but these gains are not being felt in homes across New Mexico."

When U.S. Sen. Tom Udall wrapped up on Friday (Sen. Martin Heinrich still hasn't spoken), the chorus of voices for improving the economy was complete. "Thirty percent of New Mexico children and 44 percent of Native American children live below the poverty line." Udall said. "We should work together to improve that. No American who works full time should be in poverty."

It's difficult to see how a fight over driver's licenses for undocumented immigrants will feed one child or provide one more job. Rather than re-fight old battles, the Legislature should focus on jobs, fighting poverty and increasing economic opportunity. This session, not later.

___ (c)2015 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC

LOAD-DATE: February 22, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20150222-SF-EDITORIAL-Addressing-poverty-needs-to-grab-legislative-focus-0222-20150222

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2015 The Santa Fe New Mexican

201 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by Tribune Content Agency

February 21, 2015 Saturday

Udall speaks against right-to-work, urges more funds for early ed

BYLINE: Patrick Malone, The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 431 words

Feb. 21--U.S. Sen. Tom Udall used his pulpit during a joint session of the New Mexico Legislature on Friday to weigh in on two of the most divisive issues facing state lawmakers this session.

He spoke out against so-called "right-to-work" legislation and expressed support for a measure that would let voters decide whether to tap into the state's savings to expand early childhood education.

Pointing out the state's poor rankings on child well-being, Udall, a Democrat, announced his support for Senate Joint Resolution 5. The measure would ask voters whether to devote a larger part of the state's multibillion-dollar Land Grant Permanent Fund to early childhood programs.

"I support the constitutional amendment to dedicate a portion of the permanent fund to improving child well-being," Udall said. "Let's take it to the voters. Let them decide."

Some conservative Democrats have joined Republicans in the Legislature to defeat similar proposals in recent years. They have objected to depleting the state's savings.

Udall also blasted House Republican-sponsored legislation that aims to prohibit union membership as a condition of employment, commonly known as right-to-work.

"I urge you to resist wasting time on quick fixes that sound good, but that hold back hardworking New Mexico families," Udall said. "Right-to-work laws won't make child care more available for working moms in Guadalupe; they won't build a strong high-tech workforce in Albuquerque or ensure farmers in Luna County can find a market for their chiles and wine."

Pat Garrett, spokesman for the House Republicans, fired back at Udall's criticisms of the right-to-work proposals.

"It's no surprise that a poster child of Washington dysfunction would proudly preach gridlock and call a common-sense compromise a waste of time," Garrett said.

Udall's speech concluded a week filled with joint sessions of the Legislature featuring addresses from New Mexico's congressional delegation. Already, lawmakers had heard from U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, a Republican, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and **Ben Ray Luján**, both Democrats.

Udall said partisan bickering only stands to derail the Legislature's efforts to turn around the state's economy.

"New Mexico does not have the luxury of gridlock. Trust me. You do not want to go down that road," he said. "I've seen it in Washington. The gridlock road is a bumpy road. It's not a fun road. Don't go down that road."

___ (c)2015 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC

LOAD-DATE: February 21, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20150221-SF-Udall-speaks-against-right-to-work-urges-more-funds-for-early-ed-0221-20150221

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2015 The Santa Fe New Mexican

Washington: ADDITIONAL SPONSORS -- (House of Representatives - February 20, 2015)

LENGTH: 479 words

DATELINE: Washington

The Library of Congress, The Government of USA has issued the following news release:

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 5: Ms. Foxx, Mr. Roe of Tennessee, Mr. Messer, Mr. Byrne, Mr. Sessions, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Heck of Nevada, Mr. Guthrie, Mr. Allen, and Mr. Curbelo of Florida.

H.R. 228: Mr. Cramer.

H.R. 280: Ms. Graham.

H.R. 294: Mr. Cole.

H.R. 304: Ms. Meng, Ms. Castor of Florida, Mr. Sherman, Mr. Garamendi, and Mr. Johnson of Georgia.

H.R. 344: Mr. Levin.

H.R. 382: Mr. Tipton, Mr. Coffman, Mr. Buck, and Mr. Polis.

H.R. 427: Mr. Duffy and Ms. Stefanik.

H.R. 445: Mr. Collins of Georgia.

H.R. 448: Mr. Al Green of Texas.

H.R. 511: Mr. Meadows, Mr. Moolenaar, and Mr. Hudson.

H.R. 571: Mr. Lamborn.

H.R. 577: Mr. Huelskamp.

H.R. 592: Ms. Schakowsky, Ms. Jenkins of Kansas, Mr. Byrne, and Mr. Peterson.

H.R. 625: Mr. Stivers.

H.R. 687: Mr. Gibbs.

H.R. 733: Mr. Babin and Mr. Cramer.

H.R. 746: Mr. Levin, Mr. Sires, Mr. Connolly, Mr. Himes, and Mr. Schiff.

H.R. 756: Ms. Eddie Bernice Johnson of Texas.

H.R. 767: Mr. Garamendi, Mr. Newhouse, Mr. Rodney Davis of Illinois, Mr. Roskam, and Mr. Wilson of South Carolina.

H.R. 782: Mr. Cartwright.

H.R. 787: Mrs. Bustos.

H.R. 803: Mr. Olson and Mr. Rouzer.

H.R. 823: Ms. Speier, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Lowenthal, Mr. Takano, Mr. Cárdenas, and Mr. Rangel.

[Page: H1085] GPO's PDF

H.R. 846: Mr. Grijalva, Ms. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham of New Mexico, Ms. Slaughter, Mr. Deutch, Mr. Yarmuth, Ms. Castor of Florida, Mr. Price of North Carolina, Ms. Brownley of California, Mr. Beyer, Mr. Farr, Mr. **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico, Mr. Levin, Mr. Lowenthal, Mr. Israel, Mr. Garamendi, Ms. Wasserman Schultz, and Mrs. Capps.

H.R. 915: Mr. Israel.

H.R. 921: Mr. Collins of New York.

H.R. 987: Mr. Yoho.

H.R. 1000: Mr. Veasey.

H.J. Res. 29: Mr. Grothman, Mr. Byrne, Ms. Jenkins of Kansas, Mr. Walberg, Mr. Salmon, and Mr. Allen.

H.J. Res. 32: Mr. Rouzer.

H. Con. Res. 13: Mr. Palazzo.

H. Res. 15: Mr. Vargas, Mr. Lipinski, Ms. Brown of Florida, Mr. Neal, Mr. Cummings, Mr. Takano, Ms. Judy Chu of California, Mr. Grijalva, Mr. Swalwell of California, Ms. Pingree, Mr. Ryan of Ohio, Mr. Tonko, Mr. Bishop of Georgia, Mr. Fitzpatrick, Mr. Grayson, Ms. Clark of Massachusetts, Mr. Cooper, Mr. Rush, Mrs. Napolitano, Mr. Higgins, and Ms. Velázquez.

H. Res. 54: Mr. Ellison.

H. Res. 108: Mr. Boustany, Mr. Tipton, Mr. Collins of New York, Mr. Labrador, Mr. Huizenga of Michigan, Mr. Guthrie, Mr. Issa, Mr. Upton, Mr. Gosar, Mr. Tiberi, Ms. Herrera Beutler, Mr. Brooks of Alabama, Mr. Stivers, Mr. Yoho, Mr. Aderholt, Mr. Harris, Mr. Hurd of Texas, Mr. Messer, Mr. Westmoreland, Mr. Carter of Georgia, Mr. Meadows, Ms. Bordallo, Mr. Graves of Missouri, and Mr. Emmer of Minnesota.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: February 21, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

February 20, 2015 Friday

Rep. Luján suggests NM consortium to operate labs; Local management could bring benefits

BYLINE: KEVIN ROBINSON-AVILA JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

SECTION: BUSINESS; Pg. B1

LENGTH: 496 words

SANTA FE - Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., called on New Mexico's political leaders on Thursday to consider forming a public-private consortium to bid on future federal contracts to run one or both of the state's two national labs.

Luján, who addressed a joint session of the Legislature, said a local management team for Sandia National Laboratories or Los Alamos National Laboratory might work harder to hold on to more of the federal dollars that flow into the labs.

"We need to do more to leverage the labs to drive economic growth and job creation," **Luján** told state legislators. "Too many dollars are simply passing through the labs and not staying here."

Luján said with New Mexico contractors at the helm, more opportunities might become available for local businesses.

In particular, **Luján** said he is pushing federal agencies to more aggressively engage entrepreneurs and investors in public-private partnerships to transfer promising technologies out of the labs and into the marketplace.

Lockheed Martin Corp., and a partnership between Bechtel and the University of California currently manage Sandia and Los Alamos, respectively, under contracts with the National Nuclear Security Administration. But those contracts could be put out to bid in the next few years.

Lockheed's contract at Sandia runs through April 2016, with a one-year extension option. The Bechtel-UC partnership is contracted through 2017, with one-year extension options to 2023, depending on annual performance reviews.

"We as a state should set a goal of having a New Mexico-led consortium as prime contractor for one or both of our national labs," **Luján** said. "It will change the way those dollars flow through New Mexico, having New Mexico at the front of what will be happening day in and day out."

The congressman called on New Mexico's representatives and senators to approve a joint memorial to bring public officials, universities and the business community together to study how New Mexico can take a leadership role at the labs.

Luján said such initiatives are critical to spur economic growth in New Mexico, which is lagging behind other states in recovering from the recession.

"The rest of the nation is bypassing us," the congressman said. "We need to chart a new course that puts us back on the road to prosperity."

Luján urged legislators to put aside political differences and work cooperatively to provide more opportunities to New Mexicans. He said good-paying jobs can come from promoting more renewable

energy development, and by protecting the state's natural resources, which provide tourism and agricultural employment opportunities. He also called for greater investment in education, even if that means digging further into the Land Grant Permanent Fund.

Luján, who represents the 3rd Congressional District in northern New Mexico, is the third U.S. representative to address the Legislature this week. Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., and Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., also appeared.

LOAD-DATE: February 20, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: EDDIE MOORE/JOURNAL U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján,** D-N.M., addresses a joint session of the House and Senate at the State Capitol in Santa Fe on Thursday.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Albuquerque Journal

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

February 19, 2015 Thursday

Rep. calls for war on New Mexico poverty; Lujan Grisham praises state lawmakers for creation of Jobs Council

BYLINE: DAN BOYD JOURNAL CAPITOL BUREAU

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. A3

LENGTH: 306 words

SANTA FE - U.S. Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham called on state lawmakers to target their efforts at the state's economy and elevated poverty rate Wednesday, saying, "It's time you declare a war on poverty in New Mexico."

Lujan Grisham, a Democrat who was re-elected in November 2014 to a second term in Congress, also said legislators should not look to Washington, D.C., for a model on bipartisanship.

"We are not working collectively enough on the type of bipartisan compromises that would work to jump-start New Mexico's economy," she said, while vowing to try to work more with Republicans on Capitol Hill on poverty-related issues.

Her "war on poverty" remarks echoed a phrase used by former President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964 as part of his push for federal programs aimed at lowering poverty rates.

As of 2013, New Mexico had the nation's second-highest percentage of people living in poverty, according to U.S. Census Bureau numbers released last fall. Roughly 21.9 percent of New Mexicans lived in poverty in that year, an increase of about 22,000 people from 2012.

Meanwhile, **Lujan** Grisham also lauded state lawmakers for creating a Jobs Council, a bipartisan group that has studied the state's economy and recommended ways to bolster job creation efforts.

A former state Cabinet secretary who represents the Albuquerque-based 1st Congressional District, **Lujan** Grisham also touched on access to behavioral health services and public safety issues in her 30-minute speech.

"We should not be militarizing our police forces," **Lujan** Grisham said. "That's not the purpose of those civil servants."

Lujan Grisham was the second member of the state's congressional delegation to deliver an address to lawmakers, as U.S. Rep. Steve Pearce, a Republican, spoke Tuesday. U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-NM, is scheduled to address the Legislature today.

LOAD-DATE: February 19, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: **LUJAN** GRISHAM: Addresses Legislature

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Albuquerque Journal

205 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 19, 2015

LUJAN DELIVERS ADDRESS TO NEW MEXICO LEGISLATURE; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 2145 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District addressed a joint session of the New Mexico Legislature this afternoon. Below are his remarks as prepared.

"To the distinguished members of the New Mexico House of Representatives, the New Mexico Senate, Governor Martinez, Speaker Tripp, President Pro-Tem Papen, tribal leaders, honored guests, family, and friends, thank you for welcoming me here today to discuss our shared commitment to the people of New Mexico and our common goal of building a brighter future for the New Mexico families we are so honored to represent.

"It is always a pleasure to be back in this distinguished chamber, a body that has such a special place in my heart and my family's as well. Thank you for allowing me this honor.

"Growing up and watching Dad serve in this body with my Mom always at his side, I have seen first-hand, how important it is to be the voice for those whose voices are often not heard. I saw the strength of our state and our legislature when New Mexico working families and growing the economy were at the top of everyone's priorities.

"From all around America to right here in the Roundhouse to every community across the Land of Enchantment, that should be our North Star - our mission as elected officials - fighting to grow our economy for each and every constituent we are fortunate to represent.

"As a state and a country, we cannot reach our full potential without a vibrant middle class.

That means working day in and day out to ensure every New Mexican has a good-paying job, food on the table, an education for their children, living their golden years with dignity, and putting a little money in the bank at the end of the month.

"I am not naive. I know that for too many New Mexicans, this vision feels like it's slipping away. I've sat across from many kitchen tables in many homes across New Mexico and looked into many parents' eyes and seen the hurt and fear as they struggle to provide the next meal for their children.

"Our vales demand more. I've talked to many New Mexicans who have spent too many days in search of too few jobs. We all know that New Mexicans deserve better.

"The national economy is gaining speed. The stock market is up, the private sector has added jobs for 59 straight months - the longest streak on record - but these gains are not being felt in homes across New Mexico.

"We must ask ourselves the tough questions and look within to find out why our neighboring states are growing, but New Mexico remains near the bottom. New Mexico leads the nation in child hunger and is near the bottom of childhood wellbeing. We cannot ignore these challenges. We cannot focus on small issues for political gain that sometimes distract us while the larger ones remain unaddressed.

"We cannot let our differences stand in the way of progress. Now is not the time for politics. Now is the time for helping New Mexico's families. As we begin a new Congress and work through our legislative session here at home, I hope that we can work in concert to address these challenges. I hope that we can work together on middle-class economics and offer struggling families a chance to build a brighter future here at home.

"The hard-working men and women of New Mexico are the backbone of our communities and our economy. We should be working to expand economic opportunities, create jobs and grow paychecks. To do this we must diversify our economy by taking advantage of New Mexico's unique resources.

"The federal labs are one of these resources that set us apart from states all across America. Three world-class labs in New Mexico create tremendous possibilities, but we must do more to leverage the labs to drive economic growth and job creation.

"Too many dollars that are coming to New Mexico are simply passing through and not staying here at home. An essential part of that effort is improving coordination between all the stakeholders who have an important role to play. We need a holistic approach with labs, local businesses, investors, the education community, and more all working together toward a common goal that is putting New Mexico first.

"Understanding the needs of the labs and the skills they value will help educators tailor a curriculum and job training toward those needs. Working with local businesses there can be internship and fellowship programs that provide valuable experience to prepare New Mexico's workforce. With the right focus we can attract and educate workers with the skills that then entice more businesses to set up shop in our communities - building an ecosystem around the labs that establishes a workforce pipeline and broader pool of capabilities to draw on.

"We need coordination that ensures that these efforts work in concert with our tax structure to incentivize growth in key areas. On this point I want to commend all the members of the New Mexico Legislature, the Governor, and the Jobs Council for their support of tax credits for Angel investors and research and development. That is good for New Mexico and it will put people to work. These are tools that can support startups and innovative businesses here in New Mexico that jumpstart our economy.

"At the federal level, I have been advocating for increased funding for the Small Business Innovation Research program and the Small Business Technology Transfer program. These programs encourage small businesses to engage in research and development, expanding public/private partnerships to include joint venture opportunities for small business and nonprofit research institutions, enabling them to collaborate with federal research institutions in an effort to bring technological innovations to the marketplace.

"I am also working with the Department of Energy and the National Nuclear Security Administration to encourage them to implement programs that bring together DOE and the Department of Commerce to engage businesses, venture equity, angel investors, universities, and regional entrepreneurs to develop capabilities the labs and the region need.

"As we look to the future of the labs and the impact they have on New Mexico, I believe that we should seek a greater role in shaping that future. The Sandia Management and Operation Contract is in the process of being solicited and re-bid and Los Alamos National Lab's contract will be here before we know it.

"We as a state should set a goal of having a New Mexico-led consortium as prime contractor for one or both of our national labs. If not in this next round, then certainly in the next. It will change the way those dollars flow through New Mexico, having New Mexico at the front of what will be happening day in and day out.

"I encourage the legislature to consider a joint memorial to bring together legislative leaders, the Governor, universities, and the business community to study how we make this happen so that New Mexico can take a leadership role in the operations of New Mexico's national labs.

"In addition to our labs, New Mexico is home to a wealth of natural resources. Wind and solar hold the potential to power our economy. Building a clean energy economy that turns these resources into jobs will be vital for the future of New Mexico.

"This Congress I will introduce legislation to promote increased investments in clean energy through a renewable energy standard that reduces carbon emissions and drives clean energy deployment in states around the country. By increasing the amount of renewable energy that our neighbors use, we can create more demand to export New Mexico's wind and solar. This means making transmission a key focus and encouraging more projects like SunZia throughout New Mexico so that we can move our clean energy into new markets. We can create these opportunities and protect New Mexico's assets, and we must commit to both.

"As New Mexicans, we are blessed by our surroundings with majestic lands that are some of the most beautiful in the world. We are home to the best hunting, fishing, and hiking. This is not only a great source for recreation; it is a major economic driver creating jobs in communities across the state.

"New Mexico's farmers grow crops that are a vital part of our economy as well as our culture, from pistachios to chile. It's these lands that truly make us the Land of Enchantment and it is why we must work to preserve them and support the farmers whose value-added products are the best in the world.

"While our lands, our crops, and our Carne Seca and chile are important, the most important and most treasured resource is every man, woman, and child who calls New Mexico home, who are determined, who are resilient. With the contributions from the Hispanic, Native American, Anglo, African American, and immigrant communities, to our soldiers, veterans, and military families who make us proud, our great diversity is a strength and we must embrace and celebrate it every day.

"With deep roots and a love for our land that has been home to so many generations of New Mexicans, our people are what make our state so strong. But we must invest in our greatest resources, our people. We must educate our children from their earliest days and get them on the right path from the very beginning. I will continue to support efforts at the federal level to expand access to Head Start and other early education programs that help children during their formative years, and I encourage you to take action here in New Mexico.

"With our children ranking near the top of every bad list, we must do something to break this cycle. The Land Grant Permanent Fund was created to invest in New Mexico, to help create wealth, to pave the way for positive education. What better place than in our children's future to invest?

"The challenges we face run deep. But that can't be an excuse for inaction. In fact it calls for bold action. Universal access to education is a must.

"Affordable higher education and access to job training programs must also be part of the equation. Too many students are drowning in debt, not being able to get into their first home, and sometimes not even being able to buy their first car. This is a challenge we can attack together.

"As we grow our economic sectors, we need skilled workers who are prepared for the jobs of the future. In his state of the Union Speech, President Obama called for more access to community college. I agree with the President that our community colleges can lead the way in an effort to provide a good education to all those who want to work hard.

"This Congress I will be introducing legislation to leverage our community colleges and to help them strengthen their clean energy curriculum so they can prepare students and retrain workers for careers in clean energy. By providing grants to community colleges to expand programs that focus on workforce development in this growing field, we can give students the tools they need to get ahead.

"Investing in the people of New Mexico so that we grow the middle class and combat the cycle of poverty is the key to a brighter future. What we should not do is weaken workers' ability to advocate for good wages and safe working conditions.

"As many of you know, we lost my Father to lung cancer over two years ago. Dad was an iron worker who worked up at Los Alamos and the conditions he worked in contributed to his diagnosis.

"Worker safety, ensuring that there are protections so that workers come home safe and sound every night to their family and are not impacted decades later, is of critical importance. And it is a top priority for the unions that fight for working men and women.

"Whether its workplace safety or fair wages, a 40-hour week or overtime pay, unions fought for many protections we now take for granted. That is why undermining our workers through policies that undermine working families would do more harm than good and will take New Mexico in the wrong direction.

"I am hopeful that instead we work together on areas that will strengthen working families, rebuild our economy, and create more opportunities for the people of New Mexico.

"New Mexico is at a crossroads. We have struggled through the deepest recession in a generation. The signs of an economic recovery are all around us, yet seem to be passing us by. The choices we make today will determine if we continue along this road or if we chart a new course that puts us back on the path to prosperity.

"My Father, Speaker **Lujan** said: 'We should never give up. We must preserve in our pursuit to do good, make a difference, and treat every man, woman, and child with respect and dignity.'

"To each and every one of you, I wish you well. I wish you courage and wisdom. May God bless each and every one of you and keep you safe. May God bless New Mexico and may God bless America.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-delivers-address-to-new-mexico-legislature/

LOAD-DATE: February 20, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

February 19, 2015 Thursday 1:01 AM EST

Lujan Delivers Address to New Mexico Legislature

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 2148 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District addressed a joint session of the New Mexico Legislature this afternoon. Below are his remarks as prepared.

"To the distinguished members of the New Mexico House of Representatives, the New Mexico Senate, Governor Martinez, Speaker Tripp, President Pro-Tem Papen, tribal leaders, honored guests, family, and friends, thank you for welcoming me here today to discuss our shared commitment to the people of New Mexico and our common goal of building a brighter future for the New Mexico families we are so honored to represent.

"It is always a pleasure to be back in this distinguished chamber, a body that has such a special place in my heart and my family's as well. Thank you for allowing me this honor.

"Growing up and watching Dad serve in this body with my Mom always at his side, I have seen first-hand, how important it is to be the voice for those whose voices are often not heard. I saw the strength of our state and our legislature when New Mexico working families and growing the economy were at the top of everyone's priorities.

"From all around America to right here in the Roundhouse to every community across the Land of Enchantment, that should be our North Star - our mission as elected officials - fighting to grow our economy for each and every constituent we are fortunate to represent.

"As a state and a country, we cannot reach our full potential without a vibrant middle class.

That means working day in and day out to ensure every New Mexican has a good-paying job, food on the table, an education for their children, living their golden years with dignity, and putting a little money in the bank at the end of the month.

"I am not nadve. I know that for too many New Mexicans, this vision feels like it's slipping away. I've sat across from many kitchen tables in many homes across New Mexico and looked into many parents' eyes and seen the hurt and fear as they struggle to provide the next meal for their children.

"Our vales demand more. I've talked to many New Mexicans who have spent too many days in search of too few jobs. We all know that New Mexicans deserve better.

"The national economy is gaining speed. The stock market is up, the private sector has added jobs for 59 straight months - the longest streak on record - but these gains are not being felt in homes across New Mexico.

"We must ask ourselves the tough questions and look within to find out why our neighboring states are growing, but New Mexico remains near the bottom. New Mexico leads the nation in child hunger and is near the bottom of childhood wellbeing. We cannot ignore these challenges. We cannot focus on small issues for political gain that sometimes distract us while the larger ones remain unaddressed.

"We cannot let our differences stand in the way of progress. Now is not the time for politics. Now is the time for helping New Mexico's families. As we begin a new Congress and work through our legislative session here at home, I hope that we can work in concert to address these challenges. I hope that we can work together on middle-class economics and offer struggling families a chance to build a brighter future here at home.

"The hard-working men and women of New Mexico are the backbone of our communities and our economy. We should be working to expand economic opportunities, create jobs and grow paychecks. To do this we must diversify our economy by taking advantage of New Mexico's unique resources.

"The federal labs are one of these resources that set us apart from states all across America. Three world-class labs in New Mexico create tremendous possibilities, but we must do more to leverage the labs to drive economic growth and job creation.

"Too many dollars that are coming to New Mexico are simply passing through and not staying here at home. An essential part of that effort is improving coordination between all the stakeholders who have an important role to play. We need a holistic approach with labs, local businesses, investors, the education community, and more all working together toward a common goal that is putting New Mexico first.

"Understanding the needs of the labs and the skills they value will help educators tailor a curriculum and job training toward those needs. Working with local businesses there can be internship and fellowship programs that provide valuable experience to prepare New Mexico's workforce. With the right focus we can attract and educate workers with the skills that then entice more businesses to set up shop in our communities - building an ecosystem around the labs that establishes a workforce pipeline and broader pool of capabilities to draw on.

"We need coordination that ensures that these efforts work in concert with our tax structure to incentivize growth in key areas. On this point I want to commend all the members of the New Mexico Legislature, the Governor, and the Jobs Council for their support of tax credits for Angel investors and research and development. That is good for New Mexico and it will put people to work. These are tools that can support startups and innovative businesses here in New Mexico that jumpstart our economy.

"At the federal level, I have been advocating for increased funding for the Small Business Innovation Research program and the Small Business Technology Transfer program. These programs encourage small businesses to engage in research and development, expanding public/private partnerships to include joint venture opportunities for small business and nonprofit research institutions, enabling

them to collaborate with federal research institutions in an effort to bring technological innovations to the marketplace.

"I am also working with the Department of Energy and the National Nuclear Security Administration to encourage them to implement programs that bring together DOE and the Department of Commerce to engage businesses, venture equity, angel investors, universities, and regional entrepreneurs to develop capabilities the labs and the region need.

"As we look to the future of the labs and the impact they have on New Mexico, I believe that we should seek a greater role in shaping that future. The Sandia Management and Operation Contract is in the process of being solicited and re-bid and Los Alamos National Lab's contract will be here before we know it.

"We as a state should set a goal of having a New Mexico-led consortium as prime contractor for one or both of our national labs. If not in this next round, then certainly in the next. It will change the way those dollars flow through New Mexico, having New Mexico at the front of what will be happening day in and day out.

"I encourage the legislature to consider a joint memorial to bring together legislative leaders, the Governor, universities, and the business community to study how we make this happen so that New Mexico can take a leadership role in the operations of New Mexico's national labs.

"In addition to our labs, New Mexico is home to a wealth of natural resources. Wind and solar hold the potential to power our economy. Building a clean energy economy that turns these resources into jobs will be vital for the future of New Mexico.

"This Congress I will introduce legislation to promote increased investments in clean energy through a renewable energy standard that reduces carbon emissions and drives clean energy deployment in states around the country. By increasing the amount of renewable energy that our neighbors use, we can create more demand to export New Mexico's wind and solar. This means making transmission a key focus and encouraging more projects like SunZia throughout New Mexico so that we can move our clean energy into new markets. We can create these opportunities and protect New Mexico's assets, and we must commit to both.

"As New Mexicans, we are blessed by our surroundings with majestic lands that are some of the most beautiful in the world. We are home to the best hunting, fishing, and hiking. This is not only a great source for recreation; it is a major economic driver creating jobs in communities across the state.

"New Mexico's farmers grow crops that are a vital part of our economy as well as our culture, from pistachios to chile. It's these lands that truly make us the Land of Enchantment and it is why we must work to preserve them and support the farmers whose value-added products are the best in the world.

"While our lands, our crops, and our Carne Seca and chile are important, the most important and most treasured resource is every man, woman, and child who calls New Mexico home, who are determined, who are resilient. With the contributions from the Hispanic, Native American, Anglo, African American, and immigrant communities, to our soldiers, veterans, and military families who make us proud, our great diversity is a strength and we must embrace and celebrate it every day.

"With deep roots and a love for our land that has been home to so many generations of New Mexicans, our people are what make our state so strong. But we must invest in our greatest resources, our people. We must educate our children from their earliest days and get them on the right path from the very beginning. I will continue to support efforts at the federal level to expand access to Head Start and other early education programs that help children during their formative years, and I encourage you to take action here in New Mexico.

"With our children ranking near the top of every bad list, we must do something to break this cycle. The Land Grant Permanent Fund was created to invest in New Mexico, to help create wealth, to pave the way for positive education. What better place than in our children's future to invest?

"The challenges we face run deep. But that can't be an excuse for inaction. In fact it calls for bold action. Universal access to education is a must.

"Affordable higher education and access to job training programs must also be part of the equation. Too many students are drowning in debt, not being able to get into their first home, and sometimes not even being able to buy their first car. This is a challenge we can attack together.

"As we grow our economic sectors, we need skilled workers who are prepared for the jobs of the future. In his state of the Union Speech, President Obama called for more access to community college. I agree with the President that our community colleges can lead the way in an effort to provide a good education to all those who want to work hard.

"This Congress I will be introducing legislation to leverage our community colleges and to help them strengthen their clean energy curriculum so they can prepare students and retrain workers for careers in clean energy. By providing grants to community colleges to expand programs that focus on workforce development in this growing field, we can give students the tools they need to get ahead.

"Investing in the people of New Mexico so that we grow the middle class and combat the cycle of poverty is the key to a brighter future. What we should not do is weaken workers' ability to advocate for good wages and safe working conditions.

"As many of you know, we lost my Father to lung cancer over two years ago. Dad was an iron worker who worked up at Los Alamos and the conditions he worked in contributed to his diagnosis.

"Worker safety, ensuring that there are protections so that workers come home safe and sound every night to their family and are not impacted decades later, is of critical importance. And it is a top priority for the unions that fight for working men and women.

"Whether its workplace safety or fair wages, a 40-hour week or overtime pay, unions fought for many protections we now take for granted. That is why undermining our workers through policies that undermine working families would do more harm than good and will take New Mexico in the wrong direction.

"I am hopeful that instead we work together on areas that will strengthen working families, rebuild our economy, and create more opportunities for the people of New Mexico.

"New Mexico is at a crossroads. We have struggled through the deepest recession in a generation. The signs of an economic recovery are all around us, yet seem to be passing us by. The choices we make today will determine if we continue along this road or if we chart a new course that puts us back on the path to prosperity.

"My Father, Speaker **Lujan** said: 'We should never give up. We must preserve in our pursuit to do good, make a difference, and treat every man, woman, and child with respect and dignity.'

"To each and every one of you, I wish you well. I wish you courage and wisdom. May God bless each and every one of you and keep you safe. May God bless New Mexico and may God bless America.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TagarumaMar 150220-5035852 30TagarumaMar

LOAD-DATE: February 20, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Greenwire

February 18, 2015 Wednesday

HOUSE: GOP campaign arm targets 2 top Democrats in '16 cycle

SECTION: Politics Vol. 10 No. 9

LENGTH: 326 words

Daniel Bush, E&E reporter

The House GOP's campaign arm will target two top Democrats and several vulnerable freshman lawmakers in 2016, party officials announced today. The National Republican Congressional Committee has its sights set on defeating Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** (N.M.) and Steve Israel (N.Y.), who are leading their party's efforts to bounce back from last year's election, when the GOP picked up 13 seats and expanded its House majority to its largest size since the 1920s. **Luján** replaced Israel last month as chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

Israel is heading a new policy and communications shop tasked with revamping the House Democratic Caucus' campaign message. Neither one is likely to lose, but by going after leading Democrats, the NRCC is sending a message that it plans to be on the offensive during a tough presidential election year. In addition to**Luján** and Israel, the GOP has also singled out 17 other Democrats from New York to California who were elected recently or who represent swing districts. The list includes the five Democrats left in the House who represent right-leaning districts that President Obama lost to Mitt Romney in the 2012 presidential election (E&E Daily, Feb. 10). "As [House Minority Leader] Nancy Pelosi continues to pull her smaller and weaker caucus of House Democrats to the far left, we are going to make sure that these vulnerable Democrats are held responsible for their disastrous policies," NRCC spokeswoman Katie Martin said in a statement. The NRCC's full list: Reps. Ann Kirkpatrick and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona; John Garamendi, Ami Bera, Julia Brownley, Pete Aguilar, Raul Ruiz and Scott Peters of California; Elizabeth Esty of Connecticut; Gwen Graham and Patrick Murphy of Florida; Cheri Bustos of Illinois; Collin Peterson and Rick Nolan of Minnesota; Brad Ashford of Nebraska; Annie Kuster of New Hampshire; Sean Patrick Maloney of New York; and **Luján** and Israel.

LOAD-DATE: March 18, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Environment and Energy Publishing, LLC

US Official News

February 18, 2015 Wednesday

Fleischmann and Luján to Lead House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus

LENGTH: 529 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative Chuck Fleischmann, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Chairman Chuck Fleischmann (R-TN) and Co-Chairman **Ben Ray Luján** (D-NM) announced today they will serve as co-chairs of the House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus, which held its first meeting of the 114th Congress to discuss the importance of raising awareness of environmental management issues in Congress. Fifty years of government nuclear weapons development stemming from the Manhattan Project during World War II has affected communities across the nation and resulted in the need for environmental cleanup at numerous sites.

"Our nation has a tremendous nuclear history, and with that has come an important nuclear cleanup mission," said Fleischmann who represents the city of Oak Ridge. "I am excited today to host the first meeting of the 114th Congress' Nuclear Cleanup Caucus with co-chair **Lujan** and members from across the country who have districts that are impacted. I also want to thank Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management, Mark Whitney, for taking part in this meeting. This Caucus will serve to promote the awareness of our nuclear legacy and build a stronger coalition to fight for the needs of our cleanup missions, and I am eager to get to work."

"The Nuclear Security Complex has a number of legacies that are deeply rooted in its regional communities. First amongst these is the legacy of service by members of the local community in support of the national defense," said **Luján** whose New Mexico district includes Los Alamos National Laboratory. "However, there is also the legacy of nuclear waste, which continues to threaten the current and future health and environment of these communities that have given so much to our nation. Moving forward we need to honor the legacy of service by fulfilling our obligation to clean up this legacy of waste in a safe, effective, and efficient manner. I look forward to working with Rep. Fleischmann, the rest of the caucus, and stakeholders, including the Regional Coalition of LANL Communities, which I recently met with to discuss the importance of environmental cleanup and our commitment to advocating for the resources to address waste at LANL."

Today's meeting provided the first opportunity for members who represent cleanup sites and stakeholders to come together to discuss the importance of advocating for environmental cleanup and raising awareness with their colleagues in Congress. Members of the caucus were joined by Mark Whitney, Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management at the Department of Energy.

The Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management has completed cleanup of 91 of the 107 sites where nuclear waste was generated as part of the federal nuclear security and energy research, development and production complex. The 16 remaining sites are spread across 11 states and include a number of large and complex sites, such as Hanford and Savannah River sites and Oak Ridge, TN, Idaho, and Los Alamos National Laboratories.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

209 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

February 18, 2015 Wednesday

Fleischmann and Luján to Lead House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus

LENGTH: 529 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative Chuck Fleischmann, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Chairman Chuck Fleischmann (R-TN) and Co-Chairman **Ben Ray Luján** (D-NM) announced today they will serve as co-chairs of the House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus, which held its first meeting of the 114th Congress to discuss the importance of raising awareness of environmental management issues in Congress. Fifty years of government nuclear weapons development stemming from the Manhattan Project during World War II has affected communities across the nation and resulted in the need for environmental cleanup at numerous sites.

"Our nation has a tremendous nuclear history, and with that has come an important nuclear cleanup mission," said Fleischmann who represents the city of Oak Ridge. "I am excited today to host the first meeting of the 114th Congress' Nuclear Cleanup Caucus with co-chair **Lujan** and members from across the country who have districts that are impacted. I also want to thank Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management, Mark Whitney, for taking part in this meeting. This Caucus will serve to promote the awareness of our nuclear legacy and build a stronger coalition to fight for the needs of our cleanup missions, and I am eager to get to work."

"The Nuclear Security Complex has a number of legacies that are deeply rooted in its regional communities. First amongst these is the legacy of service by members of the local community in support of the national defense," said **Luján** whose New Mexico district includes Los Alamos National Laboratory. "However, there is also the legacy of nuclear waste, which continues to threaten the current and future health and environment of these communities that have given so much to our nation. Moving forward we need to honor the legacy of service by fulfilling our obligation to clean up this legacy of waste in a safe, effective, and efficient manner. I look forward to working with Rep. Fleischmann, the rest of the caucus, and stakeholders, including the Regional Coalition of LANL Communities, which I recently met with to discuss the importance of environmental cleanup and our commitment to advocating for the resources to address waste at LANL."

Today's meeting provided the first opportunity for members who represent cleanup sites and stakeholders to come together to discuss the importance of advocating for environmental cleanup and raising awareness with their colleagues in Congress. Members of the caucus were joined by Mark Whitney, Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management at the Department of Energy.

The Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management has completed cleanup of 91 of the 107 sites where nuclear waste was generated as part of the federal nuclear security and energy research, development and production complex. The 16 remaining sites are spread across 11 states and include a number of large and complex sites, such as Hanford and Savannah River sites and Oak Ridge, TN, Idaho, and Los Alamos National Laboratories.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: February 19, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

February 17, 2015 Tuesday

Udall, Lujan, Lujan Grisham Lead Bipartisan Coalition to Protect States' Mineral Royalties

LENGTH: 413 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

U.S. Sen. Tom Udall and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham introduced bipartisan legislation this week that would allow states to collect their own mineral royalties, protecting money that is rightfully owed to the states. The bill would effectively eliminate a collection fee charged by the federal government, which amounts to around $40 million per year.

The Mineral Leasing Act provides that the continental states be paid 50 percent of the revenues resulting from the leasing of mineral resources on federal public domain lands within their borders. These royalties are used by states to fund such necessary items as public school systems, community colleges, emergency response activities and basic infrastructure projects. But in recent years, the federal government began charging states a 2 percent fee to cover collection and disbursement costs. This legislation would ensure that states can continue to receive their 50

percent share of mineral royalties by giving them the option to administer their own programs.

"The federal government's unnecessary fee on mineral revenues takes money from state budgets -- money that many New Mexico communities depend to fund public schools, emergency response and other critical services," Udall said. "New Mexico earned these royalties from our abundant natural resources, and New Mexico communities deserve to keep their share of the revenues without federal interference."

"New Mexico's federal lands are a significant resource that provides important royalties that should be used to strengthen New Mexico," **Luján** said. "This legislation will ensure that more of the money that is rightfully owed to states will be returned in order to support vital programs and investments that make a difference in our communities. Sending the money directly to the states and not to the federal government first will streamline the process, reduce administrative costs, and allow states to receive more of these critical funds."

"This bipartisan bill will ensure New Mexico can keep its fair share of revenue and help the state invest in important priorities, including schools, infrastructure development, small businesses, and other public welfare and economic development programs," **Lujan** Grisham said.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

211 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

February 17, 2015 Tuesday

Lujan Calls for a Vote on Clean DHS Funding Bill

LENGTH: 289 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District joined with House Democrats this morning to urge Republicans to stop playing politics with national security and allow a vote on a clean bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). With funding set to expire at the end

of the month, House Republicans have only scheduled four legislative days to address this critical issue.

"It is time for Congressional Republicans to stop putting their political security ahead of our national security and pass a clean bill rather than cater to the extreme anti-immigration wing of their party that is willing to sacrifice our nation's security in order to attack DREAMers," Congressman **Luján** said. "Already Congressional Republicans' failure to provide long-term funding has negatively impacted the Department of Homeland Security. Missing the next deadline would not only threaten our national security, it would also harm the many New Mexicans who work for the Department and would be left without a paycheck. Republicans should end these political games and put our national security first."

Earlier this week, **Luján** cosponsored a clean bill that avoids a shutdown of the agency charged with coordinating efforts to prevent and respond to acts of terrorism by funding DHS through the end of the fiscal year. This stands in stark contrast to House Republicans, who have refused to fund DHS unless the legislation also targets DREAMers, kids who were brought to this country through no fault of their own.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

212 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

February 17, 2015 Tuesday

Lujan and Fleischmann to Lead House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus

LENGTH: 569 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

United States Representatives **Ben Ray Luján** (D-NM) and Chuck Fleischmann (R-TN) announced today they will serve as co-chairs of the House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus, which held its first meeting of the 114th Congress to discuss the importance of raising awareness of environmental management issues in Congress. Fifty years of government nuclear weapons development stemming from the

Manhattan Project during World War II has affected communities across the nation and resulted in the need for environmental cleanup at numerous sites.

"The Nuclear Security Complex has a number of legacies that are deeply rooted in its regional communities. First amongst these is the legacy of service by members of the local community in support of the national defense," said **Luján**, whose New Mexico district includes Los Alamos National Laboratory. "However, there is also the legacy of nuclear waste, which continues to threaten the current and future health and environment of these communities that have given so much to our nation. Moving forward we need to honor the legacy of service by fulfilling our obligation to clean up this legacy of waste in a safe, effective, and efficient manner. I look forward to working with Rep. Fleischmann, the rest of the caucus, and stakeholders, including the Regional Coalition of LANL Communities, which I recently met with to discuss the importance of environmental cleanup and our commitment to advocating for the resources to address waste at LANL."

"Our nation has a tremendous nuclear history, and with that has come an important nuclear cleanup mission. I am excited today to host the first meeting of the 114th Congress' Nuclear Cleanup Caucus with co-chair **Lujan** and members from across the country who have districts that are impacted," said Fleischmann, who represents the city of Oak Ridge. "I also want to thank Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management, Mark Whitney, for taking part in this meeting. This Caucus will serve to promote the awareness of our nuclear legacy and build a stronger coalition to fight for the needs of our cleanup missions, and I am eager to get to work."

Today's meeting provided the first opportunity for members who represent cleanup sites and stakeholders to come together to discuss the importance of advocating for environmental cleanup and raising awareness with their colleagues in Congress. Members of the caucus were joined by Mark Whitney, Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management at the Department of Energy.

"The Environmental Management program benefits from the continued focus and support from the Members of the Cleanup Caucus as we continue to make progress on completing cleanup at sites and in communities across the nation," said Whitney.

The Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management has completed cleanup of 91 of the 107 sites where nuclear waste was generated as part of the federal nuclear security and energy research, development and production complex. The 16 remaining sites are spread across 11 states and include a number of large and complex sites, such as Hanford and Savannah River sites and Oak Ridge, Idaho, and Los Alamos National Laboratories.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

February 17, 2015 Tuesday

Lujan Introduces RECA Legislation to Expand Compensation for Those Exposed to Radiation

LENGTH: 872 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District introduced legislation in the House of Representatives today that expands compensation for those exposed to radiation while working in uranium mines or living downwind from atomic weapons tests. Companion legislation has been introduced in the Senate by a bipartisan coalition of Senators, including New Mexico Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich.

Among the provisions in the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) Amendments of 2015 are much needed changes that would build upon previous RECA legislation by further widening qualifications for compensation for radiation exposure; qualifying post 1971 uranium workers for compensation; and expanding the downwind exposure area to include Colorado, Idaho, Montana, and New Mexico, as well as any county in Arizona, Nevada, or Utah, which has been shown to be impacted by downwind contamination.

"Until this gets done - compensating and recognizing the miners, workers, downwinders and all who are suffering from the impacts of uranium mining and nuclear testing during the Cold War - we will continue to push this legislation forward," Congressman **Luján** said. "I will continue my efforts to educate my colleagues in the House on the critical need to compensate all those who played a key role in our national security during the Cold War and have suffered as a result of their efforts."

Specifically, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments of 2015 will:

o Extend compensation to employees of mines and mills employed after Dec. 31, 1971. These are individuals who began working in uranium mines and mills after the U.S. stopped purchasing uranium, but failed to implement and enforce adequate uranium mining safety standards. Many of these workers have the same illnesses as pre-1971 workers who currently qualify for RECA compensation.

o Add core drillers to the list of compensable employees, which currently only includes miners, millers and ore transporters.

o Add renal cancer, or any other chronic renal disease, to the list of compensable diseases for employees of mines and mills. Currently, millers and transporters are covered for kidney disease, but miners are not.

o Allow claimants to combine work histories to meet the requirement of the legislation. For example, individuals who worked half a year in a mill and half a year in a mine would be eligible for compensation. Currently, the Department of Justice makes some exceptions for this, but the policy is not codified in law.

o Make all claimants available for an equal amount of compensation, specifically $150,000, regardless of whether they are millers, miners, ore transporters, onsite employees, or downwinders.

o Make all claimants eligible for medical benefits. Currently, only miners, millers and ore transporters can claim medical benefits through the medical expense compensation program.

o Recognize radiation exposure from the Trinity Test Site in New Mexico, as well as tests in the Pacific Ocean.

o Expand the downwind areas to include all of Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, and Utah for the Nevada Test Site; New Mexico for the Trinity Test Site; and Guam for the Pacific tests.

o Allow the use of affidavits to substantiate employment history, presence in affected area, and work at a test site. Current legislation only allows miners to use affidavits.

o Return all attorney fees to a cap of 10 percent of the amount of the RECA claim, as was mandated in the original 1990 RECA legislation.

o Authorize $3 million for five years for epidemiological research on the impacts of uranium development on communities and families of uranium workers. The funds would be allocated to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to award grants to universities and non-profits to carry out the research.

o Allow miners, millers, core drillers, and ore transporters to file a Special Exposure Cohort petition within the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA). Other DOE workers are currently allowed to file such petitions for compensation when claims are denied and there is not enough information for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health to do dose reconstruction to determine the impacts of exposure.

To meet its responsibility to those Americans who sacrificed so much for our national security, Congress passed the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) on October 5, 1990 and later broadened the scope of the Act's coverage on July 10, 2000. The current law offers compensation to individuals who contracted certain cancers and other serious diseases following their exposure to radiation released during above-ground atmospheric nuclear weapons tests or following their occupational exposure to radiation while employed in the uranium industry. However, there are many additional individuals who are sick or dying from radiation exposure and are unable to receive the compensation they deserve.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: February 18, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

February 17, 2015 Tuesday

Lujan Calls for a Vote on Clean DHS Funding Bill

LENGTH: 289 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District joined with House Democrats this morning to urge Republicans to stop playing politics with national security and allow a vote on a clean bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). With funding set to expire at the end of the month, House Republicans have only scheduled four legislative days to address this critical issue.

"It is time for Congressional Republicans to stop putting their political security ahead of our national security and pass a clean bill rather than cater to the extreme anti-immigration wing of their party that is willing to sacrifice our nation's security in order to attack DREAMers," Congressman **Luján** said. "Already Congressional Republicans' failure to provide long-term funding has negatively impacted the Department of Homeland Security. Missing the next deadline would not only threaten our national security, it would also harm the many New Mexicans who work for the Department and would be left without a paycheck. Republicans should end these political games and put our national security first."

Earlier this week, **Luján** cosponsored a clean bill that avoids a shutdown of the agency charged with coordinating efforts to prevent and respond to acts of terrorism by funding DHS through the end of the fiscal year. This stands in stark contrast to House Republicans, who have refused to fund DHS unless the legislation also targets DREAMers, kids who were brought to this country through no fault of their own.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: February 18, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

215 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

February 16, 2015 Monday 7:05 PM EST

Rep. Lujan Introduces Bill to Improve Workers' Compensation in Uranium Mining

BYLINE: by MERLY LAPIG, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 196 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Feb. 16 -- Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., has introduced legislation (H.R. 994) to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act to "improve compensation for workers involved in uranium mining."

The bill was introduced on Feb. 13 and has six co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. Raul M. Grijalva, D-Ariz., Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., Ann Kirkpatrick, D-Ariz., Ed Perlmutter, D-Colo., Dina Titus, D-Nev., and Steve Pearce, R-N.M.

The legislation was referred to the House Judiciary Committee; House Education and the Workforce Committee; and House Energy and Commerce Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.php. For more information about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information, contact Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; targetednews.com.

22LapigM 150216-kn-1192075

LOAD-DATE: February 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

216 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

February 16, 2015 Monday 7:04 PM EST

Rep. Grisham Introduces Bill to Abolish Limitation on Number of Veterans to Enroll in Programs of Independent Living Services

BYLINE: by MERLY LAPIG, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 184 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Feb. 16 -- Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., has introduced legislation (H.R. 993) to "repeal the limitation on the number of veterans authorized to be enrolled in programs of independent living services and assistance administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs."

The bill was introduced on Feb. 13 and has three co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. Niki Tsongas, D-Mass., Matthew Cartwright, D-Pa., and **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M.

The legislation was referred to the House Veterans' Affairs Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.php. For more information about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information, contact Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; targetednews.com.

22LapigM 150216-kn-1192074

LOAD-DATE: February 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

217 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

February 16, 2015 Monday 6:52 PM EST

Rep. Gibson Introduces Bill to Clarify Presumptions of Exposure for Veterans Who Served in Vicinity of Republic of Vietnam

BYLINE: by ETHEL TENORIO, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 687 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Feb. 16 -- Rep. Chris Gibson, R-N.Y., has introduced legislation (H.R. 969) to "clarify presumptions relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam."

The bill was introduced on Feb. 13 and has 131 co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. Steven M. Palazzo, R-Miss., Peter T. King, R-N.Y., Charles B. Rangel, D-N.Y., Leonard Lance, R-N.J., Alcee L Hastings, D-Fla., Kevin Cramer, R-N.D., Chellie Pingree, D-Maine, Matthew Cartwright, D-Pa., Keith Rothfus, R-Pa., Thomas Massie, R-Ky., Juan C. Vargas, D-Calif., **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., Steve Stivers, R-Ohio, Roger Williams, R-Texas, Adam B. Schiff, D-Calif., Betty McCollum, D-Minn., Jeff Duncan, R-S.C., Bobby L. Rush, D-Ill., Raul M. Grijalva, D-Ariz., Blake Farenthold, R-Texas, Jim Himes, D-Conn., John Lewis, D-Ga., Sanford D. Bishop Jr., D-Ga., Reid J. Ribble, R-Wis., Walter B. Jones, R-N.C., Joe Courtfney, D-Conn., Marsha Blackburn, R-Tenn., Gerald E. Connolly, D-Va., John Delaney, D-Md., Albio Sires, D-N.J., Julia Brownley, D-Calif., Jim McDermott, D-Wash., Cheri Bustos, D-Ill., Suzan DelBene, D-Wash., Richard E. Neal, D-Mass., Hakeen Jeffries, D-N.Y., Morgan Griffith, R-Va., Paul Cook, R-Calif., Mark Amodei, R-Nev., Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., Joseph P. Kennedy III, D-Mass., Richard B. Nugent, R-Fla., J. Randy Forbes, R-Va., Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz., Gregorio Sablan, D-M.P., Jaime Herrera Beutler, R-Wash., Elizabeth Esty, D-Conn., Marc Veasey, D-Texas, Katherine M. Clark, D-Mass., Scott Peters, D-Calif., Lois Frankel, D-Fla., John R. Carter, R-Texas, Peter A. DeFazio, D-Ore., Jose E. Serrano, D-N.Y., David Jolly, R-Fla., Jeff Fortenberry, R-Neb., Brad Ashford, D-Neb., Jared Polis, D-Colo., Alan Lowenthal, D-Calif., Adam Smith, D-Wash., John A. Yarmuth, D-Ky., Steve Cohen, D-Tenn., Niki Tsongas, D-Mass., Barbara Lee, D-Calif., Patrick Murphy, D-Fla., Rick Larsen, D-Wash., Yvette D. Clarke, D-N.Y., David N. Cicilline, D-R.I., Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., Tony Cardenas, D-Calif., Mike Honda, D-Calif., Gregory W. Meeks, D-N.Y., Timothy Walz, D-Minn., Patrick Meehan, R-Pa., Carlos Curbelo, R-Fla., David Joyce, R-Ohio, Lucille Roybal-Allard, D-Calif., Joyce Beatty, D-Ohio, Paul Tonko, D-N.Y., John B. Larson, D-Conn., Brett Guthrie, R-Ky., Austin Scott, R-Ga., James McGovern, D-Mass., Jason Smith, R-Mo., Robert C. Scott, D-Va., Robert Latta, R-Ohio, Tom Reed, R-N.Y., Lee Zeldin, R-N.Y., Lou Barletta, R-Pa., Rosa L. DeLauro, D-Conn., Sean Patrick Maloney, D-N.Y., Brian Higgins, D-N.Y., Nita M. Lowey, D-N.Y., Steve Israel, D-N.Y., Jim Bridenstine, R-Okla., Michael G. Fitzpatrick, R-Pa., Richard L. Hanna, R-N.Y., Randy Neugebauer, R-Texas, Grace Meng, D-N.Y., Henry C. Johnson, D-Ga., Denny Heck, D-Wash., Dennis A. Ross, R-Fla., Tom Marino, R-Pa., Joseph R. Pitts, R-Pa., Dan Benishek, R-Mich., Tulsi Gabbard, D-Hawaii, David B. McKinley, R-W.Va., Mike Simpson, R-Idaho, Marcy Kaptur, D-Ohio, Bradley Byrne, R-Ala., Kevin Yoder, R-Kan., Harold Rogers, R-Ky., Tom Cole, R-Okla., Barry Loudermilk, R-Ga., Evan Jenkins, R-W.Va., Louie Gohmert, R-Texas, Mike Rogers, R-Ala., Ed Perlmutter, D-Colo., Pete Olson, R-Texas, Jim Renacci, R-Ohio, Mo Brooks, R-Ala., Terri A. Sewell, D-Ala., Cresent Hardy, R-Nev., Brian Babin, R-Texas, Robert A. Brady, D-Pa., Rick Nolan, D-Minn., Daniel Webster, R-Fla., Diana DeGette, D-Colo.; Dels. Eleanor Holmes Norton, D-D.C., Madeleine Z. Bordallo, D-Guam, and Gregorio Sablan, D-M.P.

The legislation was referred to the House Veterans' Affairs Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.php. For more information about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information, contact Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; targetednews.com.

22ETenorio20150216-kn-1192050

LOAD-DATE: February 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

February 14, 2015 Saturday 7:14 PM EST

Rep. Lummis Introduces Bill to Convey to States Property Interest in State Share of Royalties, Other Payments

BYLINE: by MERLY LAPIG, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 209 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Feb. 14 -- Rep. Cynthia Lummis, R-Wyo., has introduced legislation (H.R. 945) to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to "require the Secretary of the Interior to convey to a State all right, title, and interest in and to a percentage of the amount of royalties and other amounts required to be paid to the State under that Act with respect to public land and deposits in the State."

The bill was introduced on Feb. 12 and has five co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., Steve Pearce, R-N.M., **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., Chris Stewart, R-Utah, and Scott R. Tipton, R-Colo.

The legislation was referred to the House Natural Resources Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.php. For more information about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information, contact Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; targetednews.com.

22LapigM 150214-kn-1191938

LOAD-DATE: February 14, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

February 14, 2015 Saturday 7:00 PM EST

Rep. DeLauro Introduces Bill to Allow Americans to Earn Paid Sick Time for Health Needs

BYLINE: by MERLY LAPIG, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 466 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Feb. 14 -- Rep. Rosa L. DeLauro, D-Conn., has introduced legislation (H.R. 932) to "allow Americans to earn paid sick time so that they can address their own health needs and the health needs of their families."

The bill was introduced on Feb. 12 and has 71 co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. Doris O. Matsui, D-Calif., Robert A. Brady, D-Pa., Joseph Crowley, D-N.Y., Jim Langevin, D-R.I., Brendan Boyle, D-Pa., Katherine M. Clark, D-Mass., Niki Tsongas, D-Mass., Frederica S. Wilson, D-Fla., Jackie Speier, D-Calif., Adam B. Schiff, D-Calif., Ted Deutch, D-Fla., Robert C. Scott, D-Va., Mark Pocan, D-Wis., Charles B. Rangel, D-N.Y., John A. Yarmuth, D-Ky., Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., Barbara Lee, D-Calif., Frank Pallone Jr., D-N.J., Raul M. Grijalva, D-Ariz., Nita M. Lowey, D-N.Y., Gwen Moore, D-Wis., Sander M. Levin, D-Mich., Luis V. Gutierrez, D-Ill., Donna F. Edwards, D-Md., Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill., Julia Brownley, D-Calif., Elizabeth Esty, D-Conn., Derek Kilmer, D-Wash., Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., Carolyn B. Maloney, D-N.Y., Mark Takano, D-Calif., Michael E. Capuano, D-Mass., Dina Titus, D-Nev., John Garamendi, D-Calif., Chellie Pingree, D-Maine, Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., Ann McLane Kuster, D-N.H., Joe Courtney, D-Conn., Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., Suzan DelBene, D-Wash., Cheri Bustos, D-Ill., Donald M. Payne Jr., D-N.J., Joseph P. Kennedy III, D-Mass., Andre Carson, D-Ind., Yvette D. Clarke, D-N.Y., William "Lacy" Clay Jr., D-Mo., Emanuel Cleaver, D-Mo., Steve Israel, D-N.Y., Betty McCollum, D-Minn., Jim McDermott, D-Wash., Jared Polis, D-Colo., Tim Ryan, D-Ohio, Eric Swalwell, D-Calif., Nydia M. Velazquez, D-N.Y., Louise Slaughter, D-N.Y., Lois Frankel, D-Fla., Janice Hahn, D-Calif., Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., Judy Chu, D-Calif., Debbie Dingell, D-Mich., Marcy Kaptur, D-Ohio, Grace Meng, D-N.Y., Mike Honda, D-Calif., Marcia L. Fudge, D-Ohio, Corrine Brown, D-Fla., **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., John Lewis, D-Ga., Chaka Fattah, D-Pa., Gene Green, D-Texas, and Paul Tonko, D-N.Y.

The legislation was referred to the House Education and the Workforce Committee, House Administration Committee and the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.php. For more information about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information, contact Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; targetednews.com.

22LapigM 150214-kn-1191925

LOAD-DATE: February 14, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 13, 2015

LUJAN INTRODUCES RECA LEGISLATION TO EXPAND COMPENSATION FOR THOSE EXPOSED TO RADIATION; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 859 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District introduced legislation in the House of Representatives today that expands compensation for those exposed to radiation while working in uranium mines or living downwind from atomic weapons tests. Companion legislation has been introduced in the Senate by a bipartisan coalition of Senators, including New Mexico Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich.

Among the provisions in the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) Amendments of 2015 are much needed changes that would build upon previous RECA legislation by further widening qualifications for compensation for radiation exposure; qualifying post 1971 uranium workers for compensation; and expanding the downwind exposure area to include Colorado, Idaho, Montana, and New Mexico, as well as any county in Arizona, Nevada, or Utah, which has been shown to be impacted by downwind contamination.

"Until this gets done - compensating and recognizing the miners, workers, downwinders and all who are suffering from the impacts of uranium mining and nuclear testing during the Cold War - we will continue to push this legislation forward," Congressman **Lujan** said. "I will continue my efforts to educate my colleagues in the House on the critical need to compensate all those who played a key role in our national security during the Cold War and have suffered as a result of their efforts."

Specifically, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments of 2015 will:

* Extend compensation to employees of mines and mills employed after Dec. 31, 1971. These are individuals who began working in uranium mines and mills after the U.S. stopped purchasing uranium, but failed to implement and enforce adequate uranium mining safety standards. Many of these workers have the same illnesses as pre-1971 workers who currently qualify for RECA compensation.

* Add core drillers to the list of compensable employees, which currently only includes miners, millers and ore transporters.

* Add renal cancer, or any other chronic renal disease, to the list of compensable diseases for employees of mines and mills. Currently, millers and transporters are covered for kidney disease, but miners are not.

* Allow claimants to combine work histories to meet the requirement of the legislation. For example, individuals who worked half a year in a mill and half a year in a mine would be eligible for compensation. Currently, the Department of Justice makes some exceptions for this, but the policy is not codified in law.

* Make all claimants available for an equal amount of compensation, specifically $150,000, regardless of whether they are millers, miners, ore transporters, onsite employees, or downwinders.

* Make all claimants eligible for medical benefits. Currently, only miners, millers and ore transporters can claim medical benefits through the medical expense compensation program.

* Recognize radiation exposure from the Trinity Test Site in New Mexico, as well as tests in the Pacific Ocean.

* Expand the downwind areas to include all of Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, and Utah for the Nevada Test Site; New Mexico for the Trinity Test Site; and Guam for the Pacific tests.

* Allow the use of affidavits to substantiate employment history, presence in affected area, and work at a test site. Current legislation only allows miners to use affidavits.

* Return all attorney fees to a cap of 10 percent of the amount of the RECA claim, as was mandated in the original 1990 RECA legislation.

* Authorize $3 million for five years for epidemiological research on the impacts of uranium development on communities and families of uranium workers. The funds would be allocated to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to award grants to universities and non-profits to carry out the research.

* Allow miners, millers, core drillers, and ore transporters to file a Special Exposure Cohort petition within the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA). Other DOE workers are currently allowed to file such petitions for compensation when claims are denied and there is not enough information for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health to do dose reconstruction to determine the impacts of exposure.

To meet its responsibility to those Americans who sacrificed so much for our national security, Congress passed the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) on October 5, 1990 and later broadened the scope of the Act's coverage on July 10, 2000. The current law offers compensation to individuals who contracted certain cancers and other serious diseases following their exposure to radiation released during above-ground atmospheric nuclear weapons tests or following their occupational exposure to radiation while employed in the uranium industry. However, there are many additional individuals who are sick or dying from radiation exposure and are unable to receive the compensation they deserve.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-introduces-reca-legislation-to-expand-compensation-for-those-exposed-to-radiation/

LOAD-DATE: February 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 13, 2015

UDALL, LUJAN, LUJAN GRISHAM LEAD BIPARTISAN COALITION TO PROTECT STATES' MINERAL ROYALTIES; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 425 words

WASHINGTON - U.S. Sen. Tom Udall and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham introduced bipartisan legislation this week that would allow states to collect their own mineral royalties, protecting money that is rightfully owed to the states. The bill would effectively eliminate a collection fee charged by the federal government, which amounts to around $40 million per year.

The Mineral Leasing Act provides that the continental states be paid 50 percent of the revenues resulting from the leasing of mineral resources on federal public domain lands within their borders. These royalties are used by states to fund such necessary items as public school systems, community colleges, emergency response activities and basic infrastructure projects. But in recent years, the federal government began charging states a 2 percent fee to cover collection and disbursement costs. This legislation would ensure that states can continue to receive their 50 percent share of mineral royalties by giving them the option to administer their own programs.

"The federal government's unnecessary fee on mineral revenues takes money from state budgets -- money that many New Mexico communities depend to fund public schools, emergency response and other critical services," Udall said. "New Mexico earned these royalties from our abundant natural resources, and New Mexico communities deserve to keep their share of the revenues without federal interference."

"New Mexico's federal lands are a significant resource that provides important royalties that should be used to strengthen New Mexico," **Lujan** said. "This legislation will ensure that more of the money that is rightfully owed to states will be returned in order to support vital programs and investments that make a difference in our communities. Sending the money directly to the states and not to the federal government first will streamline the process, reduce administrative costs, and allow states to receive more of these critical funds."

"This bipartisan bill will ensure New Mexico can keep its fair share of revenue and help the state invest in important priorities, including schools, infrastructure development, small businesses, and other public welfare and economic development programs," **Lujan** Grisham said.

U.S. Sens. John Barrasso, R-Wyo., Mike Enzi, R-Wyo. and U.S. Rep. Cynthia Lummis, R-Wyo., joined to introduce the bill.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/udall-**lujan-lujan**-grisham-lead-bipartisan-coalition-to-protect-states-mineral-royalties/

LOAD-DATE: February 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 13, 2015

LUJAN CALLS FOR A VOTE ON CLEAN DHS FUNDING BILL; Joins House Democrats to Urge Republicans to Stop Playing Politics with National Security; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM). News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 274 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District joined with House Democrats this morning to urge Republicans to stop playing politics with national security and allow a vote on a clean bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). With funding set to expire at the end of the month, House Republicans have only scheduled four legislative days to address this critical issue.

"It is time for Congressional Republicans to stop putting their political security ahead of our national security and pass a clean bill rather than cater to the extreme anti-immigration wing of their party that is willing to sacrifice our nation's security in order to attack DREAMers," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Already Congressional Republicans' failure to provide long-term funding has negatively impacted the Department of Homeland Security. Missing the next deadline would not only threaten our national security, it would also harm the many New Mexicans who work for the Department and would be left without a paycheck. Republicans should end these political games and put our national security first."

Earlier this week, **Lujan** cosponsored a clean bill that avoids a shutdown of the agency charged with coordinating efforts to prevent and respond to acts of terrorism by funding DHS through the end of the fiscal year. This stands in stark contrast to House Republicans, who have refused to fund DHS unless the legislation also targets DREAMers, kids who were brought to this country through no fault of their own.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-calls-for-a-vote-on-clean-dhs-funding-bill/

LOAD-DATE: February 16, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

February 13, 2015 Friday

LUJAN CALLS FOR A VOTE ON CLEAN DHS FUNDING BILL

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 280 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Joins House Democrats to Urge Republicans to Stop Playing Politics with National Security

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District joined with House Democrats this morning to urge Republicans to stop playing politics with national security and allow a vote on a clean bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). With funding set to expire at the end of the month, House Republicans have only scheduled four legislative days to address this critical issue.

"It is time for Congressional Republicans to stop putting their political security ahead of our national security and pass a clean bill rather than cater to the extreme anti-immigration wing of their party that is willing to sacrifice our nation's security in order to attack DREAMers," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Already Congressional Republicans' failure to provide long-term funding has negatively impacted the Department of Homeland Security. Missing the next deadline would not only threaten our national security, it would also harm the many New Mexicans who work for the Department and would be left without a paycheck. Republicans should end these political games and put our national security first."

Earlier this week, **Lujan** cosponsored a clean bill that avoids a shutdown of the agency charged with coordinating efforts to prevent and respond to acts of terrorism by funding DHS through the end of the fiscal year. This stands in stark contrast to House Republicans, who have refused to fund DHS unless the legislation also targets DREAMers, kids who were brought to this country through no fault of their own.

LOAD-DATE: February 14, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

February 13, 2015 Friday 11:16 PM EST

Udall, Lujan, Lujan Grisham Lead Bipartisan Coalition to Protect States' Mineral Royalties

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 421 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

U.S. Sen. Tom Udall and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham introduced bipartisan legislation this week that would allow states to collect their own mineral royalties, protecting money that is rightfully owed to the states. The bill would effectively eliminate a collection fee charged by the federal government, which amounts to around $40 million per year.

The Mineral Leasing Act provides that the continental states be paid 50 percent of the revenues resulting from the leasing of mineral resources on federal public domain lands within their borders. These royalties are used by states to fund such necessary items as public school systems, community colleges, emergency response activities and basic infrastructure projects.

But in recent years, the federal government began charging states a 2 percent fee to cover collection and disbursement costs. This legislation would ensure that states can continue to receive their 50 percent share of mineral royalties by giving them the option to administer their own programs.

"The federal government's unnecessary fee on mineral revenues takes money from state budgets -- money that many New Mexico communities depend to fund public schools, emergency response and other critical services," Udall said.

"New Mexico earned these royalties from our abundant natural resources, and New Mexico communities deserve to keep their share of the revenues without federal interference."

"New Mexico's federal lands are a significant resource that provides important royalties that should be used to strengthen New Mexico," **Lujan** said. "This legislation will ensure that more of the money that is rightfully owed to states will be returned in order to support vital programs and investments that make a difference in our communities. Sending the money directly to the states and not to the federal government first will streamline the process, reduce administrative costs, and allow states to receive more of these critical funds."

"This bipartisan bill will ensure New Mexico can keep its fair share of revenue and help the state invest in important priorities, including schools, infrastructure development, small businesses, and other public welfare and economic development programs," **Lujan** Grisham said.

U.S. Sens. John Barrasso, R-Wyo., Mike Enzi, R-Wyo. and U.S. Rep. Cynthia Lummis, R-Wyo., joined to introduce the bill.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TacordaCheng-150214-5029907 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: February 14, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

225 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

February 13, 2015 Friday 11:16 PM EST

Lujan Calls for a Vote on Clean DHS Funding Bill

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 277 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District joined with House Democrats this morning to urge Republicans to stop playing politics with national security and allow a vote on a clean bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). With funding set to expire at the end of the month, House Republicans have only scheduled four legislative days to address this critical issue.

"It is time for Congressional Republicans to stop putting their political security ahead of our national security and pass a clean bill rather than cater to the extreme anti-immigration wing of their party that is willing to sacrifice our nation's security in order to attack DREAMers," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Already Congressional Republicans' failure to provide long-term funding has negatively impacted the Department of Homeland Security. Missing the next deadline would not only threaten our national security, it would also harm the many New Mexicans who work for the Department and would be left without a paycheck. Republicans should end these political games and put our national security first."

Earlier this week, **Lujan** cosponsored a clean bill that avoids a shutdown of the agency charged with coordinating efforts to prevent and respond to acts of terrorism by funding DHS through the end of the fiscal year. This stands in stark contrast to House Republicans, who have refused to fund DHS unless the legislation also targets DREAMers, kids who were brought to this country through no fault of their own.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TacordaCheng-150214-5029908 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: February 14, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

February 13, 2015 Friday

Udall, Luján, Lujan Grisham Lead Bipartisan Coalition to Protect States' Mineral Royalties

LENGTH: 430 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Tom Udall, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

U.S. Sen. Tom Udall and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham introduced bipartisan legislation this week that would allow states to collect their own mineral royalties, protecting money that is rightfully owed to the states. The bill would effectively eliminate a collection fee charged by the federal government, which amounts to around $40 million per year.

The Mineral Leasing Act provides that the continental states be paid 50 percent of the revenues resulting from the leasing of mineral resources on federal public domain lands within their borders. These royalties are used by states to fund such necessary items as public school systems, community colleges, emergency response activities and basic infrastructure projects. But in recent years, the federal government began charging states a 2 percent fee to cover collection and disbursement costs. This legislation would ensure that states can continue to receive their 50 percent share of mineral royalties by giving them the option to administer their own programs.

"The federal government's unnecessary fee on mineral revenues takes money from state budgets - money that many New Mexico communities depend to fund public schools, emergency response and other critical services," Udall said. "New Mexico earned these royalties from our abundant natural resources, and New Mexico communities deserve to keep their share of the revenues without federal interference."

"New Mexico's federal lands are a significant resource that provides important royalties that should be used to strengthen New Mexico," **Luján** said. "This legislation will ensure that more of the money that is rightfully owed to states will be returned in order to support vital programs and investments

that make a difference in our communities. Sending the money directly to the states and not to the federal government first will streamline the process, reduce administrative costs, and allow states to receive more of these critical funds."

"This bipartisan bill will ensure New Mexico can keep its fair share of revenue and help the state invest in important priorities, including schools, infrastructure development, small businesses, and other public welfare and economic development programs," **Lujan** Grisham said.

U.S. Sens. John Barrasso, R-Wyo., Mike Enzi, R-Wyo. and U.S. Rep. Cynthia Lummis, R-Wyo., joined to introduce the bill.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

227 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

February 13, 2015 Friday

Bipartisan coalition introduces bill to protect states mineral royalties

LENGTH: 640 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Mike Enzi, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

U.S. Senators Mike Enzi, R-Wyo., Tom Udall, D-N.M., John Barrasso, R-Wyo., Representatives Cynthia Lummis, R-Wyo., Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., and **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., introduced legislation today that would allow states to collect their own mineral royalties, protecting money that is rightfully owed to the states. The bill would effectively eliminate a collection fee charged by the federal government, which amounts to around $40 million per year.

"For years, the federal government split the revenue 50-50, but only when it was short on money did it decide to squeeze a few states with this unfair surcharge," Enzi said. "By empowering states to collect their own mineral revenue, they would no longer have to worry about the federal government snatching up mineral royalties that are rightfully theirs."

"The federal government's unnecessary fee on mineral revenues takes money from state budgets -- money that many New Mexico communities depend to fund public schools, emergency response and other critical services," Udall said. "New Mexico earned these royalties from our abundant natural resources, and New Mexico communities deserve to keep their share of the revenues without federal interference."

"States are in the best position to make sure that their mineral revenues are properly paid and collected," Barrasso said. "Our bill will ensure Washington delivers on its obligation to mineral producing states while also making the process more efficient, cost effective and accountable."

"We need to stop Washington's taxing of state coffers to cover federal spending," Rep. Lummis said. "Citing administrative costs, the federal government has been taking an additional 2% annually that is owed to mineral states like Wyoming and New Mexico. To address this, I am pleased to re-introduce this legislation that I wrote last Congress to remove the federal middle man and allow states the option to collect their 50% share of royalties under the Mineral Leasing Act. I look forward to working with Sens. Enzi and Barrasso and my other colleagues in Congress to protect states' money by keeping it from needlessly leaving the states' borders."

"This bi-partisan bill will ensure New Mexico can keep its fair share of revenue and help the state invest in important priorities, including schools, infrastructure development, small businesses, and other public welfare and economic development programs," Rep. **Lujan** Grisham said.

"New Mexico's federal lands are a significant resource that provides important royalties that should be used to strengthen New Mexico," Rep. **Luján** said. "This legislation will ensure that more of the money that is rightfully owed to states will be returned in order to support vital programs and investments that make a difference in our communities. Sending the money directly to the states and not to the federal government first will streamline the process, reduce administrative costs, and allow states to receive more of these critical funds."

The Mineral Leasing Act provides that the continental states be paid 50 percent of the revenues resulting from the leasing of mineral resources on federal public domain lands within their borders. These royalties are used by states to fund such necessary items as public school systems, community colleges, emergency response activities and basic infrastructure projects.

Currently, the federal government charges states a 2 percent fee to cover collection and disbursement costs. This legislation would ensure that states can continue to receive their 50 percent share of mineral royalties by giving them the option to administer their own programs.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

LUJAN AND FLEISCHMANN TO LEAD HOUSE NUCLEAR CLEANUP CAUCUS;
Hold First Meeting to Raise Awareness of Environmental Cleanup Issues;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 556 words

Washington, D.C. - United States Representatives **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-NM) and Chuck Fleischmann (R-TN) announced today they will serve as co-chairs of the House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus, which held its first meeting of the 114th Congress to discuss the importance of raising awareness of environmental management issues in Congress. Fifty years of government nuclear weapons development stemming from the Manhattan Project during World War II has affected communities across the nation and resulted in the need for environmental cleanup at numerous sites.

"The Nuclear Security Complex has a number of legacies that are deeply rooted in its regional communities. First amongst these is the legacy of service by members of the local community in support of the national defense," said **Lujan**, whose New Mexico district includes Los Alamos National Laboratory. "However, there is also the legacy of nuclear waste, which continues to threaten the current and future health and environment of these communities that have given so much to our nation. Moving forward we need to honor the legacy of service by fulfilling our obligation to clean up this legacy of waste in a safe, effective, and efficient manner. I look forward to working with Rep. Fleischmann, the rest of the caucus, and stakeholders, including the Regional Coalition of LANL Communities, which I recently met with to discuss the importance of environmental cleanup and our commitment to advocating for the resources to address waste at LANL."

"Our nation has a tremendous nuclear history, and with that has come an important nuclear cleanup mission. I am excited today to host the first meeting of the 114th Congress' Nuclear Cleanup Caucus with co-chair **Lujan** and members from across the country who have districts that are impacted," said Fleischmann, who represents the city of Oak Ridge. "I also want to thank Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management, Mark Whitney, for taking part in this meeting. This Caucus will serve to promote the awareness of our nuclear legacy and build a stronger coalition to fight for the needs of our cleanup missions, and I am eager to get to work."

Today's meeting provided the first opportunity for members who represent cleanup sites and stakeholders to come together to discuss the importance of advocating for environmental cleanup and raising awareness with their colleagues in Congress. Members of the caucus were joined by Mark Whitney, Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management at the Department of Energy.

"The Environmental Management program benefits from the continued focus and support from the Members of the Cleanup Caucus as we continue to make progress on completing cleanup at sites and in communities across the nation," said Whitney.

The Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management has completed cleanup of 91 of the 107 sites where nuclear waste was generated as part of the federal nuclear security and energy research, development and production complex. The 16 remaining sites are spread across 11 states and include a number of large and complex sites, such as Hanford and Savannah River sites and Oak Ridge, Idaho, and Los Alamos National Laboratories.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-and-fleischmann-to-lead-house-nuclear-cleanup-caucus1/

LOAD-DATE: February 13, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 12, 2015

Fleischmann and Lujan to Lead House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus; Rep. Chuck Fleischmann (R-TN) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 515 words

WASHINGTON - Chairman Chuck Fleischmann (R-TN) and Co-Chairman **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-NM) announced today they will serve as co-chairs of the House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus, which held its first meeting of the 114th Congress to discuss the importance of raising awareness of environmental management issues in Congress. Fifty years of government nuclear weapons development stemming from the Manhattan Project during World War II has affected communities across the nation and resulted in the need for environmental cleanup at numerous sites.

"Our nation has a tremendous nuclear history, and with that has come an important nuclear cleanup mission," said Fleischmann who represents the city of Oak Ridge. "I am excited today to host the first meeting of the 114th Congress' Nuclear Cleanup Caucus with co-chair **Lujan** and members from across the country who have districts that are impacted. I also want to thank Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management, Mark Whitney, for taking part in this meeting. This Caucus will serve to promote the awareness of our nuclear legacy and build a stronger coalition to fight for the needs of our cleanup missions, and I am eager to get to work."

"The Nuclear Security Complex has a number of legacies that are deeply rooted in its regional communities. First amongst these is the legacy of service by members of the local community in support of the national defense," said **Lujan** whose New Mexico district includes Los Alamos National Laboratory. "However, there is also the legacy of nuclear waste, which continues to threaten the current and future health and environment of these communities that have given so much to our nation. Moving forward we need to honor the legacy of service by fulfilling our obligation to clean up this legacy of waste in a safe, effective, and efficient manner. I look forward to working with Rep. Fleischmann, the rest of the caucus, and stakeholders, including the Regional Coalition of LANL Communities, which I recently met with to discuss the importance of environmental cleanup and our commitment to advocating for the resources to address waste at LANL."

Today's meeting provided the first opportunity for members who represent cleanup sites and stakeholders to come together to discuss the importance of advocating for environmental cleanup

and raising awareness with their colleagues in Congress. Members of the caucus were joined by Mark Whitney, Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management at the Department of Energy.

The Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management has completed cleanup of 91 of the 107 sites where nuclear waste was generated as part of the federal nuclear security and energy research, development and production complex. The 16 remaining sites are spread across 11 states and include a number of large and complex sites, such as Hanford and Savannah River sites and Oak Ridge, TN, Idaho, and Los Alamos National Laboratories.

Read this original document at: http://fleischmann.house.gov/press-release/fleischmann-and-luj%C3%A1n-lead-house-nuclear-cleanup-caucus

LOAD-DATE: February 13, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Ruidoso News (New Mexico)

February 12, 2015 Thursday

Tom Udall, Martin Heinrich, Ben Ray Lujan and Michelle Lujan Grisham: Right-to-work legislation hurts working families

BYLINE: By Congressmen Tom Udall, Martin Heinrich, **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham Guest column

SECTION: OPINION

LENGTH: 564 words

As the national economy shows signs of real improvement, New Mexico's recovery has been challenging and slow. Working families want to know when we will see more jobs, higher salaries and access to quality education at every level. The state Legislature has an opportunity to put New Mexico in a position to provide that economic security and rebuild the middle class.

Unfortunately, the first bill to gain traction at the Roundhouse is a divisive plan backed by out-of-state political operatives designed to divide working families. The so-called right-to-work plan championed by special interests would do more harm than good. Consider these consequences

In states with similar anti-worker laws, workers earn, on average, $5,000 less each year than their counterparts in competing states.

Six in 10 states with the highest unemployment rates have these anti-worker laws.

Twelve of the 14 states with the worst pay gap between men and women are anti-worker states.

Workers in states with these anti-worker laws earn fewer benefits.

Worker safety suffers in these anti-worker states where the rate of deaths on the job is 54.4 percent higher.

The Legislature's Jobs Council has produced bipartisan ideas to create jobs and help rebuild New Mexico's economy. Democrats and Republicans got together with business and labor leaders, local and state officials and economic developers who endorsed these ideas.

So it is disheartening to see the new House Republican leadership using its newfound power to focus on legislation that would hurt working families. And it's disappointing to see voices of opposition silenced during committee debate on this issue.

We have opposed anti-worker policies like these at the federal level because unions have long provided benefits for all workers, regardless of membership, by fighting for benefits many now take for granted such as overtime, workplace safety and paid leave.

Legitimate studies are proving that anti-worker laws would weaken New Mexico's already struggling middle class. Employees with unions at their backs are able to help raise the bar on pay and benefits for all workers in every industry. Anti-worker laws diminish that power. That's why working families in New Mexico have stood strong against such policies every time outsider special interest groups have tried to force them on us.

The fact of the matter is that people are already free to join a union or not that's the law.

When corporate-backed special interest groups tell people to drop their union memberships, working people suffer the consequences. Non-union workers lose the guarantee that they will be heard when it comes to working conditions, benefits and wages. Working men and women in New Mexico know that real employee freedom means having a voice in the workplace.

The New Mexico Legislature has a history of standing up for working families. We urge state lawmakers to focus on growing our economy, creating well-paying 21st century jobs, investing in our schools and strengthening our middle class. There's so much good that can be done for our state, let's focus the effort where it will really count by putting New Mexico's working families first.

U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich are Democratics from New Mexico. U.S. Reps. Ben Ray Lujcn represents the 3rd Congressional District and Michell **Lujan** Grisham, the !st, in the House of Representatives.

LOAD-DATE: February 13, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Ruidoso News, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

States News Service

February 12, 2015 Thursday

FLEISCHMANN AND LUJAN TO LEAD HOUSE NUCLEAR CLEANUP CAUCUS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 505 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of Tennessee Rep. Chuck Fleischmann:

Chairman Chuck Fleischmann (R-TN) and Co-Chairman **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-NM) announced today they will serve as co-chairs of the House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus, which held its first meeting of the 114th Congress to discuss the importance of raising awareness of environmental management issues in Congress. Fifty years of government nuclear weapons development stemming from the Manhattan Project during World War II has affected communities across the nation and resulted in the need for environmental cleanup at numerous sites.

"Our nation has a tremendous nuclear history, and with that has come an important nuclear cleanup mission," said Fleischmann who represents the city of Oak Ridge. "I am excited today to host the first meeting of the 114th Congress' Nuclear Cleanup Caucus with co-chair **Lujan** and members from across the country who have districts that are impacted. I also want to thank Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management, Mark Whitney, for taking part in this meeting. This Caucus will serve to promote the awareness of our nuclear legacy and build a stronger coalition to fight for the needs of our cleanup missions, and I am eager to get to work."

"The Nuclear Security Complex has a number of legacies that are deeply rooted in its regional communities. First amongst these is the legacy of service by members of the local community in support of the national defense," said **Lujan** whose New Mexico district includes Los Alamos National Laboratory. "However, there is also the legacy of nuclear waste, which continues to threaten the current and future health and environment of these communities that have given so much to our nation. Moving forward we need to honor the legacy of service by fulfilling our obligation to clean up this legacy of waste in a safe, effective, and efficient manner. I look forward to working with Rep. Fleischmann, the rest of the caucus, and stakeholders, including the Regional Coalition of LANL Communities, which I recently met with to discuss the importance of environmental cleanup and our commitment to advocating for the resources to address waste at LANL."

Today's meeting provided the first opportunity for members who represent cleanup sites and stakeholders to come together to discuss the importance of advocating for environmental cleanup and raising awareness with their colleagues in Congress. Members of the caucus were joined by Mark Whitney, Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management at the Department of Energy.

The Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management has completed cleanup of 91 of the 107 sites where nuclear waste was generated as part of the federal nuclear security and energy research, development and production complex. The 16 remaining sites are spread across 11 states and include a number of large and complex sites, such as Hanford and Savannah River sites and Oak Ridge, TN, Idaho, and Los Alamos National Laboratories.

###

LOAD-DATE: February 12, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

States News Service

February 12, 2015 Thursday

LUJAN AND FLEISCHMANN TO LEAD HOUSE NUCLEAR CLEANUP CAUCUS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 560 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Hold First Meeting to Raise Awareness of Environmental Cleanup Issues

Washington, D.C. - United States Representatives **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-NM) and Chuck Fleischmann (R-TN) announced today they will serve as co-chairs of the House Nuclear Cleanup Caucus, which held its first meeting of the 114th Congress to discuss the importance of raising awareness of environmental management issues in Congress. Fifty years of government nuclear weapons development stemming from the Manhattan Project during World War II has affected communities across the nation and resulted in the need for environmental cleanup at numerous sites.

"The Nuclear Security Complex has a number of legacies that are deeply rooted in its regional communities. First amongst these is the legacy of service by members of the local community in support of the national defense," said **Lujan**, whose New Mexico district includes Los Alamos National Laboratory. "However, there is also the legacy of nuclear waste, which continues to threaten the current and future health and environment of these communities that have given so much to our nation. Moving forward we need to honor the legacy of service by fulfilling our obligation to clean up this legacy of waste in a safe, effective, and efficient manner. I look forward to working with Rep. Fleischmann, the rest of the caucus, and stakeholders, including the Regional Coalition of LANL Communities, which I recently met with to discuss the importance of environmental cleanup and our commitment to advocating for the resources to address waste at LANL."

"Our nation has a tremendous nuclear history, and with that has come an important nuclear cleanup mission. I am excited today to host the first meeting of the 114th Congress' Nuclear Cleanup Caucus with co-chair **Lujan** and members from across the country who have districts that are impacted," said Fleischmann, who represents the city of Oak Ridge. "I also want to thank Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management, Mark Whitney, for taking part in this meeting. This Caucus will serve to promote the awareness of our nuclear legacy and build a stronger coalition to fight for the needs of our cleanup missions, and I am eager to get to work."

Today's meeting provided the first opportunity for members who represent cleanup sites and stakeholders to come together to discuss the importance of advocating for environmental cleanup and raising awareness with their colleagues in Congress. Members of the caucus were joined by Mark Whitney, Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management at the Department of Energy.

"The Environmental Management program benefits from the continued focus and support from the Members of the Cleanup Caucus as we continue to make progress on completing cleanup at sites and in communities across the nation," said Whitney.

The Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management has completed cleanup of 91 of the 107 sites where nuclear waste was generated as part of the federal nuclear security and energy research, development and production complex. The 16 remaining sites are spread across 11 states and include a number of large and complex sites, such as Hanford and Savannah River sites and Oak Ridge, Idaho, and Los Alamos National Laboratories.

LOAD-DATE: February 14, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

February 12, 2015 Thursday 2:24 AM EST

Bipartisan Coalition Introduces Bill to Protect States Mineral Royalties

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 631 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The office of Sen. Michael B. Enzi, R-Wyo., issued the following news release:

U.S. Senators Mike Enzi, R-Wyo., Tom Udall, D-N.M., John Barrasso, R-Wyo., Representatives Cynthia Lummis, R-Wyo., Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., and **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., introduced legislation today that would allow states to collect their own mineral royalties, protecting money that is rightfully owed to the states. The bill would effectively eliminate a collection fee charged by the federal government, which amounts to around $40 million per year.

"For years, the federal government split the revenue 50-50, but only when it was short on money did it decide to squeeze a few states with this unfair surcharge," Enzi said. "By empowering states to collect their own mineral revenue, they would no longer have to worry about the federal government snatching up mineral royalties that are rightfully theirs."

"The federal government's unnecessary fee on mineral revenues takes money from state budgets -- money that many New Mexico communities depend to fund public schools, emergency response and other critical services," Udall said.

"New Mexico earned these royalties from our abundant natural resources, and New Mexico communities deserve to keep their share of the revenues without federal interference."

"States are in the best position to make sure that their mineral revenues are properly paid and collected," Barrasso said. "Our bill will ensure Washington delivers on its obligation to mineral producing states while also making the process more efficient, cost effective and accountable."

"We need to stop Washington's taxing of state coffers to cover federal spending," Rep. Lummis said. "Citing administrative costs, the federal government has been taking an additional 2% annually that is owed to mineral states like Wyoming and New Mexico. To address this, I am pleased to re-introduce this legislation that I wrote last Congress to remove the federal middle man and allow states the option to collect their 50% share of royalties under the Mineral Leasing Act. I look forward to working with Sens. Enzi and Barrasso and my other colleagues in Congress to protect states' money by keeping it from needlessly leaving the states' borders."

"This bi-partisan bill will ensure New Mexico can keep its fair share of revenue and help the state invest in important priorities, including schools, infrastructure development, small businesses, and other public welfare and economic development programs," Rep. **Lujan** Grisham said.

"New Mexico's federal lands are a significant resource that provides important royalties that should be used to strengthen New Mexico," Rep. **Lujan** said. "This legislation will ensure that more of the money that is rightfully owed to states will be returned in order to support vital programs and investments that make a difference in our communities. Sending the money directly to the states and not to the federal government first will streamline the process, reduce administrative costs, and allow states to receive more of these critical funds."

The Mineral Leasing Act provides that the continental states be paid 50 percent of the revenues resulting from the leasing of mineral resources on federal public domain lands within their borders. These royalties are used by states to fund such necessary items as public school systems, community colleges, emergency response activities and basic infrastructure projects.

Currently, the federal government charges states a 2 percent fee to cover collection and disbursement costs. This legislation would ensure that states can continue to receive their 50 percent share of mineral royalties by giving them the option to administer their own programs.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TacordaCheng-150213-5028622 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: February 13, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

February 12, 2015 Thursday

Washington: FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION WASHINGTON OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

LENGTH: 2104 words

DATELINE: Washington

US Federal Communications Commission, The Government of USA has published the following document:

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN
The Honorable Michelle **Lujan** Grisham
U.S. House of Representatives
214 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Dear Congresswoman Grisham:
January 29, 2015
Thank you for your letter supporting the rural broadband experiments application submitted by The High Plains Regional Education Cooperative and Terastream Broadband (Terastream). Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding.

In January of last year, the Commission initiated an experiment to inform om policies to build the next generation networks in rural America and invited proposals on whether there is interest in constructing high-bandwidth networks in high-cost areas . This experiment has allowed us to explore how to structure the CAF Phase II competitive bidding process in price-cap areas and gather valuable information about deploying next-generation networks in high-cost areas. We issued an invitation, and the response was astounding. We received nearly 1,000 expressions of interest from all parts of the country and from a wide range of entities, including rural telephone companies, rural electric co-ops, cable and wireless service providers, schools and libraries, research and education networks, and communities.
In July 2014, we adopted a $100 million budget for the rural broadband experiments and established an objective methodology for selecting projects an1ong formal applications, which were due between October 23 and November 7, 2014. In total, 181 applicants proposed to serve over 76,000 census blocks in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.
On December 5, 2014, we announced the provisionally selected bidders. The provisionally selected bidders bid on support to cover 26,867 census blocks in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Terastream' s submission was one of the provisionally selected bidders under category one, or entities seeking support to build networks capable of delivering 100 Mbps downstream and 25 Mbps upstream. Its provisionally selected bid is comprised of 149 census blocks in New Mexico.
I look forward to working with you as we continue the work of reforming and modernizing the USF high-cost program- as well as other components of the Fund- to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
United States Senate
702 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Heinrich:

January 29, 2015

Thank you for your letter supporting the rural broadband experiments application submitted by The High Plains Regional Education Cooperative and Terastream Broadband (Terastream). Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding.

In January oflast year, the Commission initiated an experiment to inform our policies to build the next generation networks in rural America and invited proposals on whether there is interest in constructing high-bandwidth networks in high-cost areas. This experiment has allowed us to explore how to structure the CAF Phase II competitive bidding process in price-cap areas and gather valuable information about deploying next-generation networks in high-cost areas. We issued an invitation, and the response was astounding. We received nearly 1,000 expressions of interest from all parts of the country and from a wide range of entities, including rural telephone companies, rural electric co-ops, cable and wireless service providers, schools and libraries, research and education networks, and communities.

In July 2014, we adopted a $100 million budget for the rural broadband experiments and established an objective methodology for selecting projects among formal applications, which were due between October 23 and November 7, 2014. In total, 181 applicants proposed to serve over 76,000 census blocks in all 50 states and Puerto Rico .

On December 5, 2014, we announced the provisionally selected bidders. The provisionally selected bidders bid on support to cover 26,867 census blocks in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Terastream 's submission was one of the provisionally selected bidders under category one, or entities seeking support to build networks capable of delivering 100 Mbps downstream and 25 Mbps upstream. Its provisionally selected bid is comprised of 149 census blocks in New Mexico.

I look forward to working with you as we continue the work of reforming and modernizing the USF high-cost program - as well as other components of the Fund - to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON
O FFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

The Honorable **Ben Ray Lujan**
U.S. House of Representatives
2446 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman **Lujan**:

January 29, 2015

Thank you for your letter supp01iing the rural broadband experiments application submitted by The High Plains Regional Education Cooperative and Terastream Broadband (Terastream). Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding.

In January oflast year, the Commission initiated an experiment to inform our policies to build the next generation networks in rural America and invited proposals on whether there is interest in constructing high-bandwidth networks in high-cost areas. This experiment has allowed

us to explore how to structure the CAF Phase II competitive bidding process in price-cap areas and gather valuable information about deploying next-generation networks in high-cost areas . We issued an invitation, and the response was astounding. We received nearly 1,000 expressions of interest from all parts of the country and from a wide range of entities, including rural telephone companies, rural electric co-ops, cable and wireless service providers, schools and libraries, research and education networks, and communities.

In July 2014, we adopted a $100 million budget for the rural broadband experiments and established an objective methodology for selecting projects among formal applications, which were due between October 23 and November 7, 2014. In total, 181 applicants proposed to serve over 76,000 census blocks in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

On December 5, 2014, we announced the provisionally selected bidders. The provisionally selected bidders bid on support to cover 26,867 census blocks in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Terastream' s submission was one of the provisionally selected bidders under category one, or entities seeking support to build networks capable of delivering 100 Mbps downstream and 25 Mbps upstream. Its provisionally selected bid is comprised of 149 census blocks in New Mexico.

I look forward to working with you as we continue the work of reforming and modernizing the USF high-cost program - as well as other components of the Fund -to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.

Page 2-The Honorable **Ben Ray Lujan**

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any fmiher assistance.

Smcerel#tf-
e hee!er

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON
OFFIC E OF
THE CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Steve Pearce
U.S . House of Representatives
2432 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Pearce:

January 29, 2015

Thank you for your letter supporting the rural broadband experiments application submitted by The High Plains Regional Education Cooperative and Terastream Broadband (Terastream). Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding.

In January oflast year, the Commission initiated an experiment to inform our policies to build the next generation networks in rural America and invited proposals on whether there is interest in constructing high-bandwidth networks in high-cost areas. This experiment has allowed us to explore how to structure the CAF Phase II competitive bidding process in price-cap areas and gather valuable information about deploying next-generation networks in high-cost areas. We issued an invitation, and the response was astounding. We received nearly 1,000 expressions of interest from all parts of the country and from a wide range of entities, including rural telephone companies, rural electric co-ops, cable and wireless service providers, schools and libraries, research and education networks, and communities.

In July 2014, we adopted a $100 million budget for the rural broadband experiments and established an objective methodology for selecting projects among formal applications, which were due between October 23 and November 7, 2014. In total, 181 applicants proposed to serve over 76,000 census blocks in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

On December 5, 2014, we announced the provisionally selected bidders. The provisionally selected bidders bid on supp011 to cover 26,867 census blocks in 25 states and Pue11o Rico. Terastream's submission was one of the provisionally selected bidders under category one, or entities seeking support to build networks capable of delivering 100 Mbps downstream and 25 Mbps upstream. Its provisionally selected bid is comprised of 149 census blocks in New Mexico .

I look forward to working with you as we continue the work of reforming and modernizing the USF high-cost program - as well as other components of the Fund - to ensure

that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.
Page 2-The Honorable Steve Pearce
I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.
Sincerel y,~~(/__
(/ki,
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN
The Honorable Tom Udall
United States Senate
110 Hati Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
Dear Senator Udall:
January 29, 2015
Thank you for your letter supporting the rural broadband experiments application submitted by The High Plains Regional Education Cooperative and Terastream Broadband (Terastream). Your views m·e very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding.
In January oflast year, the Commission initiated an experiment to inform our policies to build the next generation networks in rural America and invited proposals on whether there is interest in constructing high-bandwidth networks in high-cost areas. This experiment has allowed us to explore how to structure the CAF Phase II competitive bidding process in price-cap areas and gather valuable information about deploying next-generation networks in high-cost areas. We issued an invitation, and the response was astounding. We received nearly 1,000 expressions of interest from all parts of the country and from a wide range of entities, including rural telephone companies, rural electric co-ops, cable and wireless service providers, schools and libraries, research and education networks, and communities.
In July 20 14, we adopted a $1 00 million budget for the rural broadband experiments and established an objective methodology for selecting projects among formal applications, which were due between October 23 and November 7, 2014. In total, 181 applicants proposed to serve over 76,000 census blocks in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.
On December 5, 2014, we atmounced the provisionally selected bidders. The provisionally selected bidders bid on support to cover 26,867 census blocks in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Terastream's submission was one of the provisionally selected bidders under category one, or entities seeking support to build networks capable of delivering 100 Mbps downstream and 25 Mbps upstream. Its provisionally selected bid is comprised of 149 census blocks in New Mexico .
I look forward to working with you as we continue the work of reforming and modernizing the USF high-cost program- as well as other components of the Fund - to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.
Page 2-The Honorable Tom Udall
I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.
Sincerely,
~ Joheeler

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 19, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

February 12, 2015 Thursday

Washington: FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION WASHINGTON OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

LENGTH: 2104 words

DATELINE: Washington

US Federal Communications Commission, The Government of USA has published the following document:

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN
The Honorable Michelle **Lujan** Grisham
U.S. House of Representatives
214 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Dear Congresswoman Grisham:
January 29, 2015
Thank you for your letter supporting the rural broadband experiments application submitted by The High Plains Regional Education Cooperative and Terastream Broadband (Terastream). Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding.
In January of last year, the Commission initiated an experiment to inform om policies to build the next generation networks in rural America and invited proposals on whether there is interest in constructing high-bandwidth networks in high-cost areas . This experiment has allowed us to explore how to structure the CAF Phase II competitive bidding process in price-cap areas and gather valuable information about deploying next-generation networks in high-cost areas. We issued an invitation, and the response was astounding. We received nearly 1,000 expressions of interest from all parts of the country and from a wide range of entities, including rural telephone companies, rural electric co-ops, cable and wireless service providers, schools and libraries, research and education networks, and communities.
In July 2014, we adopted a $100 million budget for the rural broadband experiments and established an objective methodology for selecting projects an1ong formal applications, which were due between October 23 and November 7, 2014. In total, 181 applicants proposed to serve over 76,000 census blocks in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.
On December 5, 2014, we announced the provisionally selected bidders. The provisionally selected bidders bid on support to cover 26,867 census blocks in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Terastream' s submission was one of the provisionally selected bidders under category one, or entities seeking support to build networks capable of delivering 100 Mbps downstream and 25 Mbps upstream. Its provisionally selected bid is comprised of 149 census

blocks in New Mexico.
I look forward to working with you as we continue the work of reforming and modernizing the USF high-cost program- as well as other components of the Fund- to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.
Page 2-The Honorable Michelle **Lujan** Grisham
I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN
The Honorable Martin Heinrich
United States Senate
702 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
Dear Senator Heinrich:
January 29, 2015
Thank you for your letter supporting the rural broadband experiments application submitted by The High Plains Regional Education Cooperative and Terastream Broadband (Terastream). Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding.
In January oflast year, the Commission initiated an experiment to inform our policies to build the next generation networks in rural America and invited proposals on whether there is interest in constructing high-bandwidth networks in high-cost areas. This experiment has allowed us to explore how to structure the CAF Phase II competitive bidding process in price-cap areas and gather valuable information about deploying next-generation networks in high-cost areas. We issued an invitation, and the response was astounding. We received nearly 1,000 expressions of interest from all parts of the country and from a wide range of entities, including rural telephone companies, rural electric co-ops, cable and wireless service providers, schools and libraries, research and education networks, and communities.
In July 2014, we adopted a $100 million budget for the rural broadband experiments and established an objective methodology for selecting projects among formal applications, which were due between October 23 and November 7, 2014. In total, 181 applicants proposed to serve over 76,000 census blocks in all 50 states and Puerto Rico .
On December 5, 2014, we announced the provisionally selected bidders. The provisionally selected bidders bid on support to cover 26,867 census blocks in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Terastream 's submission was one of the provisionally selected bidders under category one, or entities seeking support to build networks capable of delivering 100 Mbps downstream and 25 Mbps upstream. Its provisionally selected bid is comprised of 149 census blocks in New Mexico.
I look forward to working with you as we continue the work of reforming and modernizing the USF high-cost program - as well as other components of the Fund - to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.
Page 2-The Honorable Martin Heinrich
I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.
Sincerely,
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON
O FFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN
The Honorable **Ben Ray Lujan**
U.S. House of Representatives
2446 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Dear Congressman **Lujan**:
January 29, 2015
Thank you for your letter supp01iing the rural broadband experiments application submitted by The High Plains Regional Education Cooperative and Terastream Broadband

(Terastream). Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding.
In January oflast year, the Commission initiated an experiment to inform our policies to build the next generation networks in rural America and invited proposals on whether there is interest in constructing high-bandwidth networks in high-cost areas. This experiment has allowed us to explore how to structure the CAF Phase II competitive bidding process in price-cap areas and gather valuable information about deploying next-generation networks in high-cost areas . We issued an invitation, and the response was astounding. We received nearly 1,000 expressions of interest from all parts of the country and from a wide range of entities, including rural telephone companies, rural electric co-ops, cable and wireless service providers, schools and libraries, research and education networks, and communities.
In July 2014, we adopted a $100 million budget for the rural broadband experiments and established an objective methodology for selecting projects among formal applications, which were due between October 23 and November 7, 2014. In total, 181 applicants proposed to serve over 76,000 census blocks in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.
On December 5, 2014, we announced the provisionally selected bidders. The provisionally selected bidders bid on support to cover 26,867 census blocks in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Terastream' s submission was one of the provisionally selected bidders under category one, or entities seeking support to build networks capable of delivering 100 Mbps downstream and 25 Mbps upstream. Its provisionally selected bid is comprised of 149 census blocks in New Mexico.
I look forward to working with you as we continue the work of reforming and modernizing the USF high-cost program - as well as other components of the Fund -to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.
Page 2-The Honorable **Ben Ray Lujan**
I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any fmiher assistance.
Smcerel#tf-
e hee!er
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON
OFFIC E OF
THE CHAIRMAN
The Honorable Steve Pearce
U.S . House of Representatives
2432 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Dear Congressman Pearce:
January 29, 2015
Thank you for your letter supporting the rural broadband experiments application submitted by The High Plains Regional Education Cooperative and Terastream Broadband (Terastream). Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding.
In January oflast year, the Commission initiated an experiment to inform our policies to build the next generation networks in rural America and invited proposals on whether there is interest in constructing high-bandwidth networks in high-cost areas. This experiment has allowed us to explore how to structure the CAF Phase II competitive bidding process in price-cap areas and gather valuable information about deploying next-generation networks in high-cost areas. We issued an invitation, and the response was astounding. We received nearly 1,000 expressions of interest from all parts of the country and from a wide range of entities, including rural telephone companies, rural electric co-ops, cable and wireless service providers, schools and libraries, research and education networks, and communities.
In July 2014, we adopted a $100 million budget for the rural broadband experiments and established an objective methodology for selecting projects among formal applications, which were due between October 23 and November 7, 2014. In total, 181 applicants proposed to serve over 76,000 census blocks in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.
On December 5, 2014, we announced the provisionally selected bidders. The provisionally selected bidders bid on supp011 to cover 26,867 census blocks in 25 states and Pue11o Rico. Terastream's submission was one of the provisionally selected bidders under

category one, or entities seeking support to build networks capable of delivering 100 Mbps downstream and 25 Mbps upstream. Its provisionally selected bid is comprised of 149 census blocks in New Mexico .
I look forward to working with you as we continue the work of reforming and modernizing the USF high-cost program - as well as other components of the Fund - to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.
Page 2-The Honorable Steve Pearce
I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.
Sincerel y,~~(/__
(/ki,
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN
The Honorable Tom Udall
United States Senate
110 Hati Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
Dear Senator Udall:
January 29, 2015
Thank you for your letter supporting the rural broadband experiments application submitted by The High Plains Regional Education Cooperative and Terastream Broadband (Terastream). Your views m·e very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding.
In January oflast year, the Commission initiated an experiment to inform our policies to build the next generation networks in rural America and invited proposals on whether there is interest in constructing high-bandwidth networks in high-cost areas. This experiment has allowed us to explore how to structure the CAF Phase II competitive bidding process in price-cap areas and gather valuable information about deploying next-generation networks in high-cost areas. We issued an invitation, and the response was astounding. We received nearly 1,000 expressions of interest from all parts of the country and from a wide range of entities, including rural telephone companies, rural electric co-ops, cable and wireless service providers, schools and libraries, research and education networks, and communities.
In July 20 14, we adopted a $1 00 million budget for the rural broadband experiments and established an objective methodology for selecting projects among formal applications, which were due between October 23 and November 7, 2014. In total, 181 applicants proposed to serve over 76,000 census blocks in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.
On December 5, 2014, we atmounced the provisionally selected bidders. The provisionally selected bidders bid on support to cover 26,867 census blocks in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Terastream's submission was one of the provisionally selected bidders under category one, or entities seeking support to build networks capable of delivering 100 Mbps downstream and 25 Mbps upstream. Its provisionally selected bid is comprised of 149 census blocks in New Mexico .
I look forward to working with you as we continue the work of reforming and modernizing the USF high-cost program- as well as other components of the Fund - to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.
Page 2-The Honorable Tom Udall
I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.
Sincerely,
~ Joheeler

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

February 12, 2015 Thursday

Washington: FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION WASHINGTON OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

LENGTH: 2104 words

DATELINE: Washington

US Federal Communications Commission, The Government of USA has published the following document:

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN
The Honorable Michelle **Lujan** Grisham
U.S. House of Representatives
214 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Dear Congresswoman Grisham:
January 29, 2015
Thank you for your letter supporting the rural broadband experiments application submitted by The High Plains Regional Education Cooperative and Terastream Broadband (Terastream). Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding.

In January of last year, the Commission initiated an experiment to inform om policies to build the next generation networks in rural America and invited proposals on whether there is interest in constructing high-bandwidth networks in high-cost areas . This experiment has allowed us to explore how to structure the CAF Phase II competitive bidding process in price-cap areas and gather valuable information about deploying next-generation networks in high-cost areas. We issued an invitation, and the response was astounding. We received nearly 1,000 expressions of interest from all parts of the country and from a wide range of entities, including rural telephone companies, rural electric co-ops, cable and wireless service providers, schools and libraries, research and education networks, and communities.
In July 2014, we adopted a $100 million budget for the rural broadband experiments and

established an objective methodology for selecting projects an1ong formal applications, which were due between October 23 and November 7, 2014. In total, 181 applicants proposed to serve over 76,000 census blocks in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

On December 5, 2014, we announced the provisionally selected bidders. The provisionally selected bidders bid on support to cover 26,867 census blocks in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Terastream' s submission was one of the provisionally selected bidders under category one, or entities seeking support to build networks capable of delivering 100 Mbps downstream and 25 Mbps upstream. Its provisionally selected bid is comprised of 149 census blocks in New Mexico.

I look forward to working with you as we continue the work of reforming and modernizing the USF high-cost program- as well as other components of the Fund- to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.

Page 2-The Honorable Michelle **Lujan** Grisham

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
United States Senate
702 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Heinrich:

January 29, 2015

Thank you for your letter supporting the rural broadband experiments application submitted by The High Plains Regional Education Cooperative and Terastream Broadband (Terastream). Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding.

In January oflast year, the Commission initiated an experiment to inform our policies to build the next generation networks in rural America and invited proposals on whether there is interest in constructing high-bandwidth networks in high-cost areas. This experiment has allowed us to explore how to structure the CAF Phase II competitive bidding process in price-cap areas and gather valuable information about deploying next-generation networks in high-cost areas. We issued an invitation, and the response was astounding. We received nearly 1,000 expressions of interest from all parts of the country and from a wide range of entities, including rural telephone companies, rural electric co-ops, cable and wireless service providers, schools and libraries, research and education networks, and communities.

In July 2014, we adopted a $100 million budget for the rural broadband experiments and established an objective methodology for selecting projects among formal applications, which were due between October 23 and November 7, 2014. In total, 181 applicants proposed to serve over 76,000 census blocks in all 50 states and Puerto Rico .

On December 5, 2014, we announced the provisionally selected bidders. The provisionally selected bidders bid on support to cover 26,867 census blocks in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Terastream 's submission was one of the provisionally selected bidders under category one, or entities seeking support to build networks capable of delivering 100 Mbps downstream and 25 Mbps upstream. Its provisionally selected bid is comprised of 149 census blocks in New Mexico.

I look forward to working with you as we continue the work of reforming and modernizing the USF high-cost program - as well as other components of the Fund - to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.

Page 2-The Honorable Martin Heinrich

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON
O FFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

The Honorable **Ben Ray Lujan**
U.S. House of Representatives
2446 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Dear Congressman **Lujan**:
January 29, 2015
Thank you for your letter supp01iing the rural broadband experiments application submitted by The High Plains Regional Education Cooperative and Terastream Broadband (Terastream). Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding.
In January oflast year, the Commission initiated an experiment to inform our policies to build the next generation networks in rural America and invited proposals on whether there is interest in constructing high-bandwidth networks in high-cost areas. This experiment has allowed us to explore how to structure the CAF Phase II competitive bidding process in price-cap areas and gather valuable information about deploying next-generation networks in high-cost areas . We issued an invitation, and the response was astounding. We received nearly 1,000 expressions of interest from all parts of the country and from a wide range of entities, including rural telephone companies, rural electric co-ops, cable and wireless service providers, schools and libraries, research and education networks, and communities.
In July 2014, we adopted a $100 million budget for the rural broadband experiments and established an objective methodology for selecting projects among formal applications, which were due between October 23 and November 7, 2014. In total, 181 applicants proposed to serve over 76,000 census blocks in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.
On December 5, 2014, we announced the provisionally selected bidders. The provisionally selected bidders bid on support to cover 26,867 census blocks in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Terastream' s submission was one of the provisionally selected bidders under category one, or entities seeking support to build networks capable of delivering 100 Mbps downstream and 25 Mbps upstream. Its provisionally selected bid is comprised of 149 census blocks in New Mexico.
I look forward to working with you as we continue the work of reforming and modernizing the USF high-cost program - as well as other components of the Fund -to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.
Page 2-The Honorable **Ben Ray Lujan**
I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any fmiher assistance.
Smcerel#tf-
e hee!er
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON
OFFIC E OF
THE CHAIRMAN
The Honorable Steve Pearce
U.S . House of Representatives
2432 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Dear Congressman Pearce:
January 29, 2015
Thank you for your letter supporting the rural broadband experiments application submitted by The High Plains Regional Education Cooperative and Terastream Broadband (Terastream). Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding.
In January oflast year, the Commission initiated an experiment to inform our policies to build the next generation networks in rural America and invited proposals on whether there is interest in constructing high-bandwidth networks in high-cost areas. This experiment has allowed us to explore how to structure the CAF Phase II competitive bidding process in price-cap areas and gather valuable information about deploying next-generation networks in high-cost areas. We issued an invitation, and the response was astounding. We received nearly 1,000 expressions of interest from all parts of the country and from a wide range of entities, including rural telephone companies, rural electric co-ops, cable and wireless service providers, schools and

libraries, research and education networks, and communities.
In July 2014, we adopted a $100 million budget for the rural broadband experiments and established an objective methodology for selecting projects among formal applications, which were due between October 23 and November 7, 2014. In total, 181 applicants proposed to serve over 76,000 census blocks in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.
On December 5, 2014, we announced the provisionally selected bidders. The provisionally selected bidders bid on supp011 to cover 26,867 census blocks in 25 states and Pue11o Rico. Terastream's submission was one of the provisionally selected bidders under category one, or entities seeking support to build networks capable of delivering 100 Mbps downstream and 25 Mbps upstream. Its provisionally selected bid is comprised of 149 census blocks in New Mexico .
I look forward to working with you as we continue the work of reforming and modernizing the USF high-cost program - as well as other components of the Fund - to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.
Page 2-The Honorable Steve Pearce
I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.
Sincerel y,~~(/__
(/ki,
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN
The Honorable Tom Udall
United States Senate
110 Hati Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
Dear Senator Udall:
January 29, 2015
Thank you for your letter supporting the rural broadband experiments application submitted by The High Plains Regional Education Cooperative and Terastream Broadband (Terastream). Your views m·e very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding.
In January oflast year, the Commission initiated an experiment to inform our policies to build the next generation networks in rural America and invited proposals on whether there is interest in constructing high-bandwidth networks in high-cost areas. This experiment has allowed us to explore how to structure the CAF Phase II competitive bidding process in price-cap areas and gather valuable information about deploying next-generation networks in high-cost areas. We issued an invitation, and the response was astounding. We received nearly 1,000 expressions of interest from all parts of the country and from a wide range of entities, including rural telephone companies, rural electric co-ops, cable and wireless service providers, schools and libraries, research and education networks, and communities.
In July 20 14, we adopted a $1 00 million budget for the rural broadband experiments and established an objective methodology for selecting projects among formal applications, which were due between October 23 and November 7, 2014. In total, 181 applicants proposed to serve over 76,000 census blocks in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.
On December 5, 2014, we atmounced the provisionally selected bidders. The provisionally selected bidders bid on support to cover 26,867 census blocks in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Terastream's submission was one of the provisionally selected bidders under category one, or entities seeking support to build networks capable of delivering 100 Mbps downstream and 25 Mbps upstream. Its provisionally selected bid is comprised of 149 census blocks in New Mexico .
I look forward to working with you as we continue the work of reforming and modernizing the USF high-cost program- as well as other components of the Fund - to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.
Page 2-The Honorable Tom Udall
I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,
~ Joheeler

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: February 13, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

237 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

February 11, 2015 Wednesday

NM delegation mostly backs use of force against IS; Pearce wants open-ended deal; others want curbs on president

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 954 words

WASHINGTON - As the White House prepares to ask Congress for a resolution formally authorizing U.S. military force against the Islamic State terror group, New Mexico's delegation is wary but eager to see details of the proposal.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest told reporters in Washington on Tuesday that President Obama will likely send Congress a proposed agreement on a use-of-force authorization this week, possibly as soon as today. The announcement came on the same day the White House confirmed the death of 26-year-old aid worker Kayla Jean Mueller, who spent more than a year in Islamic State captivity.

"No matter how long it takes, the United States will find and bring to justice the terrorists who are responsible for Kayla's captivity and death," Obama said in a statement. "ISIL is a hateful and abhorrent terrorist group whose actions stand in stark contrast to the spirit of people like Kayla."

Sen. Tom Udall, a New Mexico Democrat who sits on the Senate Foreign Relations Commit- tee, in December proposed limiting the scope of the force authorization to one year and securing a commitment that the use of force wouldn't extend beyond Iraq and Syria without congressional approval. Both proposals, which had the support of Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., failed in a vote of the committee.

"ISIS is a brutal terrorist group that must be stopped, but I'm very concerned about an open-ended authorization with no limits on time or geography," Udall told the Journal in a statement late Tuesday. "I am still very concerned about any authorization that might put us on a path toward sending ground troops to the Middle East."

However, Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., said he would not support an authorization that contained timelines or otherwise restricted the U.S. military from in its efforts to eliminate the Islamic State group.

"By laying out a strategy that does not limit the amount of troops, place artificial timelines, or expect our military to complete the mission through repeated deployments by the same soldiers, the administration can prevent placing the military at an operational disadvantage from the start," Pearce said. "As I stated in September, after the president's announced action against ISIS, if we are going to risk the lives of our troops, we must follow through. We must complete the mission."

The Islamic State group, formerly known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, or ISIL, has seized territory in Iraq and Syria and tortured and killed hostages from the United States and allied countries. The U.S. has been engaged against the terror group militarily for months, but Obama wants an official use-of-force authorization from Congress. Earnest said White House officials were meeting with Republicans and Democrats on Capitol Hill on Tuesday to try to craft language that would win bipartisan support.

"He does believe it would be a powerful symbol for the Congress to send to the American people, to our allies and even to our enemies that the United States of America is united behind the strategy the president has laid out to degrade and ultimately destroy ISIL," Earnest said.

Earnest said Obama is confident he does not legally need permission from Congress to engage the Islamic State group militarily, but he would prefer to have it. The White House has been battling the terror group under previous congressional authorizations of force against Iraq and al-Qaida, as well as his executive authority over the military under the Constitution. The Obama administration wants to repeal the 2002 Iraq war authorization as part of the new measure and retain the 2001 resolution against al-Qaida.

Bloomberg News, citing unnamed congressional sources, reported that the White House will place strict limits on the types of U.S. ground forces that can be deployed.

Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., said Congress has a responsibility to go on the record about the use of force against the Islamic State fighters.

"If we are going to ask Americans to risk their lives, then Congress cannot shirk its responsibility," said Heinrich, who has co-sponsored legislation that would bar the introduction of U.S. ground troops against the Islamic State. "The legislative branch has a fundamental and moral responsibility to consider the use of military force and cast a vote yea or nay."

Heinrich also said the U.S. should not have to wage the fight alone.

"America will do our part, but countries in the region must provide the ground troops to protect and stabilize their own backyard," he said. "That is not our role."

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., said she appreciated the White House plan to ask Congress to weigh in, but like other members of the delegation she said she would remain noncommittal until seeing details of the president's plan. **Lujan** Grisham and many other Democrats have expressed deep reservations about any proposal that would commit U.S. ground troops.

"Like many of my constituents, I have important questions and concerns that need to be addressed before I can consider additional military action," she said.

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., said, "Congress and the president must work together to ensure that any AUMF to address the threat of ISIL has clear goals, a clear exit, is precise, and does not commit U.S. combat troops on the ground. The path forward must also involve a greater commitment from our allies in the region and a focus on disrupting ISIL's access to funding and weapons. I will look closely at the AUMF to see if it meets these standards."

Earnest told reporters Tuesday that he hopes Congress will move quickly to approve the White House request.

"The president does believe that this message is even more powerful if it has bipartisan support," he said.

LOAD-DATE: February 11, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Albuquerque Journal

238 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

February 9, 2015 Monday

Lujan Joins Bipartisan Effort to Improve Email Privacy Protections

LENGTH: 254 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** announced today that he has joined in a bipartisan effort to update and improve privacy protections for electronic communications. **Luján** and more than 230 members of the House introduced legislation to update the Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA), which has not been updated since 1986 despite substantial changes in technology.

"In the nearly 30 years since ECPA was written we have seen amazing technological progress that has brought us new tools to communicate. Yet in that time, our laws have not kept up with these changes," Congressman **Luján** said. "From cloud computing to smartphones, many of the technologies that are part of our daily lives did not even exist. It is long past time to update ECPA to reflect the developments in technology and to ensure the American people have important privacy protections."

The Electronic Communications Privacy Amendments Act of 2015 requires the government to get a search warrant based on a showing of probable cause in order to access email and other data in the

cloud. It replaces the "180-day rule" which has been used to gain warrantless access to emails that are on a server for more than 180 days. The legislation protects privacy while also preserving the legal tools necessary to conduct criminal investigations.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 3, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

February 9, 2015 Monday

N.M. Delegation, UNM Announce that Proposal to Create National Institute of Photonics will Advance to Final Round

LENGTH: 1163 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, along with the University of New Mexico, announced that the Department of Defense has selected a team that includes UNM as a finalist for the administration's new Integrated Photonics Institute for Manufacturing Innovation (IP-IMI) program. The initiative is part of a national effort launched in 2013 to create a network of regional manufacturing institutes or "hubs" across the county that help bridge the gap between applied research and product development.

UNM will collaborate with a team of academic institutions from four states, led by the Information Science Institute ISI at the University of Southern California, to compete for $110 million in federal grant matching funds to develop a partnership between industry, government and academia to accelerate the creation of new photonics technologies. The mission is to establish a state-of-the-art in the design, manufacture, testing, assembly and packaging of complex photonic integrated circuits that combine a variety of photonic and electronic components to achieve functionality.

The New Mexico congressional delegation has strongly supported New Mexico's application. If its application is successful, the USC-UNM hub would be the first hub west of the Mississippi. UNM would serve as the lead sensing hub, focusing on the development of integrated phonic sensors for chem-bio sensing.

"New Mexico's congressional delegation is united in our strong support for UNM's application, and we are committed to doing everything we can to help the team succeed," Udall said. "Our universities, military, business and scientific communities already are among the world's leading developers of advanced photonics technologies. Not only would the UNM team position the nation to be a global leader in the photonics field, the photonics hub would help New Mexico by boosting efforts to diversify the state's economy and create well-paying high-tech jobs."

"The University of New Mexico and its coalition of universities perform some of the world's most cutting-edge research and development in the field of optics and photonics technologies," Heinrich said. "New Mexico's private companies, universities, national labs, research facilities, and immeasurable talent make us a leading contender for the Department of Defense's Integrated Photonics Manufacturing Institute. In New Mexico, we develop photonics technologies that are used in the military, scientific, medical, and intelligence communities. Establishing a photonics hub will help give our communities an economic boost and create quality jobs, while bridging the gap between applied research and product development. I remain steadfast in my commitment to give UNM's coalition the best shot at this opportunity."

"The advancement of New Mexico to the next round of the IP-IMI process is a testament to the research and development culture in our state," Pearce said. "I commend the University of New Mexico on this latest achievement and I join my colleagues in continued support for New Mexico's involvement in this critical research."

"It is welcome news that UNM is part of a team that has been selected to submit a full proposal for the Integrated Photonics Institute for Manufacturing Innovation," **Luján** said. "This selection validates New Mexico's national stature in this important field that plays an essential role in robotics, medical imaging, biometric security, and more. Having a hub at UNM would enable New Mexico to play an even greater role and leverage our unique resources to advance this critical sector that can help diversify our economy and spur new opportunities in our communities."

"This is a tremendous opportunity for New Mexico to step up and take a leadership role in this burgeoning industry, while creating high-wage jobs that will boost our economic comeback," **Lujan** Grisham said.

The USC-UNM team also includes the University of California system schools in Los Angeles, San Diego and Berkeley; Arizona State University; and Ohio State University The team will compete against two others based in New York and Florida. Full and final applications are due by March 31, and the final selection is expected in June 2015.

"The University of New Mexico already has strong partnerships with our national labs, city and state governments and local industry. We want to enhance those assets in every way we can," UNM President Robert G. Frank said. "This grant would be a fantastic accelerator."

Sanjay Krishna, who directs the Center for High Technology Materials at UNM, has been leading UNM's effort. UNM is currently working with the state and the city of Albuquerque to secure matching funds to develop an integrated photonics curriculum for high schools, colleges and UNM branch campuses as part of a workforce development and education plan.

"I believe that photonics could be an enabling technology that can spur economic development and create new opportunities for entrepreneurs," Krishna said. "Our close interaction with the federal and national labs is a great strength and our interactions with high schools, community colleges, branch campuses and other universities could create a K through PhD workforce."

Ultimately, the IP-IMI will be an end-to-end integrated photonics manufacturing "ecosystem." It will include integrated design tools for efficient simulation and design of integrated photonic circuits, domestic photonic device fabrication foundry access, automated packaging, assembly and test of integrated photonic circuits, and workforce development. Activities under the IP-IMI will enable universities and small-to-medium enterprises to participate in the integrated photonics revolution. It will bring government, industry and academia together with the goal of organizing the current

fragmented domestic capabilities in integrated photonic technology and better position the U.S. relative to global competition.

The IP-IMI is the newest addition to the federal government's new National Network for Manufacturing Innovation, a series of manufacturing "hubs" intended to bridge the gap between applied research and product development by bringing together companies, universities and other academic and training institutions, and federal agencies to co invest in key technology areas that encourage investment and production in the United States.

This type of "teaching factory" provides a unique opportunity for education and training of students and workers at all levels, while providing the shared assets to help small manufacturers and other companies access the cutting-edge capabilities and equipment to design, test, and pilot new products and manufacturing processes.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 3, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

240 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

February 9, 2015 Monday

Lujan Joins Bipartisan Effort to Improve Email Privacy Protections

LENGTH: 254 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** announced today that he has joined in a bipartisan effort to update and improve privacy protections for electronic communications. **Luján** and more than 230 members of the House introduced legislation to update the Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA), which has not been updated since 1986 despite substantial changes in technology.

"In the nearly 30 years since ECPA was written we have seen amazing technological progress that has brought us new tools to communicate. Yet in that time, our laws have not kept up with these changes," Congressman **Luján** said. "From cloud computing to smartphones, many of the

technologies that are part of our daily lives did not even exist. It is long past time to update ECPA to reflect the developments in technology and to ensure the American people have important privacy protections."

The Electronic Communications Privacy Amendments Act of 2015 requires the government to get a search warrant based on a showing of probable cause in order to access email and other data in the cloud. It replaces the "180-day rule" which has been used to gain warrantless access to emails that are on a server for more than 180 days. The legislation protects privacy while also preserving the legal tools necessary to conduct criminal investigations.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: February 10, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

February 9, 2015 Monday

N.M. Delegation, UNM Announce that Proposal to Create National Institute of Photonics will Advance to Final Round

LENGTH: 1163 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, along with the University of New Mexico, announced that the Department of Defense has selected a team that includes UNM as a finalist for the administration's new Integrated Photonics Institute for Manufacturing Innovation (IP-IMI) program. The initiative is part of a national effort launched in 2013 to create a network of regional manufacturing institutes or "hubs" across the county that help bridge the gap between applied research and product development.

UNM will collaborate with a team of academic institutions from four states, led by the Information Science Institute ISI at the University of Southern California, to compete for $110 million in federal grant matching funds to develop a partnership between industry, government and academia to accelerate the creation of new photonics technologies. The mission is to establish a state-of-the-art

in the design, manufacture, testing, assembly and packaging of complex photonic integrated circuits that combine a variety of photonic and electronic components to achieve functionality.

The New Mexico congressional delegation has strongly supported New Mexico's application. If its application is successful, the USC-UNM hub would be the first hub west of the Mississippi. UNM would serve as the lead sensing hub, focusing on the development of integrated phonic sensors for chem-bio sensing.

"New Mexico's congressional delegation is united in our strong support for UNM's application, and we are committed to doing everything we can to help the team succeed," Udall said. "Our universities, military, business and scientific communities already are among the world's leading developers of advanced photonics technologies. Not only would the UNM team position the nation to be a global leader in the photonics field, the photonics hub would help New Mexico by boosting efforts to diversify the state's economy and create well-paying high-tech jobs."

"The University of New Mexico and its coalition of universities perform some of the world's most cutting-edge research and development in the field of optics and photonics technologies," Heinrich said. "New Mexico's private companies, universities, national labs, research facilities, and immeasurable talent make us a leading contender for the Department of Defense's Integrated Photonics Manufacturing Institute. In New Mexico, we develop photonics technologies that are used in the military, scientific, medical, and intelligence communities. Establishing a photonics hub will help give our communities an economic boost and create quality jobs, while bridging the gap between applied research and product development. I remain steadfast in my commitment to give UNM's coalition the best shot at this opportunity."

"The advancement of New Mexico to the next round of the IP-IMI process is a testament to the research and development culture in our state," Pearce said. "I commend the University of New Mexico on this latest achievement and I join my colleagues in continued support for New Mexico's involvement in this critical research."

"It is welcome news that UNM is part of a team that has been selected to submit a full proposal for the Integrated Photonics Institute for Manufacturing Innovation," **Luján** said. "This selection validates New Mexico's national stature in this important field that plays an essential role in robotics, medical imaging, biometric security, and more. Having a hub at UNM would enable New Mexico to play an even greater role and leverage our unique resources to advance this critical sector that can help diversify our economy and spur new opportunities in our communities."

"This is a tremendous opportunity for New Mexico to step up and take a leadership role in this burgeoning industry, while creating high-wage jobs that will boost our economic comeback," **Lujan** Grisham said.

The USC-UNM team also includes the University of California system schools in Los Angeles, San Diego and Berkeley; Arizona State University; and Ohio State University The team will compete against two others based in New York and Florida. Full and final applications are due by March 31, and the final selection is expected in June 2015.

"The University of New Mexico already has strong partnerships with our national labs, city and state governments and local industry. We want to enhance those assets in every way we can," UNM President Robert G. Frank said. "This grant would be a fantastic accelerator."

Sanjay Krishna, who directs the Center for High Technology Materials at UNM, has been leading UNM's effort. UNM is currently working with the state and the city of Albuquerque to secure matching funds to develop an integrated photonics curriculum for high schools, colleges and UNM branch campuses as part of a workforce development and education plan.

"I believe that photonics could be an enabling technology that can spur economic development and create new opportunities for entrepreneurs," Krishna said. "Our close interaction with the federal and national labs is a great strength and our interactions with high schools, community colleges, branch campuses and other universities could create a K through PhD workforce."

Ultimately, the IP-IMI will be an end-to-end integrated photonics manufacturing "ecosystem." It will include integrated design tools for efficient simulation and design of integrated photonic circuits, domestic photonic device fabrication foundry access, automated packaging, assembly and test of integrated photonic circuits, and workforce development. Activities under the IP-IMI will enable universities and small-to-medium enterprises to participate in the integrated photonics revolution. It will bring government, industry and academia together with the goal of organizing the current fragmented domestic capabilities in integrated photonic technology and better position the U.S. relative to global competition.

The IP-IMI is the newest addition to the federal government's new National Network for Manufacturing Innovation, a series of manufacturing "hubs" intended to bridge the gap between applied research and product development by bringing together companies, universities and other academic and training institutions, and federal agencies to co invest in key technology areas that encourage investment and production in the United States.

This type of "teaching factory" provides a unique opportunity for education and training of students and workers at all levels, while providing the shared assets to help small manufacturers and other companies access the cutting-edge capabilities and equipment to design, test, and pilot new products and manufacturing processes.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: February 10, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

February 7, 2015 Saturday 6:52 PM EST

Rep. Boustany Introduces Bill to Abolish Medicare Outpatient Rehabilitation Therapy Caps

BYLINE: by KAREN NARAG, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 375 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7 -- Rep. Charles Boustany Jr., R-La., has introduced legislation (H.R. 775) to "repeal the Medicare outpatient rehabilitation therapy caps."

The bill was introduced on Feb. 5 and has 54 co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. Marsha Blackburn, R-Tenn., Lois Capps, D-Calif., Xavier Becerra, D-Calif., C.A. "Dutch" Ruppersberger, D-Md.,

Blake Farenthold, R-Texas, Grace F. Napolitano, D-Calif., Ryan Costello, R-Pa., Nita M. Lowey, D-N.Y., Niki Tsongas, D-Mass., Alcee L Hastings, D-Fla., John B. Larson, D-Conn., Glenn W. Thompson, R-Pa., Tim Ryan, D-Ohio, Bill Foster, D-Ill., Jim Langevin, D-R.I., Mike Kelly, R-Pa., Pete Sessions, R-Texas, David Joyce, R-Ohio, Peter J. Roskam, R-Ill., Alan Nunnelee, R-Miss., Cedric L. Richmond, D-La., Mike Honda, D-Calif., David Loebsack, D-Iowa, John A. Yarmuth, D-Ky., Joe Heck, R-Nev., Charles B. Rangel, D-N.Y., Patrick Meehan, R-Pa., Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-Texas, Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., Lynn Jenkins, R-Kan., Billy Long, R-Mo., Keith Ellison, D-Minn., Peter T. King, R-N.Y., Gregg Harper, R-Miss., Ann Kirkpatrick, D-Ariz., Joe Wilson, R-S.C., Raul M. Grijalva, D-Ariz., Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill., Jared Huffman, D-Calif., **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., Michael C. Burgess, R-Texas, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., Julia Brownley, D-Calif., Ann Wagner, R-Mo., Joyce Beatty, D-Ohio, Tim Murphy, R-Pa., Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill., Lois Frankel, D-Fla., Michael R. Turner, R-Ohio, Jackie Walorski, R-Ind., Rob Bishop, R-Utah, Tom Cole, R-Okla., Pete Olson, R-Texas, and Rick Nolan, D-Minn.

The legislation was referred to the House Energy and Commerce Committee; and House Ways and Means Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/LegislativeData.php?&n=BillText. For more information about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information, contact Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; targetednews.com.

23NaragK 150207-kn-1190655

LOAD-DATE: February 7, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

243 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

February 6, 2015 Friday

UNM a finalist to land $110M photonics institute

BYLINE: Mike English

LENGTH: 270 words

The University of New Mexico has advanced to the final round of a selection process for the $110 million Integrated Photonics Institute for Manufacturing Innovation program, a new federal project that would help turn research into commercial products.

The New Mexico congressional delegation - Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, along with Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham - joined UNM in announcing Thursday that the U.S. Department of Defense has selected UNM and a team of schools from four states, including the University of Southern California, to potentially run a regional manufacturing institute.

The $110 million would be used to develop partnerships between industry, government and academia to commercialize new photonics technologies. UNM Center for High Technology Materials Director Sanjay Krishna has been leading the university's effort.

"The University of New Mexico already has strong partnerships with our national labs, city and state governments and local industry. We want to enhance those assets in every way we can," UNM President Robert Frank said in a release. "This grant would be a fantastic accelerator."

Udall said the state's members of Congress will do all they can to help secure UNM's involvement in the program. "We are committed to doing everything we can to help the team succeed," he said in the release.

Want Albuquerque news in your inbox? Click here to sign up for our email newsletters.

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: February 6, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 6, 2015

LUJAN JOINS BIPARTISAN EFFORT TO IMPROVE EMAIL PRIVACY PROTECTIONS;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 243 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** announced today that he has joined in a bipartisan effort to update and improve privacy protections for electronic communications. **Lujan** and more than 230 members of the House introduced legislation to update the Electronic Communications

Privacy Act (ECPA), which has not been updated since 1986 despite substantial changes in technology.

"In the nearly 30 years since ECPA was written we have seen amazing technological progress that has brought us new tools to communicate. Yet in that time, our laws have not kept up with these changes," Congressman **Lujan** said. "From cloud computing to smartphones, many of the technologies that are part of our daily lives did not even exist. It is long past time to update ECPA to reflect the developments in technology and to ensure the American people have important privacy protections."

The Electronic Communications Privacy Amendments Act of 2015 requires the government to get a search warrant based on a showing of probable cause in order to access email and other data in the cloud. It replaces the "180-day rule" which has been used to gain warrantless access to emails that are on a server for more than 180 days. The legislation protects privacy while also preserving the legal tools necessary to conduct criminal investigations.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-joins-bipartisan-effort-to-improve-email-privacy-protections/

LOAD-DATE: February 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

February 6, 2015 Friday

LUJAN JOINS BIPARTISAN EFFORT TO IMPROVE EMAIL PRIVACY PROTECTIONS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 232 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** announced today that he has joined in a bipartisan effort to update and improve privacy protections for electronic communications. **Lujan** and more than 230 members of the House introduced legislation to update the Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA), which has not been updated since 1986 despite substantial changes in technology.

"In the nearly 30 years since ECPA was written we have seen amazing technological progress that has brought us new tools to communicate. Yet in that time, our laws have not kept up with these changes," Congressman **Lujan** said. "From cloud computing to smartphones, many of the technologies that are part of our daily lives did not even exist. It is long past time to update ECPA to reflect the developments in technology and to ensure the American people have important privacy protections."

The Electronic Communications Privacy Amendments Act of 2015 requires the government to get a search warrant based on a showing of probable cause in order to access email and other data in the cloud. It replaces the "180-day rule" which has been used to gain warrantless access to emails that are on a server for more than 180 days. The legislation protects privacy while also preserving the legal tools necessary to conduct criminal investigations.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: February 8, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

February 5, 2015 Thursday 9:19 PM EST

Proposal to Create National Institute of Photonics Advances to Final Round

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 1030 words

DATELINE: ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

The University of New Mexico issued the following news release:

A consortium, that includes the University of New Mexico, is bidding for $110 million in federal funds for a new Integrated Photonics Institute for Manufacturing Innovation (IP-IMI). The consortium has advanced to the final round of competition, the Department of Defense announced recently.

The initiative is part of a national effort launched in 2013 to create a network of regional manufacturing institutes or "hubs" across the county that help bridge the gap between applied research and product development.

The mission is to establish a state-of-the-art hub focusing on the design, manufacture, testing, assembly and packaging of complex photonic integrated circuits that combine a variety of photonic and electronic components to achieve functionality.

The program calls for UNM to collaborate with a team of academic institutions from four states, led by the Information Science Institute ISI at University of Southern California. The $110 million in federal grant matching funds will help develop a partnership between industry, government and academia to accelerate the creation of new photonics technologies.

"The University of New Mexico already has strong partnerships with our national labs, city and state governments and local industry," UNM President Robert G. Frank said. "We want to enhance those assets in every way we can. This grant would be a fantastic accelerator."

Sanjay Krishna, UNM School of Engineering professor in computer and electrical engineering, directs UNM's Center for High Technology Materials (CHTM) and has been leading UNM's effort. UNM is currently working with the state and the city of Albuquerque to secure matching funds to develop an integrated photonics curriculum for high schools, colleges and UNM branch campuses as part of a workforce development and education plan.

"I believe that photonics could be an enabling technology that can spur economic development and create new opportunities for entrepreneurs," Krishna said. "Our close interaction with the federal and national labs is a great strength and our interactions with high schools, community colleges, branch campuses and other universities could create a K through PhD workforce."

Ultimately, the IP-IMI will be an end-to-end integrated photonics manufacturing "ecosystem." It will include integrated design tools for efficient simulation and design of integrated photonic circuits, domestic photonic device fabrication foundry access, automated packaging, assembly and test of integrated photonic circuits, and workforce development.

Activities under the IP-IMI will enable universities and small-to-medium enterprises to participate in the integrated photonics revolution. It will bring government, industry and academia together with the goal of organizing the current fragmented domestic capabilities in integrated photonic technology and better position the U.S. relative to global competition.

If successful, the USC-UNM hub would be the first west of the Mississippi. UNM would serve as the lead sensing hub, focusing on the development of integrated phonic sensors for chem-bio sensing.

The USC-UNM team also includes the University of California system schools in Los Angeles, San Diego and Berkeley; Arizona State University; and Ohio State University. The team will compete against two others based in New York and Florida. Full and final applications are due by March 31, and the final selection is expected in June 2015.

The New Mexico congressional delegation: U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan**, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and Steve Pearce are all in support of the program.

"Our universities, military, business and scientific communities already are among the world's leading developers of advanced photonics technologies," said Udall. "Not only would the UNM team position the nation to be a global leader in the photonics field, the photonics hub would help New Mexico by boosting efforts to diversify the state's economy and create well-paying high-tech jobs."

"The University of New Mexico and its coalition of universities perform some of the world's most cutting-edge research and development in the field of optics and photonics technologies," Heinrich said. "New Mexico's private companies, universities, national labs, research facilities, and immeasurable talent make us a leading contender."

"It is welcome news that UNM is part of a team that has been selected to submit a full proposal for the Integrated Photonics Institute for Manufacturing Innovation," **Lujan** said. "Having a hub at UNM would enable New Mexico to play an even greater role and leverage our unique resources to advance this critical sector that can help diversify our economy and spur new opportunities in our communities."

"This is a tremendous opportunity for New Mexico to step up and take a leadership role in this burgeoning industry, while creating high-wage jobs that will boost our economic comeback," **Lujan** Grisham said.

"The advancement of New Mexico to the next round of the IP-IMI process is a testament to the research and development culture in our state," Pearce said. "I commend the University of New Mexico on this latest achievement and I join my colleagues in continued support for New Mexico's involvement in this critical research."

The IP-IMI is the newest addition to the federal government's new National Network for Manufacturing Innovation, a series of manufacturing "hubs" intended to bridge the gap between applied research and product development by bringing together companies, universities and other academic and training institutions, and federal agencies to co invest in key technology areas that encourage investment and production in the United States.

This type of "teaching factory" provides a unique opportunity for education and training of students and workers at all levels, while providing the shared assets to help small manufacturers and other companies access the cutting-edge capabilities and equipment to design, test, and pilot new products and manufacturing processes.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TagarumaMar-150206-5018592 30TagarumaMar

LOAD-DATE: February 5, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 3, 2015

LUJAN STATEMENT ON HOUSE REPUBLICANS' LATEST ATTEMPT TO REPEAL THE ACA;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 176 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after House Republicans once again voted to fully repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

"Once again House Republicans voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act and take away health insurance for millions of Americans without offering any alternative. Their plan would put insurance companies back in charge, enabling them to discriminate based on pre-existing conditions. In New Mexico, more than 214,000 people are receiving health care thanks to the ACA and the ranks of the uninsured have dropped by 5 percent.

"It is disappointing that instead of focusing on middle-class economics, passing a clean bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security, or addressing comprehensive immigration reform, House Republicans are once again playing politics with yet another vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-house-republicans-latest-attempt-to-repeal-the-aca/

LOAD-DATE: February 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

248 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

February 3, 2015 Tuesday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON HOUSE REPUBLICANS' LATEST ATTEMPT TO REPEAL THE ACA

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 164 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after House Republicans once again voted to fully repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

"Once again House Republicans voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act and take away health insurance for millions of Americans without offering any alternative. Their plan would put insurance companies back in charge, enabling them to discriminate based on pre-existing conditions. In New Mexico, more than 214,000 people are receiving health care thanks to the ACA and the ranks of the uninsured have dropped by 5 percent.

"It is disappointing that instead of focusing on middle-class economics, passing a clean bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security, or addressing comprehensive immigration reform, House Republicans are once again playing politics with yet another vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act."

LOAD-DATE: February 5, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

February 3, 2015 Tuesday 11:04 PM EST

Lujan Statement on House Republicans' Latest Attempt to Repeal the ACA

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 173 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after House Republicans once again voted to fully repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

"Once again House Republicans voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act and take away health insurance for millions of Americans without offering any alternative. Their plan would put insurance companies back in charge, enabling them to discriminate based on pre-existing conditions. In New Mexico, more than 214,000 people are receiving health care thanks to the ACA and the ranks of the uninsured have dropped by 5 percent.

"It is disappointing that instead of focusing on middle-class economics, passing a clean bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security, or addressing comprehensive immigration reform, House Republicans are once again playing politics with yet another vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-150204-5015566 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: February 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

February 3, 2015 Tuesday

Lujan Statement on House Republicans' Latest Attempt to Repeal the ACA

LENGTH: 186 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after House Republicans once again voted to fully repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

"Once again House Republicans voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act and take away health insurance for millions of Americans without offering any alternative. Their plan would put insurance companies back in charge, enabling them to discriminate based on pre-existing conditions. In New Mexico, more than 214,000 people are receiving health care thanks to the ACA and the ranks of the uninsured have dropped by 5 percent.

"It is disappointing that instead of focusing on middle-class economics, passing a clean bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security, or addressing comprehensive immigration reform, House Republicans are once again playing politics with yet another vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: February 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

February 3, 2015 Tuesday

Lujan Statement on Black History Month

LENGTH: 258 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today in recognition of Black History Month, which is celebrated in February.

"This month we celebrate Black History Month and reflect on the enduring contributions of a community whose vibrant culture and rich traditions are an integral part of the fabric of our great nation. In all sectors of American society - as business owners, educators, members of the armed services, and more - the African American community has played a leading role.

"During Black History Month we are reminded of the tireless efforts of so many who committed themselves to the pursuit of social justice and equality and whose efforts paved the way for so much progress. It is because of their work that this year we remember the 50th anniversary of the march in Selma and the passage of the Voting Rights Act.

"Let us honor the unwavering spirit of the men and women who would not be deterred from their struggle for justice by continuing the fight for equal access at the ballot box and strengthening the Voting Rights Act so that every citizen can exercise his or her fundamental right to vote. In doing so we not only remember the legacy of those who were driven by the struggle for equality, we also honor the dreams and aspirations of the next generation."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: February 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

February 3, 2015 Tuesday

Lujan Statement on President Obama's Budget Proposal

LENGTH: 238 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on President Obama's Fiscal Year 2016 budget proposal.

"The President's budget puts the focus where it should be - on middle-class economics. President Obama has offered a number of ideas to address the squeeze that is gripping middle-class families. By concentrating on growing paychecks and investing in the critical areas that grow our economy, the President's budget stands in stark contrast to House Republicans' trickle-down policies that only focus on those at the top.

"The President's focus on expanding early education and investing in STEM education is critical to helping New Mexico's children get ahead. I am encouraged by the overall funding levels for New Mexico's national labs, but I will continue to advocate for more funding for environmental cleanup in the appropriations process. The arbitrary budget cuts of the sequester have harmed New Mexico, and by reversing this policy that led to Head Start centers shutting down, workers being furloughed, and cuts to the national labs, the President's budget takes important steps to support investments that are essential to New Mexico's future."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: February 4, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

253 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 2, 2015

LUJAN STATEMENT ON BLACK HISTORY MONTH; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 242 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today in recognition of Black History Month, which is celebrated in February.

"This month we celebrate Black History Month and reflect on the enduring contributions of a community whose vibrant culture and rich traditions are an integral part of the fabric of our great nation. In all sectors of American society - as business owners, educators, members of the armed services, and more - the African American community has played a leading role.

"During Black History Month we are reminded of the tireless efforts of so many who committed themselves to the pursuit of social justice and equality and whose efforts paved the way for so much progress. It is because of their work that this year we remember the 50th anniversary of the march in Selma and the passage of the Voting Rights Act.

"Let us honor the unwavering spirit of the men and women who would not be deterred from their struggle for justice by continuing the fight for equal access at the ballot box and strengthening the Voting Rights Act so that every citizen can exercise his or her fundamental right to vote. In doing so we not only remember the legacy of those who were driven by the struggle for equality, we also honor the dreams and aspirations of the next generation."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-black-history-month/

LOAD-DATE: February 3, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 2, 2015

LUJAN STATEMENT ON PRESIDENT OBAMA'S BUDGET PROPOSAL;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 224 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on President Obama's Fiscal Year 2016 budget proposal.

"The President's budget puts the focus where it should be - on middle-class economics. President Obama has offered a number of ideas to address the squeeze that is gripping middle-class families. By concentrating on growing paychecks and investing in the critical areas that grow our economy, the President's budget stands in stark contrast to House Republicans' trickle-down policies that only focus on those at the top.

"The President's focus on expanding early education and investing in STEM education is critical to helping New Mexico's children get ahead. I am encouraged by the overall funding levels for New Mexico's national labs, but I will continue to advocate for more funding for environmental cleanup in the appropriations process. The arbitrary budget cuts of the sequester have harmed New Mexico, and by reversing this policy that led to Head Start centers shutting down, workers being furloughed, and cuts to the national labs, the President's budget takes important steps to support investments that are essential to New Mexico's future."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-president-obamas-budget-proposal/

LOAD-DATE: February 3, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

255 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Silver City Daily Press & Independent (New Mexico)

February 2, 2015 Monday

Legislative Roundup;
Days remaining in session: 29

BYLINE: The New Mexican

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 15

LENGTH: 777 words

Homegrown lab management: Northern New Mexico's representative in Congress called on the state Legislature to lead a movement toward homegrown management of the national laboratories in the state.

Addressing a joint session on Thursday, U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N. M., said lucrative federal contracts to manage Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratory, in particular, present a unique economic development opportunity in the financially struggling state. He said the Legislature should explore ways to assemble a consortium capable of managing the labs.

Sandia's management contract is in the process of being rebid, and the contract with Los Alamos National Security, the private contractor that manages LANL, expires Oct. 1, 2017.

U.S. Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N. M., addressed the Legislature on Tuesday and urged bipartisan cooperation. He emphasized the importance of oil and gas to the state's economy. On Wednesday, in another joint session of the Legislature, U.S. Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N. M., touched on the woeful state of behavioral health care in the state.

Extracting New Mexico from its economic malaise was common theme in the congressional delegates' speeches. **Luján** said it's time for the state to chart a new economic path. "New Mexico is at a crossroads ... ," he said. "The signs of economic recovery are all around us, but yet seem to be passing us by."

Breaking fast: Native New Mexican and critically acclaimed actor Steven Michael Quezada and his wife, Cherise, ordered breakfast burritos with avocado, his with green chile, at the Roundhouse cafeteria on Thursday.

Quezada, who portrayed federal agent Steven Gomez in the popular TV series "Breaking Bad," was at the Capitol to track education issues in his capacity as a member of the Albuquerque school board.

Webcast archives killed: The House Appropriations and Finance Committee on Thursday voted down a proposal to archive Internet videos of legislative committee hearings. On a party-line 7-5 vote, with Republicans in opposition, House Resolution 2, sponsored by Rep. Jeff Steinborn, D-Las Cruces, was tabled.

Currently, committee hearings are broadcast online during the legislative session, but they are not archived. Gov. Susana Martinez's office webcasts selected proceedings, including floor sessions of the House and Senate, which are archived on the governor's website.

After voting down the bill to archive committee hearing webcasts, the House Appropriations and Finance Committee approved a separate measure, House Concurrent Resolution 1, also sponsored by Steinborn, to webcast interim committee meetings when feasible, but without archiving them. That proposal received a "do pass" recommendation on a unanimous vote. Next, it moves to the House Rules and Order of Business Committee.

Stay away: The House on a 66-0 vote Thursday passed legislation that would allow rape victims to ask judges to impose permanent restraining orders against their convicted attackers.

Racheal Gonzales of Grants has been the public face of House Bill 123. Her biological father was sentenced to prison for raping her when she was a child. She has told legislative committees that for victims, the periodic expiration of restraining orders is at best inconvenient, and at worst terrifying.

The bill now moves to the Senate.

Looking ahead: The House Appropriations and Finance Committee was scheduled to consider a revised state budget proposal that reflects a downward turn in revenue expectations, driven by falling oil prices, during its meeting at 8:30 a.m. Friday in Room 307.

o U.S. Sen. Tom Udall, D-N. M., was scheduled to take his turn in addressing state legislators at 10:15 a.m. today. His office said Udall "will call on lawmakers to work together and focus on improving the well-being of New Mexico's children."

o KNME-TV's public affairs show New Mexico in Focus will air a segment today asking state lawmakers how they are trying to help children and families. Among scheduled guests for the broadcast, which airs at 7 p.m. on Channel 5.1 and repeats at 7 a.m. Sunday, are Rep. Gail Chasey, D-Albuquerque, Sen. Gay Kernan,

R-Hobbs, and Sen. John Sapien, D-Corrales.

Quote of the day: "That's an applause line." -- U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N. M., when a joint session of the Legislature greeted his proclaimed support for economic development initiatives with silence.

o Follow legislative coverage at www.santafenewmexican.com/news/legislature.

o Read Steve Terrell's blog at http://tinyurl.com/Round houseroundup and Milan Simonich's blog "Ringside Seat" at http://tinyurl.com/Ringside Seat

o Subscribe to our updates on Twitter @thenewmexican.

LOAD-DATE: February 21, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Silver City Daily Press & Independent
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

256 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

February 2, 2015 Monday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON BLACK HISTORY MONTH

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 235 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today in recognition of Black History Month, which is celebrated in February.

"This month we celebrate Black History Month and reflect on the enduring contributions of a community whose vibrant culture and rich traditions are an integral part of the fabric of our great nation. In all sectors of American society - as business owners, educators, members of the armed services, and more - the African American community has played a leading role.

"During Black History Month we are reminded of the tireless efforts of so many who committed themselves to the pursuit of social justice and equality and whose efforts paved the way for so much progress. It is because of their work that this year we remember the 50th anniversary of the march in Selma and the passage of the Voting Rights Act.

"Let us honor the unwavering spirit of the men and women who would not be deterred from their struggle for justice by continuing the fight for equal access at the ballot box and strengthening the Voting Rights Act so that every citizen can exercise his or her fundamental right to vote. In doing so

we not only remember the legacy of those who were driven by the struggle for equality, we also honor the dreams and aspirations of the next generation."

LOAD-DATE: February 5, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

States News Service

February 2, 2015 Monday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON PRESIDENT OBAMA'S BUDGET PROPOSAL

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 215 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on President Obama's Fiscal Year 2016 budget proposal.

"The President's budget puts the focus where it should be - on middle-class economics. President Obama has offered a number of ideas to address the squeeze that is gripping middle-class families. By concentrating on growing paychecks and investing in the critical areas that grow our economy, the President's budget stands in stark contrast to House Republicans' trickle-down policies that only focus on those at the top.

"The President's focus on expanding early education and investing in STEM education is critical to helping New Mexico's children get ahead. I am encouraged by the overall funding levels for New Mexico's national labs, but I will continue to advocate for more funding for environmental cleanup in the appropriations process. The arbitrary budget cuts of the sequester have harmed New Mexico, and by reversing this policy that led to Head Start centers shutting down, workers being furloughed, and cuts to the national labs, the President's budget takes important steps to support investments that are essential to New Mexico's future."

LOAD-DATE: February 5, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

February 2, 2015 Monday 8:38 PM EST

Lujan Statement on Black History Month

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 245 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today in recognition of Black History Month, which is celebrated in February.

"This month we celebrate Black History Month and reflect on the enduring contributions of a community whose vibrant culture and rich traditions are an integral part of the fabric of our great nation. In all sectors of American society - as business owners, educators, members of the armed services, and more - the African American community has played a leading role.

"During Black History Month we are reminded of the tireless efforts of so many who committed themselves to the pursuit of social justice and equality and whose efforts paved the way for so much progress. It is because of their work that this year we remember the 50th anniversary of the march in Selma and the passage of the Voting Rights Act.

"Let us honor the unwavering spirit of the men and women who would not be deterred from their struggle for justice by continuing the fight for equal access at the ballot box and strengthening the Voting Rights Act so that every citizen can exercise his or her fundamental right to vote. In doing so we not only remember the legacy of those who were driven by the struggle for equality, we also honor the dreams and aspirations of the next generation."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-150203-5013467 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: February 2, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

February 2, 2015 Monday 8:38 PM EST

Lujan Statement on President Obama's Budget Proposal

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 224 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on President Obama's Fiscal Year 2016 budget proposal.

"The President's budget puts the focus where it should be - on middle-class economics. President Obama has offered a number of ideas to address the squeeze that is gripping middle-class families. By concentrating on growing paychecks and investing in the critical areas that grow our economy, the President's budget stands in stark contrast to House Republicans' trickle-down policies that only focus on those at the top.

"The President's focus on expanding early education and investing in STEM education is critical to helping New Mexico's children get ahead. I am encouraged by the overall funding levels for New Mexico's national labs, but I will continue to advocate for more funding for environmental cleanup in the appropriations process. The arbitrary budget cuts of the sequester have harmed New Mexico, and by reversing this policy that led to Head Start centers shutting down, workers being furloughed, and cuts to the national labs, the President's budget takes important steps to support investments that are essential to New Mexico's future."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-150203-5013468 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: February 2, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

260 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

February 1, 2015 Sunday

Senate gets ready to take the test;
NCLB rewrite will wrestle with how much is too much

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 1925 words

WASHINGTON - If there is one thing that the divided U.S. Congress can agree on, it's that the federal No Child Left Behind education law is woefully outdated.

The law, enacted in 2001, aimed to make states more accountable for the millions of federal education dollars they receive each year, in large part through standardized student testing.

No Child Left Behind did, in fact, force states and local school districts to focus on improving student test scores, paying particular attention to minority and developmentally disabled children who often lagged behind. But many parents, teachers, administrators, state education leaders and members of Congress - including those from New Mexico - complain that the law overemphasizes standardized testing at the expense of classroom instruction that prepares students for the next grade level, college or the real world.

The political calculus on the standardized testing issue is tangled, with Republicans in Washington generally pushing for less testing - or at least fewer federal testing mandates - and Republicans in New Mexico generally favoring tests as a measure of progress.

Democrats and teachers' unions in New Mexico argue that testing requirements - with results factored into teacher evaluations - are unfair and counterproductive to effective classroom teaching. Meanwhile, many Democrats in Washington are averse to proposals to minimize the federal testing mandates.

NM views

In the eight years since the No Child Left Behind law expired, Congress has been unable or unwilling to rewrite and re-enact the contro- versial law, which states must still adhere to unless granted a waiver by the U.S. Department of Education.

With Republicans now controlling the House and Senate, the political inertia surrounding the expired education law appears to be dissipating. Sen. Lamar Alexander, a Tennessee Republican and former U.S. education secretary under President George H.W. Bush, last week convened a Senate education committee hearing to begin rewriting the law. Rep. John Kline, a Minnesota Republican who is chairman of the House education committee, is expected to follow suit.

"They seem to be focusing on the real issues, so I think it's going to be a priority," said Sen. Tom Udall, a New Mexico Democrat. "I want it to be a priority."

In Journal interviews last week, Udall and the three other Democrats in New Mexico's congressional delegation agreed the NCLB law needs to be rewritten and standardized testing de-emphasized - at least somewhat. But they also cautioned against stripping away too much federal oversight as part of the legislative overhaul. The Department of Education uses testing and achievement scores to track progress.

"It's important that the federal role in education is not drastically reduced," said Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M. "That's one of the most important roles of the federal government - oversight."

Rep. Steve Pearce, the New Mexico delegation's only Republican, said he would prefer that the feds leave education policy strictly to the states, echoing a common theme of conservative Republicans.

"We're trying to make a system work that is like a Model T (antique car)," Pearce said of No Child Left Behind. "You can add all the grease and oil you want, but it's still going to be a Model T. It's time to rethink education as a whole."

Back home

Meanwhile, Republican Gov. Susana Martinez and her education secretary-designate, Hanna Skandera, say that while the federal No Child Left Behind law is outdated, student testing is critical to evaluating teachers and sparking educational progress.

"As we look toward reauthorization ... we need to focus on the fact that school accountability is absolutely important," Skandera said in a Journal interview. "But it's got to be done at the local level, not defined or dictated by the federal government."

In the absence of an up-to-date federal education law, New Mexico and some other states are operating under waiver extensions that allow them to accept federal dollars in exchange for tying student test scores to their new teacher evaluation system, among other requirements.

New Mexico also included the adoption of the Common Core State Standards as part of its waiver. Forty-six states have adopted the Common Core State Standards, but Indiana has since repealed the standards and other states have introduced legislation to repeal. New Mexico state education officials remain committed to Common Core. Common Core is an unprecedented nationwide effort to ensure students in every state are taught - and tested on - the same set of high academic math and reading standards.

In November, New Mexico was among seven states the U.S. Education Department deemed eligible to apply for a four-year waiver from the requirements of No Child Left Behind, compared with three-year extensions for most other states.

Train wreck?

Democratic Sen. Martin Heinrich of New Mexico has two young sons who attended public elementary schools in Albuquerque before the family moved to the Washington, D.C., area in 2013. Heinrich said he has firsthand knowledge of the testing burden placed on New Mexico children and that testing is going to be a big part of the discussion" as Congress moves forward with its NCLB overhaul.

Heinrich's kids are now in public schools in suburban Maryland, which is also wrestling with complaints about federal testing standards. Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan, a Republican, has called education reforms to meet federal mandates in Maryland "a train wreck."

"There is broad consensus that NCLB needs to be rewritten, that it's not meeting the goals that were articulated when it was created," Heinrich said. "The difficulty is going to be how it should be rewritten. I do think there is too much testing, and too much testing that is not useful to instruction."

Heinrich said if the federal government is going to maintain national testing policies, it needs to do a better job.

"We have an existing role represented by No Child Left Behind that I don't think has been as helpful as it should be," he said. "We need to get that right. We need to rewrite it in a way that better aligns with local goals without being redundant, so you're not having situations where kids are being tested on a state test, a federal test and a local test, and losing a big chunk of their annual school year to evaluation that could be spent on instruction."

Former Sen. Jeff Bingaman, a New Mexico Democrat, was one of the key architects of the No Child Left Behind Law and worked with the late Sen. Ted Kennedy, current House Speaker John Boehner and former President George W. Bush to pass the legislation in 2001.

Bingaman said the overemphasis on testing isn't all the federal government's fault and that Common Core has helped ease the burden.

"A substantial amount of the testing, states were doing before the federal law ever passed," Bingaman said, stressing that testing remains the best way to account for federal education spending. "The solution is not to quit testing but to consolidate the testing. This movement toward Common Core standards, I think, makes that feasible. Most states are signed up and sticking with the idea of common standards, so you're to a point where, if you test to see if students are meeting those standards, that should be adequate for the federal government to decide whether its concerns are met."

Bingaman also positioned himself as a relatively rare - at least these days - defender of No Child Left Behind.

"I think that the law, overall, has had the effect of making schools reassess what they were doing," he said. "The idea that each state has to have a plan for improving student performance and then demonstrate by testing that they are actually improving performance has been a positive thing."

Alexander, the current Senate education committee chairman, disagreed. He has floated a draft "discussion" bill that offers two paths forward on student testing: Let states decide how much to test or retain the federally driven testing provisions contained in the expired NCLB law.

Alexander wants the committee to pass an NCLB rewrite by late February. Last week, he made clear which path on testing he prefers.

"Given all of the great progress that states and local school districts have made on standards, accountability, tests and teacher evaluation over the past 30 years, you'll get a lot more progress with a lot less opposition if you leave those decisions there," he told an education hearing on Capitol Hill last week. "I think we should return to state and local school district decisions for measuring the progress of our schools, and for evaluating and measuring the effectiveness of teachers."

Like Bingaman, Udall said federal testing mandates help provide proof that federal taxpayers are getting an adequate bang for the bucks they spend on education.

"The states run the education systems, but let's not forget how much money comes in from the federal government - targeted money to try to do a better job for students and teachers," Udall said. "We do a lot in teacher training, and we try to target the students who aren't doing well and who are under-achievers. When you spend those kinds of dollars, we have to make sure there is accountability - some kind of measurement - and that's where you get into the testing arena."

NM spending

New Mexico spends about $2.6 billion annually on elementary and secondary education, with state and local funding accounting for the vast majority - just under $2.4 billion of that amount, according to the state Legislative Finance Committee.

Gary King, a Democrat who ran for governor last year, said during the campaign that he might be willing to give up the tens of millions of dollars in federal education funding simply to get out from under burdensome federal testing requirements.

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., said the Obama administration's approach to education over the past six years has exacerbated a problem of too much testing created by No Child Left Behind. Citing New Mexico as a prime example, she said states have shifted their focus from practical

classroom instruction to teaching for test preparation. She also said that, in many cases, teachers haven't been adequately trained to prepare students for the tests.

"The Obama administration has been part of the problem, and what I mean specifically is they have really worked to give states the flexibility to figure out teachers' accountability," **Lujan** Grisham said. "But that accountability has (reduced) states' investments in helping teachers succeed and instead penalizes teachers by not having them be a part of the evaluation process and by not including them in how the testing apparatus should look. The states are (implementing) their own tests that don't quite work. New Mexico is a lead example on where those struggles are the most defined and having the most devastating impact, which has led to the kind of teacher vacancy we have."

Skandera insisted that New Mexico's education policy is helping to expose poorly performing schools and turn them around.

"We have a school grading system that has been very powerful in helping parents identify effective schools, and helping school leaders identify strengths and weaknesses in their schools," she said. "It's important that every state - like New Mexico - has a plan to intervene in schools that are struggling. Making sure we know how our students are doing is absolutely a civil rights issue and we should own that across the nation."

Journal Staff Writer Jon Swedien

contributed to this report.

LOAD-DATE: February 2, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Albuquerque Journal

US Official News

January 31, 2015 Saturday

New Mexico: **Lujan** Sponsors Measures to Overturn Citizens United and Increase Transparency in Elections

LENGTH: 410 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he is supporting a pair of measures aimed at limiting money in politics by overturning the Citizens United Supreme Court decision and increasing transparency in elections. **Luján** is a

cosponsor of the DISCLOSE Act and the Democracy for All Amendment, which would amend the Constitution.

"Five years ago, Citizens United opened up the floodgates of special-interest money into our political system. Since that time, we've seen the rise of Super PACs that can spend unlimited amounts of money while hiding their donors and preventing the American people from finding the truth behind where their money comes from," Congressman **Luján** said. "The legislation I am supporting would increase transparency in our electoral system and restore accountability, while ensuring that a wealthy few do not drown out the voices of the American people."

The DISCLOSE Act increases transparency through four major requirements:

o Enhances public reporting of campaign-related activity by corporations and other outside groups. All corporations, unions, other outside groups, and Super PACs will have to report to the FEC within 24 hours of making a $10,000 campaign expenditure or financial transfer to other groups which can then be used for campaign-related activity.
o Requires corporations and other outside groups to stand by their ads. All leaders of corporations, unions, other outside groups, and Super PACs that make campaign-related ads will have to stand by their ads and say that he or she "approves this message." Top financial contributors have to be disclosed in television and radio advertisements.
o Requires corporations and other outside groups to disclose campaign-related spending to shareholders and organization members.
o Requires lobbyists to disclose campaign-related expenditures in conjunction with their lobbying activities.

The Democracy for All Amendment amends the Constitution to provide Congress and the states with the authority to determine reasonable campaign finance regulations and distinguish between natural persons and corporations or other artificial entities. A companion bill has been introduced in the Senate by Senator Tom Udall of New Mexico.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 2, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

January 31, 2015 Saturday

New Mexico: New Mexico Lawmakers Announce $15.6 Million Expansion Funding for State Veterans' Home

LENGTH: 654 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

WASHINGTON - Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has approved $15.6 million conditional funding for the New Mexico State Veterans' Home in Truth or Consequences to construct a new 59 bed facility. The construction and expansion project includes 39 Alzheimer's beds, a 20 bed Skilled Nursing Unit, a new rehabilitation section for inpatient and outpatient services, and a new pool. The N.M. State Veterans' Home must complete items the VA has outlined as requirements for final grant award approval within 180 days from the date they received notification of the conditional funding approval.

The conditionally awarded funding is available through the VA's State Home Construction Grant Program, which provides matching grant funds for renovation and construction of state veterans homes and adult day care facilities. The VA matches 65 percent of the project costs, and states fund the remaining 35 percent. The N.M. State Veterans' Home--the only nursing facility in N.M. dedicated specifically to serving veterans and their families--has planned the construction of a new facility since 2008, and the project is estimated to cost $30 million. It has already secured $12.5 million in state funding and plans to request additional funding during the 2015 state legislative session.

"The New Mexico State Veterans' Home provides top-notch nursing home care for our veterans, and this grant will help with needed updates and an expansion to help better serve elderly and rehabbing patients," Udall said. "As a member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, I am proud to support funding for projects like this to ensure our veterans get the care they have earned. I thank our state legislature for setting aside initial funding for this project, and we ask that state lawmakers provide the full amount so construction can move forward."

"Constructing a new facility at the New Mexico State Veterans' Home will provide our elderly veterans with the best nursing care available," Heinrich said. "This funding ensures that veterans in New Mexico with rehabilitative or disability needs benefit from state-of-the-art inpatient and outpatient services, and a Skilled Nursing Unit. These kinds of investments are critical if we are to fulfill our nation's promise to those who served. Few sacrifices are as selfless as those our military service men and women make in defense of this nation. We owe our veterans and their loved ones more than a debt of gratitude -- we owe them action in both our words and deeds."

"As the one nursing facility in New Mexico that serves only our veterans and their families, the State Veterans' Home helps New Mexico's heroes that come from every corner of the state," **Luján** said. "Funds for an expansion will enable this important facility to assist more of our brave men and women and give them the care they have earned through their service to our nation. The VA's approval for conditional funding represents another important step toward making the new facility a reality for New Mexico's veterans."

"Veterans and their families deserve every opportunity for quality care and skilled nursing that will help them recover from injuries and live with dignity," **Lujan** Grisham said. "I fully support this investment and urge the VA to ensure that residents at the State Veterans' Home have access to quality programs and qualified staff."

The N.M. State Veterans' Home received notice of the conditional funding approval in late September, and therefore must meet the requirements outlined by the VA by late March for final approval of the $15,614,314 award.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 2, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

263 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

January 31, 2015 Saturday

New Mexico: Lujan Sponsors Measures to Overturn Citizens United and Increase Transparency in Elections

LENGTH: 410 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he is supporting a pair of measures aimed at limiting money in politics by overturning the Citizens United Supreme Court decision and increasing transparency in elections. **Luján** is a cosponsor of the DISCLOSE Act and the Democracy for All Amendment, which would amend the Constitution.

"Five years ago, Citizens United opened up the floodgates of special-interest money into our political system. Since that time, we've seen the rise of Super PACs that can spend unlimited amounts of money while hiding their donors and preventing the American people from finding the truth behind where their money comes from," Congressman **Luján** said. "The legislation I am supporting would increase transparency in our electoral system and restore accountability, while ensuring that a wealthy few do not drown out the voices of the American people."

The DISCLOSE Act increases transparency through four major requirements:

o Enhances public reporting of campaign-related activity by corporations and other outside groups. All corporations, unions, other outside groups, and Super PACs will have to report to the FEC within 24 hours of making a $10,000 campaign expenditure or financial transfer to other groups which can then be used for campaign-related activity.
o Requires corporations and other outside groups to stand by their ads. All leaders of corporations, unions, other outside groups, and Super PACs that make campaign-related ads will have to stand by their ads and say that he or she "approves this message." Top financial contributors have to be disclosed in television and radio advertisements.
o Requires corporations and other outside groups to disclose campaign-related spending to shareholders and organization members.

o Requires lobbyists to disclose campaign-related expenditures in conjunction with their lobbying activities.

The Democracy for All Amendment amends the Constitution to provide Congress and the states with the authority to determine reasonable campaign finance regulations and distinguish between natural persons and corporations or other artificial entities. A companion bill has been introduced in the Senate by Senator Tom Udall of New Mexico.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: February 1, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

January 31, 2015 Saturday

New Mexico: New Mexico Lawmakers Announce $15.6 Million Expansion Funding for State Veterans' Home

LENGTH: 654 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

WASHINGTON - Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has approved $15.6 million conditional funding for the New Mexico State Veterans' Home in Truth or Consequences to construct a new 59 bed facility. The construction and expansion project includes 39 Alzheimer's beds, a 20 bed Skilled Nursing Unit, a new rehabilitation section for inpatient and outpatient services, and a new pool. The N.M. State Veterans' Home must complete items the VA has outlined as requirements for final grant award approval within 180 days from the date they received notification of the conditional funding approval.

The conditionally awarded funding is available through the VA's State Home Construction Grant Program, which provides matching grant funds for renovation and construction of state veterans homes and adult day care facilities. The VA matches 65 percent of the project costs, and states fund

the remaining 35 percent. The N.M. State Veterans' Home--the only nursing facility in N.M. dedicated specifically to serving veterans and their families--has planned the construction of a new facility since 2008, and the project is estimated to cost $30 million. It has already secured $12.5 million in state funding and plans to request additional funding during the 2015 state legislative session.

"The New Mexico State Veterans' Home provides top-notch nursing home care for our veterans, and this grant will help with needed updates and an expansion to help better serve elderly and rehabbing patients," Udall said. "As a member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, I am proud to support funding for projects like this to ensure our veterans get the care they have earned. I thank our state legislature for setting aside initial funding for this project, and we ask that state lawmakers provide the full amount so construction can move forward."

"Constructing a new facility at the New Mexico State Veterans' Home will provide our elderly veterans with the best nursing care available," Heinrich said. "This funding ensures that veterans in New Mexico with rehabilitative or disability needs benefit from state-of-the-art inpatient and outpatient services, and a Skilled Nursing Unit. These kinds of investments are critical if we are to fulfill our nation's promise to those who served. Few sacrifices are as selfless as those our military service men and women make in defense of this nation. We owe our veterans and their loved ones more than a debt of gratitude -- we owe them action in both our words and deeds."

"As the one nursing facility in New Mexico that serves only our veterans and their families, the State Veterans' Home helps New Mexico's heroes that come from every corner of the state," **Luján** said. "Funds for an expansion will enable this important facility to assist more of our brave men and women and give them the care they have earned through their service to our nation. The VA's approval for conditional funding represents another important step toward making the new facility a reality for New Mexico's veterans."

"Veterans and their families deserve every opportunity for quality care and skilled nursing that will help them recover from injuries and live with dignity," **Lujan** Grisham said. "I fully support this investment and urge the VA to ensure that residents at the State Veterans' Home have access to quality programs and qualified staff."

The N.M. State Veterans' Home received notice of the conditional funding approval in late September, and therefore must meet the requirements outlined by the VA by late March for final approval of the $15,614,314 award.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: February 1, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Copyright 2015 CQ Transcriptions, LLC
All Rights Reserved
CQ Transcriptions

All materials herein are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of CQ Transcriptions. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.

REP. NANCY PELOSI, D-CALIF., HOUSE MINORITY LEADER, HOLDS A NEWS CONFERENCE AT HOUSE DEMOCRATIC ISSUES CONFERENCE

January 30, 2015 Friday

EVENT DATE: January 30, 2015

TYPE: NEWS CONFERENCE

LOCATION: PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

SPEAKER: REP. NANCY PELOSI, D-CALIF., HOUSE MINORITY LEADER,

WITNESSES:
REP. XAVIER BECERRA, D-CALIF., CHAIRMAN, HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS
REP. JOSEPH CROWLEY, D-N.Y., VICE CHAIRMAN, HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS
REP. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, D-MD.
REP. DONNA EDWARDS, D-MD., CO-CHAIR, DEMOCRATIC STEERING AND POLICY COMMITTEE
REP. JAMES E. CLYBURN, D-S.C., ASSISTANT HOUSE MINORITY LEADER
REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M.

TEXT:

BECERRA: So just to give you a warning, we have buses filled with members that are waiting for us, so we're going to all try to brief, take a couple of questions and we're going to scoot out so we can make sure it continues to be a great conference.

Shall we start? OK.

So let me thank you all for being here. Javier Xavier, chairman of the House Democratic Caucus.

The vice chairman will tell you right now, we just had a rousing finishing. Cleanup batter did a great job. The vice president -- our vice chairman, Mr. Crowley, will tell you about that.

But we knew why we were here. We came understanding the mission we were given by the American people. We had it in the title of our conference: Grow America's Economy, Grow American Paychecks.

That was what it was all about for us these last two and a half days, honing in what we need to do to make sure it's clear who the real job creators are: the middle-class. We know it's the middle class who go out there and generate demand, they're the ones that build the markets. The middle class drives our economy.

We understand and we choose to be Democrats, because we choose to be the party of the middle class, not the party of Koch.

We understand that there have to be solutions. We must strengthen not just the middle class with more jobs, higher wages, improving our roads, our bridges, our classrooms, our public safety. We have to do something more to make sure that more than 10 million Americans get health security.

So we leave Philly, the land and home of American democracy, united shoulder to shoulder with the middle class who want to dream even higher. We know that. They want to go beyond the middle class.

And we know we're here shoulder to shoulder with the aspiring class who dream of becoming part of the middle class, part of the job creators.

That's why we came, we know where we go from here, and now let me ask our vice chairman, Joe Crowley, to tell us a little bit more about the conference.

CROWLEY: As the vice chairman said, I was going to say, we had a rousing ending.

(LAUGHTER)

And I'm so pleased to be here today and to have had the opportunity to introduce the vice president before our caucus today.

I want to thank the president for his stirring speech last night as well, but there's -- there's really no better way to the conference -- caucus retreat than with Joe Biden. He just is wonderful.

I want to thank Xavier Becerra and all the caucus staff as well for a wonderful caucus retreat.

I want to thank the leader and all the members of the leadership as well on focusing the attention of our caucus and our party on growing our economy before the middle class, giving a leg up, giving a hand up to those who need it most, people who are struggling to get into the middle class and for people who are in the middle class today.

So I thank you all -- all the leadership and all the members of the Democratic Caucus.

And with that, I turn it now to the ranking member of the budget committee, Chris Van Hollen of Maryland.

VAN HOLLEN: And I -- I too want to thank our chairman and vice chairman of the caucus. It was a terrific gathering. I think we all leave here with a big boost to go into the next round. Thank you, Madam Leader and the whole team here.

And of course, on Monday, we're going to be hearing from the president in the form of his submission of the budget, which will build on his State of the Union address, and we'll quickly be into discussion on the budget, because both the House and the Senate under the rules have to come up with a budget by April 15th.

And those budgets at their root are really a discussion of and a debate about the values and priorities we have as a country. Where should we be investing? How do we move forward? How do we raise revenue?

How do we do all of that in a way that grows our economy as fast as possible, but also in a way that provides for greater shared prosperity? Because one of the things we've seen is as the job markets have picked up, as more and more people have gone back to work, we still have a real challenge with stagnant wages, especially for folks in the middle class and those working their way into the middle class.

So we're gonna be focused like a laser beam on those issues. The president's budget makes investments that are absolutely essential to help power our economy in education, in scientific research and innovation, in infrastructure, but also provides help to working families and middle-income families to help make ends meet. Things like his child and dependent care tax credit. Things like his two- earner tax credit.

So, we want to make sure that both the investments we make as well as the tax policy we build are designed, again, to rapidly grow our economy in a way that everybody can benefit.

And what we do know is if the past is prelude, and we expect it to be, our Republican colleagues will put forward a budget that takes us in the exact opposite direction. They will continue to focus on trickle-down economics, simply cutting tax rates for folks at the very top and thinking somehow miraculously that's gonna help everybody else, when history has told us that doesn't work.

And then they're gonna be dramatically cutting investments in our kids' education and in scientific research that helps power our economy and in infrastructure.

So, we welcome this debate. We think this is the question the country should be focused on.

If you listen to a lot of Republicans, they agree with us rhetorically on what the challenge is. Right? I mean, you hear Mitch McConnell and Speaker Boehner, they're talking for the first time about the middle class and wage stagnation.

Now, we welcome a debate about how you're gonna actually do that, because we think we have a plan and that the president has a plan to do that. We think the Republicans' plan actually takes the country in the wrong direction.

And, Donna Edwards, who has been somebody who, I should say, when it comes things like the child and dependent tax credit, has been championing this for a very long time.

So, Donna?

EDWARDS: Thank you very much, Chris.

And thank you to our chairman and vice chairman for a really fabulous conference about growing and building the momentum for moving the middle class forward.

But I'm here to talk to you today, actually, about a piece of unfinished business. And it is the unfinished business of the last Congress with a looming deadline of February 27 for 280,000 employees of the Department of Homeland Security, and for the security of the United States and our domestic security.

And that is the expiration of the funding for the Department of Homeland Security.

Like Chris Van Hollen, I represent a congressional district that is in the metropolitan Washington region where our law enforcement agencies cooperate and share cooperation for our domestic security and our homeland security, and they are depending on the Department of Homeland Security at a time of great international threat, daily threat, and daily threats to our homeland.

And the Republicans have decided that they want to have a food fight with the present of the United States because he took executive action on immigration when they failed to act on immigration.

And, right now, they want to hold hostage the funding for the Department of Homeland Security, and it's unacceptable.

And so, the unfinished business from last year -- the unfinished business of this Congress, the first order of business, before we can even get to these -- to these priorities, and we want to get to them, is to fund the Department of Homeland -- Homeland Security.

And I think the American people should know that it is at the feet of the Republican Party that our domestic security is in jeopardy.

And so, for all of those employees who on February 27th, they will be essential employees without a paycheck because of the Republican failure to act.

And so, as we go back to Washington, February 27th looms. And it's the responsibility of the House Republicans to get their act together and fund the Department of Homeland Security.

And so, with that, I'd like to turn this over to our leader who has taken charge over these last several days and is gonna lead middle-class momentum, Nancy Pelosi.

PELOSI: Thank you very much, Congresswoman Edwards.

Thank you, my colleagues.

I want to join in commending our distinguished chair of the caucus, Xavier Becerra and Vice Chair Joe Crowley for a great, great meeting. It's fraught (ph) with me a few days of -- of conversation -- is just the tip of the iceberg of the work that has gone into it, and what has gone into it has produced unity, camaraderie, enthusiasm but more importantly than that, momentum, momentum for the middle class, middle class, the true job creator.

And that is our message to the American people: The squeeze on the middle class is a squeeze on our economy. All of the economic indicators show that our economy is growing and prospects are good except one: the stagnation of wages for our working families.

Unless we can put purchasing powers -- power into the hands of the consumers in this consumer economy, we will not have recovery that we need, and that's why our focus has been on the middle class, the backbone of our democracy but also the job creators.

As we gather here in Philadelphia, where many of our sacred founding documents were written, they talked about life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That -- that was amazing, that in that time, they said "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

As you've heard me say before in the Affordable Care Act, we have given people the ability for a healthier life and the ability to pursue their happiness, because they were not job-locked and -- and they could make their own decisions freely.

But the fact is also that life, liberty and pursuit of happiness must be reflected in the values of our country in a budget. And I was very proud of the interaction -- it's only the beginning -- on the budget led by Congressman Van Hollen, to -- to be -- Ranking Member Van Hollen -- to be continued. This is just -- where we go from here, continued discussion on the budget, which will show the differentiation between the values that we think everyone shares in this country and the ill, misguided proposals the Republicans have in their budget.

So we go forward. Chris will be having -- Ranking Member Van Hollen will have those meetings with members about how we get consensus about -- around our budget and support of the principles on the president's budget.

Mr. Clyburn, as you know, is heading up our outreach and engagement task force to give people a reason to register, a reason to vote in this 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act.

Congresswoman Donna Edwards will be taking the lead on our campaign reform, trying to reduce the role of money in politics to increase the level of -- of hope and participation of many more people, all part of that empowerment.

And we're very proud of the role that Chairman -- I still call him Chairman -- Steve Israel...

(LAUGHTER)

Don't you dare.

Steve Israel is heading our -- our policy and communication group so that so that when we build this consensus within the party, everyone is, again, in harmony, in unity, in force on it.

Of course, our -- our chairman, **Ben Ray Lujan,** will be writing a political course, and we're very proud of the reaction the caucus has given to him.

So for us, it was a very successful weekend -- almost a weekend -- few days. We were so honored by the president's speech and the vice president speech as well.

Building on the momentum of the State of the Union address, reiterating -- returning to some of those principles and values and specific recommendations, building momentum for the middle class.

Thank you.

(UNKNOWN): We will take a couple questions.

QUESTION: Madam Leader, two-part question.

The first one, on behalf of my TV colleagues, your reaction to Mitt Romney (inaudible)...

PELOSI: Yeah, he's out of the race, right?

What else you got on your list?

(LAUGHTER)

QUESTION: So any reaction to Mitt Romney -- any reaction to Mitt Romney not running.

PELOSI: Let me say this. We have members waiting on the bus. I'm all packed, so I can stay a little bit later than the others.

But let's stay with our -- our...

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)

PELOSI: I'll come -- I'll come -- I'm happy to come back to that, but let's give them the chance.

QUESTION: Then my question would be for you, understand last night when the president talked about trade promotional authority was met with some skepticism from your caucus.

Did you deliver the vote on that if need be (ph)?

PELOSI: Well, I -- I think that you -- I don't know -- I think -- people are -- as I have said over and over, let's try to find a path to yes.

I don't know if that's possible. It depends on what is in the trade -- in the TPP. You know, "Give us fast track for TPP," well, what's TPP? Tell us what that is.

I think people are open to listening, because we are a party of trade and we understand the global economy. On the other hand, I'll say what I said a couple days ago, we will make a judgment about what is in there as to how -- what impact it has on the wages of America's working families.

QUESTION: If I may ask one -- a hometown question, local media and local political leadership's obsessed with trying to get the '16 convention here.

PELOSI: (inaudible)

QUESTION: Thank you, ma'am.

(LAUGHTER)

PELOSI: Do you think that's why the mayor was here the whole time?

(LAUGHTER)

QUESTION: Yes, it was.

PELOSI: (inaudible) to our issues conference.

(UNKNOWN): He was very good. He was great. Mayor Nutter's speech.

QUESTION: You mentioned Congressman Clyburn's leading up the effort on voter engagement. I know you spent a lot of this -- of this conference talking about the middle class -- talking about the middle class. How much have you talked in this conference about the voter engagement issue and the voting rights issue?

CLYBURN: We talked a great deal about it. In fact, we opened on Wednesday evening, the whole evening was about that. And we showed some clips from that earlier era -- not just to focus on the movie, "Selma," but to give our members, a lot of whom read about or heard about the movement, as a lot of people called it.

We did two clips -- one from a speech that Martin Luther King Jr. did in 1966, less than one year after the Voting Rights Act was signed into law, and another one from a speech he gave in 1967. Not coincidentally, both those speeches were in South Carolina -- to allow our members to see that in spite of what you may hear from the other side, Martin Luther King Jr. had a big focus on the ballot box and legislation. It was more than just about a dream unfulfilled, but he spoke about how that dream should be fulfilled.

And so, we are focusing a lot of attention on this. And I do believe that to build this middle-class economy, it is so critical to the future growth and development of this great country, we need to get more people engaged. And we're gonna very hard to do that.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)

CLYBURN: Yes, we did. And we are going to build -- and we have a full task force. The task force has met already. And we'll meet at least twice this coming week to really get this ball moving. And they've all got great ideas on how they think we can get this done.

VAN HOLLEN (?): Other questions?

QUESTION: I want to ask a question about the way this retreat was run. At times for the reporters here, it seems like this has been like a police state. At your, the caucus's direction, staff has been extremely heavy-handed, following reporters to the bathroom, at times -- yes, that's -- actually, we have been escorted everywhere we've gone.

The Republicans don't operate like this. It's not like this when we follow you guys around the Capitol. So, why all the heavy handedness? Is it really necessary?

(CROSSTALK)

BECERRA: Yeah, I -- we're not aware that they were following -- we had to have security in the hotel that we were in, because it is expected by Capitol Police that we would be secured. This hotel, where the press was located, we did not have those kinds of requirements. If you want to give me some names of staff, I'll willing to take them, because...

(CROSSTALK)

BECERRA: ... they might be ready for the Capitol Police, to work for the Capitol Police.

QUESTION: They said they were operating under the direction of the caucus. And the Capitol Police said the same thing. So, it's just -- it's unlike any of the other retreats operate. And it really...

(CROSSTALK).

BECERRA: Get names. Get names, because that wasn't at the direction of the caucus.

(UNKNOWN): Chairman, they followed me into the bathroom too.

(LAUGHTER)

CLYBURN: Well, let me say this, because something came up at the breakfast this morning. As many of you know, I come from a less than middle-class background. I define middle-class aspirationally. I believe -- when I finished college and my wife I finished college, together we both made around $7,000 per year. But I thought I was in the middle class.

CLYBURN: So I'm very, very concerned about the wait staff. Now, a few of them came to me about some of this. And I said to them, look, you've got the president of the United States and the vice president of United States. You all read the headlines. You'll know exactly what kind of challenges the security of the first family is having."

And so we're not going to be able" -- because they wanted to come into the breakfast -- until people are vetted by their Social Security numbers and that sort of thing, we told them, "This is not what we would like, but this is what's going to be required."

So a lot of this had been going around, and they understood.

And so I think that we have the responsibility to -- to maintain the security that the Secret Service -- because I spoke with some of them -- were demanding.

(UNKNOWN): We can maybe take one last question.

QUESTION: Actually, this is for Chairman **Lujan,** who we haven't heard as much from in the last few days.

What have you told your colleagues about the 2016 cycle? How are you preparing, you know?

Whip Hoyer yesterday suggested there's a universe of 60 districts that, through various machinations, might be at play or will be competitive. Do you -- do you adhere to that strategy or -- you know, what's the message you're giving your colleagues?

LUJAN: Look, I -- I think that we're -- we were all clear, and maybe even Mr. Hoyer's quote was taken out of context.

There's excitement within our colleagues, and you heard it yesterday. To feel that energy and to be able to talk to my colleagues over the hours that followed the presentations last night into today, this morning, pats on the back, saying, "Ben, we're with you. We're ready to go. We're going to do whatever we need to do."

There's -- there's excitement there, and there's member engagement. You're seeing members step forward now that maybe there was -- something happened in the past, but they're all.

They said, "Look, we've turned a page. We're going forward. We don't like being in the minority."

And the path that we laid out was pretty simple. It was majority math. We know Republicans are overextended.

We look at the maps where the president won with strong numbers where Republicans hold those seats. Even at the Senate, they're going to be defending 20-plus seats.

So we're going forward. And they're having a messaging nightmare.

Look at Governor Romney. I mean, one of the questions that comes in is asking about President Romney's reaction to him. I think Republicans are happier that he's not running than anyone else in the country.

As we talk about where our priorities have to be, with the middle class.

Charlie Dent, week one, week two, week three, week four. Week four brought us -- it's not the end of the world to be able to put the Homeland Security Department and the funding for our nation's security and the economic strength that comes with our ports, that comes with that.

What's going to come in week five? Let's look at that together.

So look, we're strong. We're coming out of this around a unified message. It's middle-class economics. To me, that means being able to put a roof over your head. It means being able to have bread and milk and eggs in your refrigerator, maybe put a little money into the bank, make sure your kids can go to college and look after them.

You know, that's what we're talking about. And where I come from, those are the people creating jobs, putting people to work. That's where we are all committed. Every one of our members, if you go talk to them -- and I challenge you to -- we are all about strengthening working families in the middle class all across America.

So I have -- I'm excited about this. When I get a chance to talk about it, let's go, because sleeves are going to be rolled up. We're going to get to work here.

So we're going to see -- feel that same excitement from all of our colleagues, and that's what I got coming into this. I'm -- I'm more energized than I am now than I was coming into this retreat.

PELOSI: Mr. -- Mr. Crowley would like to answer your question about the convention.

(LAUGHTER)

CROWLEY: I want to thank -- I'd like to thank the mayor for the welcome that he's given to us, to this incredibly important city to the United States. We really have had an incredibly warm welcome.

And -- and Madam Leader, I look forward to welcoming the mayor and the entire Pennsylvania delegation to New York for the 2016 convention.

Thank you all very much.

PELOSI: And then Congresswoman Beatty, who was also on the trip from Columbus, she would have something to say.

No, we were very honored by the presence of the mayor. He's always an intellectual resource to us in terms of policy and organizing and actually perhaps -- I don't know if you saw his speech the other day -- he talked about infrastructure and thanked us for what we did in -- in the -- in the early time in the (inaudible).

But the fact is he came to Washington and advocated for that in a very, very positive way and got results from it.

So I mean, what a wonderful city for many purposes, and this convention, this meeting certainly went off very well, so that's good.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)

PELOSI: Yeah. Well, you know, I don't -- the DNC makes the decision.

QUESTION: May the most appropriate city win.

(LAUGHTER)

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)

PELOSI: He probably concluded the prospect of success was not there, despite the thought that he was gonna win on election night. Look, they're a lovely family, he's a wonderful American. He's been a governor. He's served our country in many ways.

I don't want to make a joke about his candidacy, but I don't -- I don't think that -- I said he was the preferred candidate, so that tells you how much strength I thought he would have in the general election.

Thank you all very much again.

I just want to go back to one point that you mentioned about voting rights and the civil rights, and that aspect of this meeting. I just want to say that I did the close as we presented, Mr. Van Hollen did too, to say where we go from here, discussing budget priorities and how we arrive at them.

But I started my remarks by quoting Dr. King saying that he wanted his children to be judged not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. And I thought that that should be -- that sentence by Dr. King -- he taught us so much, but to listen to that -- judge -- judge -- he used the word "judge" -- by the content of their character.

And, how do we, as a country, address the content of the character of our children when we have their parents not making enough money to put food on the table, to have two jobs so they don't have any time to mentor them. That if they get sick, they don't have one paid sick leave, a day of sick leave to care for their children. That housing is a situation that really causes some psychological problems for children when it is in doubt or not adequate.

The opportunity gap that we have in our country, in order to address it, we have to address the education gap and what is happening. And 40 million children are going to be on the other side of the -- of the digital divide if we do not have the right budget priorities to address education, and the right policies in the budget that address enabling families to have the time to mentor their children, to nurture their children.

What is the character -- the content of the character of a nation that does not encourage the nurturing of children in its policies?

And I think that, again, Dr. King's words were probably very -- while we think of them -- we've heard them so many times, but taken one at a time -- judge. We will be judged by the decisions we make to meet the needs of our children, all of America's children, who are the heirs to America's future.

So it was very much a part of our values that we discussed and our plans for how we go forward.

Thank you all for participating, and see you next time.

Bye-bye.

END

LOAD-DATE: January 31, 2015

Copyright 2015 CQ Transcriptions, LLC
All Rights Reserved
Financial Markets Regulatory Wire

All materials herein are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of CQ Transcriptions. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.

REP. NANCY PELOSI, D-CALIF., HOUSE MINORITY LEADER, HOLDS A NEWS CONFERENCE AT HOUSE DEMOCRATIC ISSUES CONFERENCE

January 30, 2015 Friday

EVENT DATE: January 30, 2015

TYPE: NEWS CONFERENCE

LOCATION: PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

SPEAKER: REP. NANCY PELOSI, D-CALIF., HOUSE MINORITY LEADER,

WITNESSES:
REP. XAVIER BECERRA, D-CALIF., CHAIRMAN, HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS
REP. JOSEPH CROWLEY, D-N.Y., VICE CHAIRMAN, HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS
REP. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, D-MD.
REP. DONNA EDWARDS, D-MD., CO-CHAIR, DEMOCRATIC STEERING AND POLICY COMMITTEE
REP. JAMES E. CLYBURN, D-S.C., ASSISTANT HOUSE MINORITY LEADER
REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M.

TEXT:

BECERRA: So just to give you a warning, we have buses filled with members that are waiting for us, so we're going to all try to brief, take a couple of questions and we're going to scoot out so we can make sure it continues to be a great conference.

Shall we start? OK.

So let me thank you all for being here. Javier Xavier, chairman of the House Democratic Caucus.

The vice chairman will tell you right now, we just had a rousing finishing. Cleanup batter did a great job. The vice president -- our vice chairman, Mr. Crowley, will tell you about that.

But we knew why we were here. We came understanding the mission we were given by the American people. We had it in the title of our conference: Grow America's Economy, Grow American Paychecks.

That was what it was all about for us these last two and a half days, honing in what we need to do to make sure it's clear who the real job creators are: the middle-class. We know it's the middle class who go out there and generate demand, they're the ones that build the markets. The middle class drives our economy.

We understand and we choose to be Democrats, because we choose to be the party of the middle class, not the party of Koch.

We understand that there have to be solutions. We must strengthen not just the middle class with more jobs, higher wages, improving our roads, our bridges, our classrooms, our public safety. We have to do something more to make sure that more than 10 million Americans get health security.

So we leave Philly, the land and home of American democracy, united shoulder to shoulder with the middle class who want to dream even higher. We know that. They want to go beyond the middle class.

And we know we're here shoulder to shoulder with the aspiring class who dream of becoming part of the middle class, part of the job creators.

That's why we came, we know where we go from here, and now let me ask our vice chairman, Joe Crowley, to tell us a little bit more about the conference.

CROWLEY: As the vice chairman said, I was going to say, we had a rousing ending.

(LAUGHTER)

And I'm so pleased to be here today and to have had the opportunity to introduce the vice president before our caucus today.

I want to thank the president for his stirring speech last night as well, but there's -- there's really no better way to the conference -- caucus retreat than with Joe Biden. He just is wonderful.

I want to thank Xavier Becerra and all the caucus staff as well for a wonderful caucus retreat.

I want to thank the leader and all the members of the leadership as well on focusing the attention of our caucus and our party on growing our economy before the middle class, giving a leg up, giving a hand up to those who need it most, people who are struggling to get into the middle class and for people who are in the middle class today.

So I thank you all -- all the leadership and all the members of the Democratic Caucus.

And with that, I turn it now to the ranking member of the budget committee, Chris Van Hollen of Maryland.

VAN HOLLEN: And I -- I too want to thank our chairman and vice chairman of the caucus. It was a terrific gathering. I think we all leave here with a big boost to go into the next round. Thank you, Madam Leader and the whole team here.

And of course, on Monday, we're going to be hearing from the president in the form of his submission of the budget, which will build on his State of the Union address, and we'll quickly be into discussion on the budget, because both the House and the Senate under the rules have to come up with a budget by April 15th.

And those budgets at their root are really a discussion of and a debate about the values and priorities we have as a country. Where should we be investing? How do we move forward? How do we raise revenue?

How do we do all of that in a way that grows our economy as fast as possible, but also in a way that provides for greater shared prosperity? Because one of the things we've seen is as the job markets have picked up, as more and more people have gone back to work, we still have a real challenge with stagnant wages, especially for folks in the middle class and those working their way into the middle class.

So we're gonna be focused like a laser beam on those issues. The president's budget makes investments that are absolutely essential to help power our economy in education, in scientific research and innovation, in infrastructure, but also provides help to working families and middle-income families to help make ends meet. Things like his child and dependent care tax credit. Things like his two- earner tax credit.

So, we want to make sure that both the investments we make as well as the tax policy we build are designed, again, to rapidly grow our economy in a way that everybody can benefit.

And what we do know is if the past is prelude, and we expect it to be, our Republican colleagues will put forward a budget that takes us in the exact opposite direction. They will continue to focus on trickle-down economics, simply cutting tax rates for folks at the very top and thinking somehow miraculously that's gonna help everybody else, when history has told us that doesn't work.

And then they're gonna be dramatically cutting investments in our kids' education and in scientific research that helps power our economy and in infrastructure.

So, we welcome this debate. We think this is the question the country should be focused on.

If you listen to a lot of Republicans, they agree with us rhetorically on what the challenge is. Right? I mean, you hear Mitch McConnell and Speaker Boehner, they're talking for the first time about the middle class and wage stagnation.

Now, we welcome a debate about how you're gonna actually do that, because we think we have a plan and that the president has a plan to do that. We think the Republicans' plan actually takes the country in the wrong direction.

And, Donna Edwards, who has been somebody who, I should say, when it comes things like the child and dependent tax credit, has been championing this for a very long time.

So, Donna?

EDWARDS: Thank you very much, Chris.

And thank you to our chairman and vice chairman for a really fabulous conference about growing and building the momentum for moving the middle class forward.

But I'm here to talk to you today, actually, about a piece of unfinished business. And it is the unfinished business of the last Congress with a looming deadline of February 27 for 280,000 employees of the Department of Homeland Security, and for the security of the United States and our domestic security.

And that is the expiration of the funding for the Department of Homeland Security.

Like Chris Van Hollen, I represent a congressional district that is in the metropolitan Washington region where our law enforcement agencies cooperate and share cooperation for our domestic security and our homeland security, and they are depending on the Department of Homeland Security at a time of great international threat, daily threat, and daily threats to our homeland.

And the Republicans have decided that they want to have a food fight with the present of the United States because he took executive action on immigration when they failed to act on immigration.

And, right now, they want to hold hostage the funding for the Department of Homeland Security, and it's unacceptable.

And so, the unfinished business from last year -- the unfinished business of this Congress, the first order of business, before we can even get to these -- to these priorities, and we want to get to them, is to fund the Department of Homeland -- Homeland Security.

And I think the American people should know that it is at the feet of the Republican Party that our domestic security is in jeopardy.

And so, for all of those employees who on February 27th, they will be essential employees without a paycheck because of the Republican failure to act.

And so, as we go back to Washington, February 27th looms. And it's the responsibility of the House Republicans to get their act together and fund the Department of Homeland Security.

And so, with that, I'd like to turn this over to our leader who has taken charge over these last several days and is gonna lead middle-class momentum, Nancy Pelosi.

PELOSI: Thank you very much, Congresswoman Edwards.

Thank you, my colleagues.

I want to join in commending our distinguished chair of the caucus, Xavier Becerra and Vice Chair Joe Crowley for a great, great meeting. It's fraught (ph) with me a few days of -- of conversation -- is just the tip of the iceberg of the work that has gone into it, and what has gone into it has produced unity, camaraderie, enthusiasm but more importantly than that, momentum, momentum for the middle class, middle class, the true job creator.

And that is our message to the American people: The squeeze on the middle class is a squeeze on our economy. All of the economic indicators show that our economy is growing and prospects are good except one: the stagnation of wages for our working families.

Unless we can put purchasing powers -- power into the hands of the consumers in this consumer economy, we will not have recovery that we need, and that's why our focus has been on the middle class, the backbone of our democracy but also the job creators.

As we gather here in Philadelphia, where many of our sacred founding documents were written, they talked about life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That -- that was amazing, that in that time, they said "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

As you've heard me say before in the Affordable Care Act, we have given people the ability for a healthier life and the ability to pursue their happiness, because they were not job-locked and -- and they could make their own decisions freely.

But the fact is also that life, liberty and pursuit of happiness must be reflected in the values of our country in a budget. And I was very proud of the interaction -- it's only the beginning -- on the budget led by Congressman Van Hollen, to -- to be -- Ranking Member Van Hollen -- to be continued. This is just -- where we go from here, continued discussion on the budget, which will show the differentiation between the values that we think everyone shares in this country and the ill, misguided proposals the Republicans have in their budget.

So we go forward. Chris will be having -- Ranking Member Van Hollen will have those meetings with members about how we get consensus about -- around our budget and support of the principles on the president's budget.

Mr. Clyburn, as you know, is heading up our outreach and engagement task force to give people a reason to register, a reason to vote in this 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act.

Congresswoman Donna Edwards will be taking the lead on our campaign reform, trying to reduce the role of money in politics to increase the level of -- of hope and participation of many more people, all part of that empowerment.

And we're very proud of the role that Chairman -- I still call him Chairman -- Steve Israel...

(LAUGHTER)

Don't you dare.

Steve Israel is heading our -- our policy and communication group so that so that when we build this consensus within the party, everyone is, again, in harmony, in unity, in force on it.

Of course, our -- our chairman, **Ben Ray Lujan,** will be writing a political course, and we're very proud of the reaction the caucus has given to him.

So for us, it was a very successful weekend -- almost a weekend -- few days. We were so honored by the president's speech and the vice president speech as well.

Building on the momentum of the State of the Union address, reiterating -- returning to some of those principles and values and specific recommendations, building momentum for the middle class.

Thank you.

(UNKNOWN): We will take a couple questions.

QUESTION: Madam Leader, two-part question.

The first one, on behalf of my TV colleagues, your reaction to Mitt Romney (inaudible)...

PELOSI: Yeah, he's out of the race, right?

What else you got on your list?

(LAUGHTER)

QUESTION: So any reaction to Mitt Romney -- any reaction to Mitt Romney not running.

PELOSI: Let me say this. We have members waiting on the bus. I'm all packed, so I can stay a little bit later than the others.

But let's stay with our -- our...

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)

PELOSI: I'll come -- I'll come -- I'm happy to come back to that, but let's give them the chance.

QUESTION: Then my question would be for you, understand last night when the president talked about trade promotional authority was met with some skepticism from your caucus.

Did you deliver the vote on that if need be (ph)?

PELOSI: Well, I -- I think that you -- I don't know -- I think -- people are -- as I have said over and over, let's try to find a path to yes.

I don't know if that's possible. It depends on what is in the trade -- in the TPP. You know, "Give us fast track for TPP," well, what's TPP? Tell us what that is.

I think people are open to listening, because we are a party of trade and we understand the global economy. On the other hand, I'll say what I said a couple days ago, we will make a judgment about what is in there as to how -- what impact it has on the wages of America's working families.

QUESTION: If I may ask one -- a hometown question, local media and local political leadership's obsessed with trying to get the '16 convention here.

PELOSI: (inaudible)

QUESTION: Thank you, ma'am.

(LAUGHTER)

PELOSI: Do you think that's why the mayor was here the whole time?

(LAUGHTER)

QUESTION: Yes, it was.

PELOSI: (inaudible) to our issues conference.

(UNKNOWN): He was very good. He was great. Mayor Nutter's speech.

QUESTION: You mentioned Congressman Clyburn's leading up the effort on voter engagement. I know you spent a lot of this -- of this conference talking about the middle class -- talking about the middle class. How much have you talked in this conference about the voter engagement issue and the voting rights issue?

CLYBURN: We talked a great deal about it. In fact, we opened on Wednesday evening, the whole evening was about that. And we showed some clips from that earlier era -- not just to focus on the movie, "Selma," but to give our members, a lot of whom read about or heard about the movement, as a lot of people called it.

We did two clips -- one from a speech that Martin Luther King Jr. did in 1966, less than one year after the Voting Rights Act was signed into law, and another one from a speech he gave in 1967. Not coincidentally, both those speeches were in South Carolina -- to allow our members to see that in spite of what you may hear from the other side, Martin Luther King Jr. had a big focus on the ballot box and legislation. It was more than just about a dream unfulfilled, but he spoke about how that dream should be fulfilled.

And so, we are focusing a lot of attention on this. And I do believe that to build this middle-class economy, it is so critical to the future growth and development of this great country, we need to get more people engaged. And we're gonna very hard to do that.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)

CLYBURN: Yes, we did. And we are going to build -- and we have a full task force. The task force has met already. And we'll meet at least twice this coming week to really get this ball moving. And they've all got great ideas on how they think we can get this done.

VAN HOLLEN (?): Other questions?

QUESTION: I want to ask a question about the way this retreat was run. At times for the reporters here, it seems like this has been like a police state. At your, the caucus's direction, staff has been extremely heavy-handed, following reporters to the bathroom, at times -- yes, that's -- actually, we have been escorted everywhere we've gone.

The Republicans don't operate like this. It's not like this when we follow you guys around the Capitol. So, why all the heavy handedness? Is it really necessary?

(CROSSTALK)

BECERRA: Yeah, I -- we're not aware that they were following -- we had to have security in the hotel that we were in, because it is expected by Capitol Police that we would be secured. This hotel, where

the press was located, we did not have those kinds of requirements. If you want to give me some names of staff, I'll willing to take them, because...

(CROSSTALK)

BECERRA: ... they might be ready for the Capitol Police, to work for the Capitol Police.

QUESTION: They said they were operating under the direction of the caucus. And the Capitol Police said the same thing. So, it's just -- it's unlike any of the other retreats operate. And it really...

(CROSSTALK).

BECERRA: Get names. Get names, because that wasn't at the direction of the caucus.

(UNKNOWN): Chairman, they followed me into the bathroom too.

(LAUGHTER)

CLYBURN: Well, let me say this, because something came up at the breakfast this morning. As many of you know, I come from a less than middle-class background. I define middle-class aspirationally. I believe -- when I finished college and my wife I finished college, together we both made around $7,000 per year. But I thought I was in the middle class.

CLYBURN: So I'm very, very concerned about the wait staff. Now, a few of them came to me about some of this. And I said to them, look, you've got the president of the United States and the vice president of United States. You all read the headlines. You'll know exactly what kind of challenges the security of the first family is having."

And so we're not going to be able" -- because they wanted to come into the breakfast -- until people are vetted by their Social Security numbers and that sort of thing, we told them, "This is not what we would like, but this is what's going to be required."

So a lot of this had been going around, and they understood.

And so I think that we have the responsibility to -- to maintain the security that the Secret Service -- because I spoke with some of them -- were demanding.

(UNKNOWN): We can maybe take one last question.

QUESTION: Actually, this is for Chairman **Lujan,** who we haven't heard as much from in the last few days.

What have you told your colleagues about the 2016 cycle? How are you preparing, you know?

Whip Hoyer yesterday suggested there's a universe of 60 districts that, through various machinations, might be at play or will be competitive. Do you -- do you adhere to that strategy or -- you know, what's the message you're giving your colleagues?

LUJAN: Look, I -- I think that we're -- we were all clear, and maybe even Mr. Hoyer's quote was taken out of context.

There's excitement within our colleagues, and you heard it yesterday. To feel that energy and to be able to talk to my colleagues over the hours that followed the presentations last night into today, this morning, pats on the back, saying, "Ben, we're with you. We're ready to go. We're going to do whatever we need to do."

There's -- there's excitement there, and there's member engagement. You're seeing members step forward now that maybe there was -- something happened in the past, but they're all.

They said, "Look, we've turned a page. We're going forward. We don't like being in the minority."

And the path that we laid out was pretty simple. It was majority math. We know Republicans are overextended.

We look at the maps where the president won with strong numbers where Republicans hold those seats. Even at the Senate, they're going to be defending 20-plus seats.

So we're going forward. And they're having a messaging nightmare.

Look at Governor Romney. I mean, one of the questions that comes in is asking about President Romney's reaction to him. I think Republicans are happier that he's not running than anyone else in the country.

As we talk about where our priorities have to be, with the middle class.

Charlie Dent, week one, week two, week three, week four. Week four brought us -- it's not the end of the world to be able to put the Homeland Security Department and the funding for our nation's security and the economic strength that comes with our ports, that comes with that.

What's going to come in week five? Let's look at that together.

So look, we're strong. We're coming out of this around a unified message. It's middle-class economics. To me, that means being able to put a roof over your head. It means being able to have bread and milk and eggs in your refrigerator, maybe put a little money into the bank, make sure your kids can go to college and look after them.

You know, that's what we're talking about. And where I come from, those are the people creating jobs, putting people to work. That's where we are all committed. Every one of our members, if you go talk to them -- and I challenge you to -- we are all about strengthening working families in the middle class all across America.

So I have -- I'm excited about this. When I get a chance to talk about it, let's go, because sleeves are going to be rolled up. We're going to get to work here.

So we're going to see -- feel that same excitement from all of our colleagues, and that's what I got coming into this. I'm -- I'm more energized than I am now than I was coming into this retreat.

PELOSI: Mr. -- Mr. Crowley would like to answer your question about the convention.

(LAUGHTER)

CROWLEY: I want to thank -- I'd like to thank the mayor for the welcome that he's given to us, to this incredibly important city to the United States. We really have had an incredibly warm welcome.

And -- and Madam Leader, I look forward to welcoming the mayor and the entire Pennsylvania delegation to New York for the 2016 convention.

Thank you all very much.

PELOSI: And then Congresswoman Beatty, who was also on the trip from Columbus, she would have something to say.

No, we were very honored by the presence of the mayor. He's always an intellectual resource to us in terms of policy and organizing and actually perhaps -- I don't know if you saw his speech the other day -- he talked about infrastructure and thanked us for what we did in -- in the -- in the early time in the (inaudible).

But the fact is he came to Washington and advocated for that in a very, very positive way and got results from it.

So I mean, what a wonderful city for many purposes, and this convention, this meeting certainly went off very well, so that's good.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)

PELOSI: Yeah. Well, you know, I don't -- the DNC makes the decision.

QUESTION: May the most appropriate city win.

(LAUGHTER)

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)

PELOSI: He probably concluded the prospect of success was not there, despite the thought that he was gonna win on election night. Look, they're a lovely family, he's a wonderful American. He's been a governor. He's served our country in many ways.

I don't want to make a joke about his candidacy, but I don't -- I don't think that -- I said he was the preferred candidate, so that tells you how much strength I thought he would have in the general election.

Thank you all very much again.

I just want to go back to one point that you mentioned about voting rights and the civil rights, and that aspect of this meeting. I just want to say that I did the close as we presented, Mr. Van Hollen did too, to say where we go from here, discussing budget priorities and how we arrive at them.

But I started my remarks by quoting Dr. King saying that he wanted his children to be judged not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. And I thought that that should be -- that sentence by Dr. King -- he taught us so much, but to listen to that -- judge -- judge -- he used the word "judge" -- by the content of their character.

And, how do we, as a country, address the content of the character of our children when we have their parents not making enough money to put food on the table, to have two jobs so they don't have any time to mentor them. That if they get sick, they don't have one paid sick leave, a day of sick leave to care for their children. That housing is a situation that really causes some psychological problems for children when it is in doubt or not adequate.

The opportunity gap that we have in our country, in order to address it, we have to address the education gap and what is happening. And 40 million children are going to be on the other side of the -- of the digital divide if we do not have the right budget priorities to address education, and the right policies in the budget that address enabling families to have the time to mentor their children, to nurture their children.

What is the character -- the content of the character of a nation that does not encourage the nurturing of children in its policies?

And I think that, again, Dr. King's words were probably very -- while we think of them -- we've heard them so many times, but taken one at a time -- judge. We will be judged by the decisions we make to meet the needs of our children, all of America's children, who are the heirs to America's future.

So it was very much a part of our values that we discussed and our plans for how we go forward.

Thank you all for participating, and see you next time.

Bye-bye.

END

LOAD-DATE: January 31, 2015

267 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Political Transcript Wire

January 30, 2015 Friday

REP. NANCY PELOSI, D-CALIF., HOUSE MINORITY LEADER, HOLDS A NEWS CONFERENCE AT HOUSE DEMOCRATIC ISSUES CONFERENCE

LENGTH: 4229 words

HOUSE DEMOCRATS HOLD A NEWS CONFERENCE AT THE HOUSE DEMOCRATIC ISSUES CONFERENCE, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

JANUARY 30, 2015

SPEAKERS: REP. NANCY PELOSI, D-CALIF., HOUSE MINORITY LEADER

REP. JAMES E. CLYBURN, D-S.C., ASSISTANT HOUSE MINORITY LEADER

REP. XAVIER BECERRA, D-CALIF., CHAIRMAN, HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

REP. JOSEPH CROWLEY, D-N.Y., VICE CHAIRMAN, HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

REP. DONNA EDWARDS, D-MD., CO-CHAIR, DEMOCRATIC STEERING AND POLICY COMMITTEE

REP. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, D-MD.

REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M.

[*] BECERRA: So just to give you a warning, we have buses filled with members that are waiting for us, so we're going to all try to brief, take a couple of questions and we're going to scoot out so we can make sure it continues to be a great conference.

Shall we start? OK.

So let me thank you all for being here. Javier Xavier, chairman of the House Democratic Caucus.

The vice chairman will tell you right now, we just had a rousing finishing. Cleanup batter did a great job. The vice president -- our vice chairman, Mr. Crowley, will tell you about that.

But we knew why we were here. We came understanding the mission we were given by the American people. We had it in the title of our conference: Grow America's Economy, Grow American Paychecks.

That was what it was all about for us these last two and a half days, honing in what we need to do to make sure it's clear who the real job creators are: the middle-class. We know it's the middle class

who go out there and generate demand, they're the ones that build the markets. The middle class drives our economy.

We understand and we choose to be Democrats, because we choose to be the party of the middle class, not the party of Koch.

We understand that there have to be solutions. We must strengthen not just the middle class with more jobs, higher wages, improving our roads, our bridges, our classrooms, our public safety. We have to do something more to make sure that more than 10 million Americans get health security.

So we leave Philly, the land and home of American democracy, united shoulder to shoulder with the middle class who want to dream even higher. We know that. They want to go beyond the middle class.

And we know we're here shoulder to shoulder with the aspiring class who dream of becoming part of the middle class, part of the job creators.

That's why we came, we know where we go from here, and now let me ask our vice chairman, Joe Crowley, to tell us a little bit more about the conference.

CROWLEY: As the vice chairman said, I was going to say, we had a rousing ending.

(LAUGHTER)

And I'm so pleased to be here today and to have had the opportunity to introduce the vice president before our caucus today.

I want to thank the president for his stirring speech last night as well, but there's -- there's really no better way to the conference -- caucus retreat than with Joe Biden. He just is wonderful.

I want to thank Xavier Becerra and all the caucus staff as well for a wonderful caucus retreat.

I want to thank the leader and all the members of the leadership as well on focusing the attention of our caucus and our party on growing our economy before the middle class, giving a leg up, giving a hand up to those who need it most, people who are struggling to get into the middle class and for people who are in the middle class today.

So I thank you all -- all the leadership and all the members of the Democratic Caucus.

And with that, I turn it now to the ranking member of the budget committee, Chris Van Hollen of Maryland.

VAN HOLLEN: And I -- I too want to thank our chairman and vice chairman of the caucus. It was a terrific gathering. I think we all leave here with a big boost to go into the next round. Thank you, Madam Leader and the whole team here.

And of course, on Monday, we're going to be hearing from the president in the form of his submission of the budget, which will build on his State of the Union address, and we'll quickly be into discussion on the budget, because both the House and the Senate under the rules have to come up with a budget by April 15th.

And those budgets at their root are really a discussion of and a debate about the values and priorities we have as a country. Where should we be investing? How do we move forward? How do we raise revenue?

How do we do all of that in a way that grows our economy as fast as possible, but also in a way that provides for greater shared prosperity? Because one of the things we've seen is as the job markets have picked up, as more and more people have gone back to work, we still have a real challenge

with stagnant wages, especially for folks in the middle class and those working their way into the middle class.

So we're gonna be focused like a laser beam on those issues. The president's budget makes investments that are absolutely essential to help power our economy in education, in scientific research and innovation, in infrastructure, but also provides help to working families and middle-income families to help make ends meet. Things like his child and dependent care tax credit. Things like his two- earner tax credit.

So, we want to make sure that both the investments we make as well as the tax policy we build are designed, again, to rapidly grow our economy in a way that everybody can benefit.

And what we do know is if the past is prelude, and we expect it to be, our Republican colleagues will put forward a budget that takes us in the exact opposite direction. They will continue to focus on trickle-down economics, simply cutting tax rates for folks at the very top and thinking somehow miraculously that's gonna help everybody else, when history has told us that doesn't work.

And then they're gonna be dramatically cutting investments in our kids' education and in scientific research that helps power our economy and in infrastructure. So, we welcome this debate. We think this is the question the country should be focused on.

If you listen to a lot of Republicans, they agree with us rhetorically on what the challenge is. Right? I mean, you hear Mitch McConnell and Speaker Boehner, they're talking for the first time about the middle class and wage stagnation.

Now, we welcome a debate about how you're gonna actually do that, because we think we have a plan and that the president has a plan to do that. We think the Republicans' plan actually takes the country in the wrong direction.

And, Donna Edwards, who has been somebody who, I should say, when it comes things like the child and dependent tax credit, has been championing this for a very long time.

So, Donna?

EDWARDS: Thank you very much, Chris.

And thank you to our chairman and vice chairman for a really fabulous conference about growing and building the momentum for moving the middle class forward.

But I'm here to talk to you today, actually, about a piece of unfinished business. And it is the unfinished business of the last Congress with a looming deadline of February 27 for 280,000 employees of the Department of Homeland Security, and for the security of the United States and our domestic security.

And that is the expiration of the funding for the Department of Homeland Security.

Like Chris Van Hollen, I represent a congressional district that is in the metropolitan Washington region where our law enforcement agencies cooperate and share cooperation for our domestic security and our homeland security, and they are depending on the Department of Homeland Security at a time of great international threat, daily threat, and daily threats to our homeland.

And the Republicans have decided that they want to have a food fight with the present of the United States because he took executive action on immigration when they failed to act on immigration.

And, right now, they want to hold hostage the funding for the Department of Homeland Security, and it's unacceptable.

And so, the unfinished business from last year -- the unfinished business of this Congress, the first order of business, before we can even get to these -- to these priorities, and we want to get to them, is to fund the Department of Homeland -- Homeland Security.

And I think the American people should know that it is at the feet of the Republican Party that our domestic security is in jeopardy. And so, for all of those employees who on February 27th, they will be essential employees without a paycheck because of the Republican failure to act.

And so, as we go back to Washington, February 27th looms. And it's the responsibility of the House Republicans to get their act together and fund the Department of Homeland Security.

And so, with that, I'd like to turn this over to our leader who has taken charge over these last several days and is gonna lead middle-class momentum, Nancy Pelosi.

PELOSI: Thank you very much, Congresswoman Edwards.

Thank you, my colleagues.

I want to join in commending our distinguished chair of the caucus, Xavier Becerra and Vice Chair Joe Crowley for a great, great meeting. It's fraught (ph) with me a few days of -- of conversation -- is just the tip of the iceberg of the work that has gone into it, and what has gone into it has produced unity, camaraderie, enthusiasm but more importantly than that, momentum, momentum for the middle class, middle class, the true job creator.

And that is our message to the American people: The squeeze on the middle class is a squeeze on our economy. All of the economic indicators show that our economy is growing and prospects are good except one: the stagnation of wages for our working families.

Unless we can put purchasing powers -- power into the hands of the consumers in this consumer economy, we will not have recovery that we need, and that's why our focus has been on the middle class, the backbone of our democracy but also the job creators.

As we gather here in Philadelphia, where many of our sacred founding documents were written, they talked about life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That -- that was amazing, that in that time, they said "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

As you've heard me say before in the Affordable Care Act, we have given people the ability for a healthier life and the ability to pursue their happiness, because they were not job-locked and -- and they could make their own decisions freely.

But the fact is also that life, liberty and pursuit of happiness must be reflected in the values of our country in a budget. And I was very proud of the interaction -- it's only the beginning -- on the budget led by Congressman Van Hollen, to -- to be -- Ranking Member Van Hollen -- to be continued. This is just -- where we go from here, continued discussion on the budget, which will show the differentiation between the values that we think everyone shares in this country and the ill, misguided proposals the Republicans have in their budget.

So we go forward. Chris will be having -- Ranking Member Van Hollen will have those meetings with members about how we get consensus about -- around our budget and support of the principles on the president's budget. Mr. Clyburn, as you know, is heading up our outreach and engagement task force to give people a reason to register, a reason to vote in this 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act.

Congresswoman Donna Edwards will be taking the lead on our campaign reform, trying to reduce the role of money in politics to increase the level of -- of hope and participation of many more people, all part of that empowerment.

And we're very proud of the role that Chairman -- I still call him Chairman -- Steve Israel...

(LAUGHTER)

Don't you dare.

Steve Israel is heading our -- our policy and communication group so that so that when we build this consensus within the party, everyone is, again, in harmony, in unity, in force on it.

Of course, our -- our chairman, **Ben Ray Lujan,** will be writing a political course, and we're very proud of the reaction the caucus has given to him.

So for us, it was a very successful weekend -- almost a weekend -- few days. We were so honored by the president's speech and the vice president speech as well.

Building on the momentum of the State of the Union address, reiterating -- returning to some of those principles and values and specific recommendations, building momentum for the middle class.

Thank you.

(UNKNOWN): We will take a couple questions.

QUESTION: Madam Leader, two-part question.

The first one, on behalf of my TV colleagues, your reaction to Mitt Romney (inaudible)...

PELOSI: Yeah, he's out of the race, right?

What else you got on your list?

(LAUGHTER)

QUESTION: So any reaction to Mitt Romney -- any reaction to Mitt Romney not running.

PELOSI: Let me say this. We have members waiting on the bus. I'm all packed, so I can stay a little bit later than the others.

But let's stay with our -- our...

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE) PELOSI: I'll come -- I'll come -- I'm happy to come back to that, but let's give them the chance.

QUESTION: Then my question would be for you, understand last night when the president talked about trade promotional authority was met with some skepticism from your caucus.

Did you deliver the vote on that if need be (ph)?

PELOSI: Well, I -- I think that you -- I don't know -- I think -- people are -- as I have said over and over, let's try to find a path to yes.

I don't know if that's possible. It depends on what is in the trade -- in the TPP. You know, "Give us fast track for TPP," well, what's TPP? Tell us what that is.

I think people are open to listening, because we are a party of trade and we understand the global economy. On the other hand, I'll say what I said a couple days ago, we will make a judgment about what is in there as to how -- what impact it has on the wages of America's working families.

QUESTION: If I may ask one -- a hometown question, local media and local political leadership's obsessed with trying to get the '16 convention here.

PELOSI: (inaudible)

QUESTION: Thank you, ma'am.

(LAUGHTER)

PELOSI: Do you think that's why the mayor was here the whole time?

(LAUGHTER)

QUESTION: Yes, it was.

PELOSI: (inaudible) to our issues conference.

(UNKNOWN): He was very good. He was great. Mayor Nutter's speech.

QUESTION: You mentioned Congressman Clyburn's leading up the effort on voter engagement. I know you spent a lot of this -- of this conference talking about the middle class -- talking about the middle class. How much have you talked in this conference about the voter engagement issue and the voting rights issue?

CLYBURN: We talked a great deal about it. In fact, we opened on Wednesday evening, the whole evening was about that. And we showed some clips from that earlier era -- not just to focus on the movie, "Selma," but to give our members, a lot of whom read about or heard about the movement, as a lot of people called it. We did two clips -- one from a speech that Martin Luther King Jr. did in 1966, less than one year after the Voting Rights Act was signed into law, and another one from a speech he gave in 1967. Not coincidentally, both those speeches were in South Carolina -- to allow our members to see that in spite of what you may hear from the other side, Martin Luther King Jr. had a big focus on the ballot box and legislation. It was more than just about a dream unfulfilled, but he spoke about how that dream should be fulfilled.

And so, we are focusing a lot of attention on this. And I do believe that to build this middle-class economy, it is so critical to the future growth and development of this great country, we need to get more people engaged. And we're gonna very hard to do that.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)

CLYBURN: Yes, we did. And we are going to build -- and we have a full task force. The task force has met already. And we'll meet at least twice this coming week to really get this ball moving. And they've all got great ideas on how they think we can get this done.

VAN HOLLEN (?): Other questions?

QUESTION: I want to ask a question about the way this retreat was run. At times for the reporters here, it seems like this has been like a police state. At your, the caucus's direction, staff has been extremely heavy-handed, following reporters to the bathroom, at times -- yes, that's -- actually, we have been escorted everywhere we've gone.

The Republicans don't operate like this. It's not like this when we follow you guys around the Capitol. So, why all the heavy handedness? Is it really necessary?

(CROSSTALK)

BECERRA: Yeah, I -- we're not aware that they were following -- we had to have security in the hotel that we were in, because it is expected by Capitol Police that we would be secured. This hotel, where the press was located, we did not have those kinds of requirements. If you want to give me some names of staff, I'll willing to take them, because...

(CROSSTALK)

BECERRA: ... they might be ready for the Capitol Police, to work for the Capitol Police.

QUESTION: They said they were operating under the direction of the caucus. And the Capitol Police said the same thing. So, it's just -- it's unlike any of the other retreats operate. And it really...

(CROSSTALK).

BECERRA: Get names. Get names, because that wasn't at the direction of the caucus.

(UNKNOWN): Chairman, they followed me into the bathroom too.

(LAUGHTER)

CLYBURN: Well, let me say this, because something came up at the breakfast this morning. As many of you know, I come from a less than middle-class background. I define middle-class aspirationally. I believe -- when I finished college and my wife I finished college, together we both made around $7,000 per year. But I thought I was in the middle class.

CLYBURN: So I'm very, very concerned about the wait staff. Now, a few of them came to me about some of this. And I said to them, look, you've got the president of the United States and the vice president of United States. You all read the headlines. You'll know exactly what kind of challenges the security of the first family is having."

And so we're not going to be able" -- because they wanted to come into the breakfast -- until people are vetted by their Social Security numbers and that sort of thing, we told them, "This is not what we would like, but this is what's going to be required."

So a lot of this had been going around, and they understood.

And so I think that we have the responsibility to -- to maintain the security that the Secret Service -- because I spoke with some of them -- were demanding.

(UNKNOWN): We can maybe take one last question.

QUESTION: Actually, this is for Chairman **Lujan,** who we haven't heard as much from in the last few days.

What have you told your colleagues about the 2016 cycle? How are you preparing, you know?

Whip Hoyer yesterday suggested there's a universe of 60 districts that, through various machinations, might be at play or will be competitive. Do you -- do you adhere to that strategy or -- you know, what's the message you're giving your colleagues?

LUJAN: Look, I -- I think that we're -- we were all clear, and maybe even Mr. Hoyer's quote was taken out of context.

There's excitement within our colleagues, and you heard it yesterday. To feel that energy and to be able to talk to my colleagues over the hours that followed the presentations last night into today, this morning, pats on the back, saying, "Ben, we're with you. We're ready to go. We're going to do whatever we need to do."

There's -- there's excitement there, and there's member engagement. You're seeing members step forward now that maybe there was -- something happened in the past, but they're all.

They said, "Look, we've turned a page. We're going forward. We don't like being in the minority." And the path that we laid out was pretty simple. It was majority math. We know Republicans are overextended.

We look at the maps where the president won with strong numbers where Republicans hold those seats. Even at the Senate, they're going to be defending 20-plus seats.

So we're going forward. And they're having a messaging nightmare.

Look at Governor Romney. I mean, one of the questions that comes in is asking about President Romney's reaction to him. I think Republicans are happier that he's not running than anyone else in the country.

As we talk about where our priorities have to be, with the middle class.

Charlie Dent, week one, week two, week three, week four. Week four brought us -- it's not the end of the world to be able to put the Homeland Security Department and the funding for our nation's security and the economic strength that comes with our ports, that comes with that.

What's going to come in week five? Let's look at that together.

So look, we're strong. We're coming out of this around a unified message. It's middle-class economics. To me, that means being able to put a roof over your head. It means being able to have bread and milk and eggs in your refrigerator, maybe put a little money into the bank, make sure your kids can go to college and look after them.

You know, that's what we're talking about. And where I come from, those are the people creating jobs, putting people to work. That's where we are all committed. Every one of our members, if you go talk to them -- and I challenge you to -- we are all about strengthening working families in the middle class all across America.

So I have -- I'm excited about this. When I get a chance to talk about it, let's go, because sleeves are going to be rolled up. We're going to get to work here.

So we're going to see -- feel that same excitement from all of our colleagues, and that's what I got coming into this. I'm -- I'm more energized than I am now than I was coming into this retreat.

PELOSI: Mr. -- Mr. Crowley would like to answer your question about the convention.

(LAUGHTER)

CROWLEY: I want to thank -- I'd like to thank the mayor for the welcome that he's given to us, to this incredibly important city to the United States. We really have had an incredibly warm welcome.

And -- and Madam Leader, I look forward to welcoming the mayor and the entire Pennsylvania delegation to New York for the 2016 convention.

Thank you all very much.

PELOSI: And then Congresswoman Beatty, who was also on the trip from Columbus, she would have something to say.

No, we were very honored by the presence of the mayor. He's always an intellectual resource to us in terms of policy and organizing and actually perhaps -- I don't know if you saw his speech the other day -- he talked about infrastructure and thanked us for what we did in -- in the -- in the early time in the (inaudible).

But the fact is he came to Washington and advocated for that in a very, very positive way and got results from it.

So I mean, what a wonderful city for many purposes, and this convention, this meeting certainly went off very well, so that's good.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)

PELOSI: Yeah. Well, you know, I don't -- the DNC makes the decision.

QUESTION: May the most appropriate city win.

(LAUGHTER)

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)

PELOSI: He probably concluded the prospect of success was not there, despite the thought that he was gonna win on election night. Look, they're a lovely family, he's a wonderful American. He's been a governor. He's served our country in many ways.

I don't want to make a joke about his candidacy, but I don't -- I don't think that -- I said he was the preferred candidate, so that tells you how much strength I thought he would have in the general election.

Thank you all very much again.

I just want to go back to one point that you mentioned about voting rights and the civil rights, and that aspect of this meeting. I just want to say that I did the close as we presented, Mr. Van Hollen did too, to say where we go from here, discussing budget priorities and how we arrive at them.

But I started my remarks by quoting Dr. King saying that he wanted his children to be judged not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. And I thought that that should be -- that sentence by Dr. King -- he taught us so much, but to listen to that -- judge -- judge -- he used the word "judge" -- by the content of their character.

And, how do we, as a country, address the content of the character of our children when we have their parents not making enough money to put food on the table, to have two jobs so they don't have any time to mentor them. That if they get sick, they don't have one paid sick leave, a day of sick leave to care for their children. That housing is a situation that really causes some psychological problems for children when it is in doubt or not adequate.

The opportunity gap that we have in our country, in order to address it, we have to address the education gap and what is happening. And 40 million children are going to be on the other side of the -- of the digital divide if we do not have the right budget priorities to address education, and the right policies in the budget that address enabling families to have the time to mentor their children, to nurture their children.

What is the character -- the content of the character of a nation that does not encourage the nurturing of children in its policies?

And I think that, again, Dr. King's words were probably very -- while we think of them -- we've heard them so many times, but taken one at a time -- judge. We will be judged by the decisions we make to meet the needs of our children, all of America's children, who are the heirs to America's future.

So it was very much a part of our values that we discussed and our plans for how we go forward.

Thank you all for participating, and see you next time.

Bye-bye.

END

LOAD-DATE: January 31, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 66535

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

JOURNAL-CODE: PTTW

Copyright 2015 ProQuest Information and Learning
All Rights Reserved
Copyright 2015 Roll Call, Inc.

States News Service

January 30, 2015 Friday

TRANSCRIPT OF PELOSI, HOUSE DEMOCRATIC LEADERS PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY CONCLUDING THE DEMOCRATIC ISSUES CONFERENCE JANUARY 30, 2015

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 2836 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi:

Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, Assistant Democratic Leader James Clyburn (D-SC), House Democratic Caucus Chairman Xavier Becerra (D-CA), Democratic Caucus Vice Chairman Joe Crowley (D-NY), Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Chairman **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-NM), Congressman Steve Israel (D-NY), Congressman Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) and Congresswoman Donna Edwards (D-MD) held a press conference today concluding the "Grow America's Economy, Grow American Paychecks" Democratic Issues Conference. Below is a transcript of Leader Pelosi's opening remarks and the question and answer session.

Leader Pelosi's opening remarks:

"Thank you very much, Congresswoman Edwards. Thank you, my colleagues. I want to join in commending our distinguished Chair of the Caucus Xavier Becerra and Vice Chair Joe Crowley for a great, great meeting. A few days of conversation is just the tip of the iceberg of the work that has gone into it. What has gone into it has produced unity, camaraderie, enthusiasm - but more important than that, momentum, momentum for the middle class.

"The middle class: the true job creator. That is our message to the American people. The squeeze on the middle class is a squeeze on our economy. All of the economic indicators show that our economy is growing, and prospects are good, except one - the stagnation of wages for our working families. Unless we can put purchasing power into the hands of the consumers in this consumer economy, we will not have the recovery that we need. That is why our focus has been on the middle class - the backbone of our democracy, but also the job creators.

"As we gather here in Philadelphia, where many of our sacred founding documents were written - they talked about life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That was amazing, that in that time, they said "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." You have heard me say before [that] in the Affordable Care Act we have given people the opportunity for a healthier life, and the ability to pursue their happiness, because they are not job locked and they could make their own decisions freely. But the fact is also that life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness must be reflected in the values of our country in a budget. And I was very proud of the interaction - it's only the beginning - on the budget, led by Ranking Member Van Hollen, to be continued. Where we go from here [is] continued discussion on the budget, which will show the differentiation between the values that we think everyone shares in our country and the misguided proposals the Republicans have in their budget.

"So as we go forward, Ranking Member Van Hollen will be having those meetings with Members about how we build consensus around our budget in support of the principles in President's budget. Mr. Clyburn, as you know, is heading up our Outreach and Engagement Task Force, to give people a reason to register, a reason to vote in this 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act. Congresswoman Donna Edwards will be taking the lead on campaign reform, trying to reduce the role of money in politics and increase to increase the level of hope and participation of many more people - all part of that empowerment.

"We are very proud of the role [of] Chairman - I still call him Chairman - Steve Israel, [who] is heading our policy and communication group, so that when we build this consensus within the Party everyone is, again, in harmony, in unity, and in force on it. Of course, our Chairman **Ben Ray Lujan** will be driving the political course. And we are very proud of the reaction the Caucus has given to him.

"So for us, it was a very successful weekend - almost a weekend, a few days. We were so honored by the President's speech and the Vice President["s] as well, building on the momentum of the State of the Union Address, reiterating - returning to some of those principles and values and specific recommendations, building momentum for the middle class. Thank you."

***

Chairman Becerra. We have time to take one question.

Q: Madam Leader, two part question. First one: on behalf of my TV colleagues, your reaction to Mitt Romney...

Leader Pelosi. He's out of the race, right? Of course you've got to know this...

[Laughter]

Q: Any reaction to Mitt Romney? Any reaction to Mitt Romney not running for president?

Leader Pelosi. Let me say this: we have Members waiting on the bus. I'm all packed so I can stay a little bit later than the other Members. But let's stay with our...

Q: [Inaudible]

Leader Pelosi. I'm happy to come back to that but let's give them the chance.

Q: Okay, that's fine. Then my other question would be for you - I understand that last night when the President talked about Trade Promotion Authority was met with some skepticism from your Caucus. Can you deliver the votes on that if need be?

Leader Pelosi. Well, I think people are - as I've said over and over, let's try to find a path to "yes". I do not know if that is possible it; it depends on what is in TPP. You know, give us fast-track or TPP. Well, what's TPP? Tell us what it is. I think people are open to listening because we are a party of trade and we understand the global economy. On the other hand, I will say what I said a few days ago: we will make a judgment as to what is in there as to what impact it will have on the wages of America's working families.

Q: If I may ask one hometown question, local media and local political leadership have said we're trying to get the 16th convention here...

Leader Pelosi. Okay, we'll be back to that in a moment.

[Laughter]

Q: Thank you, Madam Leader.

Leader Pelosi. Do you think that's why the mayor was here the whole time?

[Laughter]

Q: Yes, it was.

Leader Pelosi. Maybe he was just attracted to our issues conference.

Chairman Becerra. He was great. Mayor Nutter was great.

Q: You mentioned Congressman Clyburn is leading up the effort on voter engagement. I know you spent a lot of this conference talking about the middle class and how about the middle class. How much have you talked in this conference about the voter engagement issue and voting rights issue in the last couple of days?

Assistant Leader Clyburn. We talked a great deal about it. In fact, we opened on Wednesday evening - the whole evening was about that. And we showed some clips from that earlier era, not just to focus on the movie "Selma" but to give our Members - a lot of them read about or heard about "the Movement", as a lot of people called it. We did two clips: one from a speech that Martin Luther King Jr. did in 1966 - less than a year after the Voting Rights Act was signed in to law - and another one from a speech he gave in 1967 - not coincidentally both those speeches were in South Carolina - to allow our Members to see, despite what you may hear from the other side, Martin Luther King Jr. had a big focus on the ballot box and legislation. It wasn't just about a dream unfulfilled, but he spoke about how that dream should be fulfilled. And so we are focusing a lot of attention on this. And I do believe that to build this middle class economy that is so critical to the future growth and development of this great country, we need to get more people engaged and we are going to work very hard to do that.

Q: And you laid out specific plans to do it?

Assistant Leader Clyburn. Yes we did, and we are going to build them. We have a full task force. The task force has met already and we'll meet at least twice this coming week to really get this ball moving. And they all got great ideas on how we they think we can get this done.

Chairman Becerra. Other questions?

Yes.

Q: I want to ask a question about how this retreat was run. At times, for the reporters here, it seems like this has been like a police state. At the Caucus' direction, staff has been extremely heavy-handed, following reporters to the bathroom at times. Yes, we've been escorted everywhere we've gone. The Republicans don't operate like this. It's not like this when we follow you guys around the Capitol, so why all the heavy-handedness? Is it really necessary?

Leader Pelosi. Republicans don't have the President of the United States...

Chairman Becerra. Yeah. We're not aware that they were following you. We had to have the security in the hotel that we were in because it was expected by Capitol Police that we would be secure. This hotel where the press was located, we did not have those kinds of requirements. If you want to give me names of staff I'll be willing to take them, because they might be ready for the Capitol Police - to work for the Capitol Police.

Q: They said they were operating under the direction of the Caucus and the Capitol Police said the same thing. So, it's unlike any of the other retreats operate and...

Chairman Becerra. Get names because that wasn't at the direction of the Caucus.

Congressman Israel. They follow me into the bathroom too.

Assistant Leader Clyburn. Well, let me say this because something came up at the breakfast this morning: as many of you know, I come from a less than middle-class background. I define middle class aspirationally [sic]. I believe - when I finished college my wife I finished college, together we both made around $7000 a year, but I thought I was in the middle class. So, I'm very, very concerned about the wait staff. And a few of them came to me about some of this and I said to them: look, you've got the President of the United States and the Vice President of the United States. If you read the headlines, you'll know exactly what kind of challenges the security of the First Family is having. And so we're not going to be able - because they wanted to come into the breakfast. Until people are vetted by their Social Security numbers and that sort of thing, we told them: this is not what we would like, but this is what is going to be required. So, a lot of this has been going around - and they understood. So I think we have a responsibility to maintain the security that the Secret Service - because I spoke with some of them - [was] demanding.

Chairman Becerra. We can maybe take one last question.

Q: Actually, this is for Chairman **Lujan**, who we haven't heard as much from in the last few days. What have you told your colleagues about the 2016 cycle? How are you preparing? You know, Whip Hoyer said yesterday that there's a universe of 60 districts that, through various machinations might be in play or will be competitive? Do you adhere to that strategy? What's the message...

Chairman **Lujan**. Look, I think that we were all clear and maybe Mr. Hoyer's quote was taken out of context. There's excitement [from] our colleagues and you heard it yesterday. To feel that energy and be able to talk to my colleagues over the hours that followed the presentation last night and into today, this morning, pats on the back saying: Ben, we're with you; we're ready to go; we're willing to do whatever we need to do. There's excitement there; and there's Member engagement there. We're seeing Members stepping forward now - maybe there was something that happened in the past but they're all in. They've said: look, turn the page; we're going forward; we don't like being in the minority.

And the path that we made out was pretty simple. It was majority math. We know Republicans are over-extended. We look at the maps where the President won with strong numbers where Republicans hold those seats - even in the Senate - they're going to be defending 20-plus seats. So we're going forward. And they're having a messaging nightmare. Look at Governor Romney - I mean, one of the questions that comes in is asking about [Governor Romney] and reaction to him. I think Republicans are happier that he's not running than anyone else in the country as we talk about where our priories have to be with the middle class. Charlie Dent - week one, week two, week three, week four. Week four brought us: "it's not the end of the world" to be able to put the Homeland Security Department and the funding for our nation's security and the economic strength that comes

with our ports, that comes with that. And what's going to come in week five? Let's look at that together.

So look, we're strong. We're coming out of this around a unified message: it's middle class economics. That means to me being able to put a roof over your head; it means being able to have bread and milk and eggs in the refrigerator, maybe put a little money into the bank; make sure your kids can go to college and look after them. You know, that's what we're talking about. And where I come from, those are the people who are creating jobs, putting people to work. That's where we are all committed - every one of our Members. If you go talk to them - and I challenge you to - we are all about strengthening working families and the middle class all across America.

So, I'm excited about this. When I get a chance to talk about it, let's go, because sleeves are going to be rolled up, we're going to get to work here. So we're going to feel that same excitement from all of our colleagues. And that's what I got coming into this. I'm more energized now than I was coming into this retreat.

Chairman Becerra. Round of applause.

Leader Pelosi. Mr. Crowley would like to answer your question about the convention.

Congressman Crowley. I'd like to thank the mayor for the welcome that he's given to us to this incredibly important city to the United States. We really have had an incredibly warm welcome. And, Madam Leader, I look forward to welcoming the mayor and the entire Pennsylvania delegation to New York for the 2016 convention. Thank you all very much.

Leader Pelosi. And then Congresswoman Beatty who was also on the trip from Columbus - she would have something to say. No, we were very honored by the presence of the mayor. He's always an intellectual resource to us in terms of policy and organizing, and actually, I don't know if you saw his speech the other day, he talked about infrastructure and thanked us for what we did in the early time in the aura. But the fact is: he came to Washington and advocated for that in a very positive way and got results from it. What a wonderful city for many purposes, and this meeting certainly went off very well. So, that's good.

Q: What about 2016, Madam?

Leader Pelosi. Well I don't know. The DNC makes the decision.

Vice Chair Crowley. May the most appropriate city win.

[Laughter]

Q: Mitt Romney reaction?

Leader Pelosi. He probably concluded that the prospect of success was not there, despite the thought that he was going to win on election night. They're a lovely family. He's a wonderful American. He's been a governor, he's served our country in many ways. I don't want to make a joke about his candidacy. But I don't think that - I said he was the preferred candidate, so that tells you how much strength I thought he would have in the general election. Thank you all very much, again.

I just want to go back to one point, because you mentioned about the voting rights and the civil rights, and that aspect of this meeting. I just want to say that I did the close, as we presented Mr. Van Hollen to say where we go from here, discussing budget priorities and how we arrive at them. But I started my remarks by quoting Dr. King saying that he wanted his children to be judged "not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." And I thought that that should be - that sentence by Dr. King, he taught us so much, but to listen to that: "Judge." "Judge" - he used the word "judge," by the content of their character.

And how do we, as a country, address the content of the character of our children when we have their parents not making enough money to put food on the table, [having] two jobs so they don't have any time to mentor them, but if they get sick, they don't have one paid day of sick leave to care for their children; that housing is a situation that really causes some psychological problems for children, when it is in doubt or not adequate. The opportunity gap that we have in our country - in order to address it, we have to address the education gap, and what is happening [is that] 40 million children are going to be on the other side of the digital divide if we do not have the right budget priorities to address education, and the right policies in the budget that address enabling families to have the time to mentor their children, to nurture their children.

What is the content of the character of a nation that does not encourage the nurturing of children in its policies? And I think that, again, Dr. King's words were probably - we think of them, we've heard them so many times, but taken one at a time: "Judge." And we will be judged by the decisions we make to meet the needs of our children, all of Americas children, who are the heirs to America's future. So it was very much a part of our values that we discussed, and our plans for how we go forward. Thank you all for participating and see you next time. Bye bye.

LOAD-DATE: January 30, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

January 30, 2015 Friday 10:50 AM EST

Transcript of Pelosi, House Democratic Leaders Press Conference Today Concluding the Democratic Issues Conference

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 2844 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif. (12th CD), issued the following news release:

Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, Assistant Democratic Leader James Clyburn (D-SC), House Democratic Caucus Chairman Xavier Becerra (D-CA), Democratic Caucus Vice Chairman Joe Crowley (D-NY), Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Chairman **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-NM), Congressman Steve Israel (D-NY), Congressman Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) and Congresswoman Donna Edwards (D-MD) held a press conference today concluding the "Grow America's Economy, Grow American Paychecks" Democratic Issues Conference. Below is a transcript of Leader Pelosi's opening remarks and the question and answer session.

Leader Pelosi's opening remarks:

"Thank you very much, Congresswoman Edwards. Thank you, my colleagues. I want to join in commending our distinguished Chair of the Caucus Xavier Becerra and Vice Chair Joe Crowley for a great, great meeting. A few days of conversation is just the tip of the iceberg of the work that has gone into it. What has gone into it has produced unity, camaraderie, enthusiasm - but more important than that, momentum, momentum for the middle class.

"The middle class: the true job creator. That is our message to the American people. The squeeze on the middle class is a squeeze on our economy. All of the economic indicators show that our economy is growing, and prospects are good, except one - the stagnation of wages for our working families. Unless we can put purchasing power into the hands of the consumers in this consumer economy, we will not have the recovery that we need. That is why our focus has been on the middle class - the backbone of our democracy, but also the job creators.

"As we gather here in Philadelphia, where many of our sacred founding documents were written - they talked about life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That was amazing, that in that time, they said "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." You have heard me say before [that] in the Affordable Care Act we have given people the opportunity for a healthier life, and the ability to pursue their happiness, because they are not job locked and they could make their own decisions freely. But the fact is also that life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness must be reflected in the values of our country in a budget. And I was very proud of the interaction - it's only the beginning - on the budget, led by Ranking Member Van Hollen, to be continued. Where we go from here [is] continued discussion on the budget, which will show the differentiation between the values that we think everyone shares in our country and the misguided proposals the Republicans have in their budget.

"So as we go forward, Ranking Member Van Hollen will be having those meetings with Members about how we build consensus around our budget in support of the principles in President's budget. Mr. Clyburn, as you know, is heading up our Outreach and Engagement Task Force, to give people a reason to register, a reason to vote in this 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act. Congresswoman Donna Edwards will be taking the lead on campaign reform, trying to reduce the role of money in politics and increase to increase the level of hope and participation of many more people - all part of that empowerment.

"We are very proud of the role [of] Chairman - I still call him Chairman - Steve Israel, [who] is heading our policy and communication group, so that when we build this consensus within the Party everyone is, again, in harmony, in unity, and in force on it. Of course, our Chairman **Ben Ray Lujan** will be driving the political course. And we are very proud of the reaction the Caucus has given to him.

"So for us, it was a very successful weekend - almost a weekend, a few days. We were so honored by the President's speech and the Vice President['s] as well, building on the momentum of the State of the Union Address, reiterating - returning to some of those principles and values and specific recommendations, building momentum for the middle class. Thank you."

***

Chairman Becerra. We have time to take one question.

Q: Madam Leader, two part question. First one: on behalf of my TV colleagues, your reaction to Mitt Romney...

Leader Pelosi. He's out of the race, right? Of course you've got to know this...

[Laughter]

Q: Any reaction to Mitt Romney? Any reaction to Mitt Romney not running for president?

Leader Pelosi. Let me say this: we have Members waiting on the bus. I'm all packed so I can stay a little bit later than the other Members. But let's stay with our...

Q: [Inaudible]

Leader Pelosi. I'm happy to come back to that but let's give them the chance.

Q: Okay, that's fine. Then my other question would be for you - I understand that last night when the President talked about Trade Promotion Authority was met with some skepticism from your Caucus. Can you deliver the votes on that if need be?

Leader Pelosi. Well, I think people are - as I've said over and over, let's try to find a path to "yes". I do not know if that is possible it; it depends on what is in TPP. You know, give us fast-track or TPP. Well, what's TPP? Tell us what it is. I think people are open to listening because we are a party of trade and we understand the global economy. On the other hand, I will say what I said a few days ago: we will make a judgment as to what is in there as to what impact it will have on the wages of America's working families.

Q: If I may ask one hometown question, local media and local political leadership have said we're trying to get the 16th convention here...

Leader Pelosi. Okay, we'll be back to that in a moment.

[Laughter]

Q: Thank you, Madam Leader.

Leader Pelosi. Do you think that's why the mayor was here the whole time?

[Laughter]

Q: Yes, it was.

Leader Pelosi. Maybe he was just attracted to our issues conference.

Chairman Becerra. He was great. Mayor Nutter was great.

Q: You mentioned Congressman Clyburn is leading up the effort on voter engagement. I know you spent a lot of this conference talking about the middle class and how about the middle class. How much have you talked in this conference about the voter engagement issue and voting rights issue in the last couple of days?

Assistant Leader Clyburn. We talked a great deal about it. In fact, we opened on Wednesday evening - the whole evening was about that. And we showed some clips from that earlier era, not just to focus on the movie "Selma" but to give our Members - a lot of them read about or heard about "the Movement", as a lot of people called it. We did two clips: one from a speech that Martin Luther King Jr. did in 1966 - less than a year after the Voting Rights Act was signed in to law - and another one from a speech he gave in 1967 - not coincidentally both those speeches were in South Carolina - to allow our Members to see, despite what you may hear from the other side, Martin Luther King Jr. had a big focus on the ballot box and legislation. It wasn't just about a dream unfulfilled, but he spoke about how that dream should be fulfilled. And so we are focusing a lot of attention on this. And I do believe that to build this middle class economy that is so critical to the future growth and development of this great country, we need to get more people engaged and we are going to work very hard to do that.

Q: And you laid out specific plans to do it?

Assistant Leader Clyburn. Yes we did, and we are going to build them. We have a full task force. The task force has met already and we'll meet at least twice this coming week to really get this ball moving. And they all got great ideas on how we they think we can get this done.

Chairman Becerra. Other questions?

Yes.

Q: I want to ask a question about how this retreat was run. At times, for the reporters here, it seems like this has been like a police state. At the Caucus' direction, staff has been extremely heavy-handed, following reporters to the bathroom at times. Yes, we've been escorted everywhere we've gone. The Republicans don't operate like this. It's not like this when we follow you guys around the Capitol, so why all the heavy-handedness? Is it really necessary?

Leader Pelosi. Republicans don't have the President of the United States...

Chairman Becerra. Yeah. We're not aware that they were following you. We had to have the security in the hotel that we were in because it was expected by Capitol Police that we would be secure. This hotel where the press was located, we did not have those kinds of requirements. If you want to give me names of staff I'll be willing to take them, because they might be ready for the Capitol Police - to work for the Capitol Police.

Q: They said they were operating under the direction of the Caucus and the Capitol Police said the same thing. So, it's unlike any of the other retreats operate and...

Chairman Becerra. Get names because that wasn't at the direction of the Caucus.

Congressman Israel. They follow me into the bathroom too.

Assistant Leader Clyburn. Well, let me say this because something came up at the breakfast this morning: as many of you know, I come from a less than middle-class background. I define middle class aspirationally [sic]. I believe - when I finished college my wife I finished college, together we both made around $7000 a year, but I thought I was in the middle class. So, I'm very, very concerned about the wait staff. And a few of them came to me about some of this and I said to them: look, you've got the President of the United States and the Vice President of the United States. If you read the headlines, you'll know exactly what kind of challenges the security of the First Family is having. And so we're not going to be able - because they wanted to come into the breakfast. Until people are vetted by their Social Security numbers and that sort of thing, we told them: this is not what we would like, but this is what is going to be required. So, a lot of this has been going around - and they understood. So I think we have a responsibility to maintain the security that the Secret Service - because I spoke with some of them - [was] demanding.

Chairman Becerra. We can maybe take one last question.

Q: Actually, this is for Chairman **Lujan**, who we haven't heard as much from in the last few days. What have you told your colleagues about the 2016 cycle? How are you preparing? You know, Whip Hoyer said yesterday that there's a universe of 60 districts that, through various machinations might be in play or will be competitive? Do you adhere to that strategy? What's the message...

Chairman **Lujan**. Look, I think that we were all clear and maybe Mr. Hoyer's quote was taken out of context. There's excitement [from] our colleagues and you heard it yesterday. To feel that energy and be able to talk to my colleagues over the hours that followed the presentation last night and into today, this morning, pats on the back saying: Ben, we're with you; we're ready to go; we're willing to do whatever we need to do. There's excitement there; and there's Member engagement there. We're seeing Members stepping forward now - maybe there was something that happened in the past but they're all in. They've said: look, turn the page; we're going forward; we don't like being in the minority.

And the path that we made out was pretty simple. It was majority math. We know Republicans are over-extended. We look at the maps where the President won with strong numbers where Republicans hold those seats - even in the Senate - they're going to be defending 20-plus seats. So we're going forward. And they're having a messaging nightmare. Look at Governor Romney - I mean,

one of the questions that comes in is asking about [Governor Romney] and reaction to him. I think Republicans are happier that he's not running than anyone else in the country as we talk about where our priories have to be with the middle class. Charlie Dent - week one, week two, week three, week four. Week four brought us: "it's not the end of the world" to be able to put the Homeland Security Department and the funding for our nation's security and the economic strength that comes with our ports, that comes with that. And what's going to come in week five? Let's look at that together.

So look, we're strong. We're coming out of this around a unified message: it's middle class economics. That means to me being able to put a roof over your head; it means being able to have bread and milk and eggs in the refrigerator, maybe put a little money into the bank; make sure your kids can go to college and look after them. You know, that's what we're talking about. And where I come from, those are the people who are creating jobs, putting people to work. That's where we are all committed - every one of our Members. If you go talk to them - and I challenge you to - we are all about strengthening working families and the middle class all across America.

So, I'm excited about this. When I get a chance to talk about it, let's go, because sleeves are going to be rolled up, we're going to get to work here. So we're going to feel that same excitement from all of our colleagues. And that's what I got coming into this. I'm more energized now than I was coming into this retreat.

Chairman Becerra. Round of applause.

Leader Pelosi. Mr. Crowley would like to answer your question about the convention.

Congressman Crowley. I'd like to thank the mayor for the welcome that he's given to us to this incredibly important city to the United States. We really have had an incredibly warm welcome. And, Madam Leader, I look forward to welcoming the mayor and the entire Pennsylvania delegation to New York for the 2016 convention. Thank you all very much.

Leader Pelosi. And then Congresswoman Beatty who was also on the trip from Columbus - she would have something to say. No, we were very honored by the presence of the mayor. He's always an intellectual resource to us in terms of policy and organizing, and actually, I don't know if you saw his speech the other day, he talked about infrastructure and thanked us for what we did in the early time in the aura. But the fact is: he came to Washington and advocated for that in a very positive way and got results from it. What a wonderful city for many purposes, and this meeting certainly went off very well. So, that's good.

Q: What about 2016, Madam?

Leader Pelosi. Well I don't know. The DNC makes the decision.

Vice Chair Crowley. May the most appropriate city win.

[Laughter]

Q: Mitt Romney reaction?

Leader Pelosi. He probably concluded that the prospect of success was not there, despite the thought that he was going to win on election night. They're a lovely family. He's a wonderful American. He's been a governor, he's served our country in many ways. I don't want to make a joke about his candidacy. But I don't think that - I said he was the preferred candidate, so that tells you how much strength I thought he would have in the general election. Thank you all very much, again.

I just want to go back to one point, because you mentioned about the voting rights and the civil rights, and that aspect of this meeting. I just want to say that I did the close, as we presented Mr. Van Hollen to say where we go from here, discussing budget priorities and how we arrive at them. But I started my remarks by quoting Dr. King saying that he wanted his children to be judged "not by

the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." And I thought that that should be - that sentence by Dr. King, he taught us so much, but to listen to that: "Judge." "Judge" - he used the word "judge," by the content of their character.

And how do we, as a country, address the content of the character of our children when we have their parents not making enough money to put food on the table, [having] two jobs so they don't have any time to mentor them, but if they get sick, they don't have one paid day of sick leave to care for their children; that housing is a situation that really causes some psychological problems for children, when it is in doubt or not adequate. The opportunity gap that we have in our country - in order to address it, we have to address the education gap, and what is happening [is that] 40 million children are going to be on the other side of the digital divide if we do not have the right budget priorities to address education, and the right policies in the budget that address enabling families to have the time to mentor their children, to nurture their children.

What is the content of the character of a nation that does not encourage the nurturing of children in its policies? And I think that, again, Dr. King's words were probably - we think of them, we've heard them so many times, but taken one at a time: "Judge." And we will be judged by the decisions we make to meet the needs of our children, all of Americas children, who are the heirs to America's future. So it was very much a part of our values that we discussed, and our plans for how we go forward. Thank you all for participating and see you next time. Bye bye.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-150203-5015065 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: February 8, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Quarterly News

January 29, 2015 Thursday

Obama Fires Up House Democrats (Updated)

BYLINE: By Emma Dumain and Matt Fuller

LENGTH: 1019 words

Updated 10:55 p.m. | PHILADELPHIA - A fiery President Barack Obama addressed House Democrats Thursday night, saying while there's more work to do in restoring the economy, Democrats can't be shy about what they've already accomplished.

His remarks, delivered in the ballroom of a Sheraton hotel on the second evening of the House Democratic retreat, were tailored to the caucus's new strategy: Focus the party's message on

growing the middle class and take full credit for the nation's economic recovery of the past six years.

"Obviously we were all disappointed by the outcome of this election. There were a lot of reasons for it, and I'm happy to take some of the blame," Obama told the assembled members, their families and their staffers. "One thing I'm positive about is, when we're shy about what we care about, when we're defensive about what we've accomplished, when we don't stand up straight and proud ... "

He then began to list - his voice rising to a campaign stump speech crescendo as members rose to their feet in wild applause - accomplishments on health insurance, immigration legislation and "middle-class economics."

He said he would "happily veto" Republican efforts to undo the Affordable Care Act - not surprising, but a crowd-pleaser nonetheless - along with legislation to roll back the financial regulatory overhaul bill known as Dodd-Frank and a measure targeting his executive orders on immigration.

He slammed Republicans for risking a Homeland Security Department shutdown over those executive actions, saying, "These are the guys concerned about borders, about terrorism? Now you want to make a political point?"

And Obama crowed about proving the critics - namely, Republicans - wrong.

"It's pretty rare when you have two visions, a vigorous debate and then you test who's right," Obama said. "And the record shows that we were right."

In a nod to the middle-class economics message, Obama said Republicans now seem to acknowledge - in rhetoric, at least - the need to help the middle class and address income stratification. He made specific mention to one "former presidential candidate" on the Republican side, Mitt Romney, who "suddenly is just deeply concerned about poverty."

While Obama poked fun at Republicans, he said Democrats "need to stand up ... and not be defensive about what we believe in."

In closing he stepped back from the podium and took a drink of water. "I'm fired up!" he said in a reference to a famous catchphrase from his 2008 presidential run.

An ensuing question-and-answer period was closed to the press, but a source in the room told CQ Roll Call the president addressed higher education, the Affordable Care Act, funding for veterans care and criminal justice changes.

"There was also a discussion of national security threats around the world and the president reiterated his call for Congress to pass a bipartisan [Authorization for Use of Military Force] to show the world America stands united against ISIL," according to the source.

"In discussing trade, the president said he recognizes the deals signed in past decades were not perfect. The president conceded that no new trade agreement will fix all of the real challenges that arise from globalization and past trade arrangements, but was firm that the agreements he is negotiating will be an improvement from the status quo for US workers and businesses."

Obama told members that officials would know within "two or three months" whether diplomacy could prevail with respect to Iran, said a source in the room.

On trade, another person attending the question-and-answer session said Obama urged members to "keep your powder a little dry" and "get informed."

He said "we ... are looking out for the same people," according to that person's readout.

Sources said the president promised the administration would make a "substantive case" and would share with members more information about the proposed trade deals. Rep. Sander M. Levin, D-Mich., had openly criticized the administration earlier in the day on that front.

While the president apparently offered some details behind closed doors, his public remarks were light on specific policy proposals, with no mention of issues like trade or a tax overhaul.

Obama, with no more elections to win and two years left to go, kept things friendly and appeared to relish his time in the spotlight: He cracked jokes about Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi's perfectly coiffed hair, poked fun at caucus Vice Chairman Joseph Crowley's imperfectly coiffed hair and wondered about the future of new DCCC Chairman **Ben Ray Luján's** hair.

Obama said he remembered a time when he, himself, was young and attractive. "Let's see how long that lasts," Obama said of the 42-year-old, dark-haired **Luján**. "He'll have hair like Steve Israel," he said, referring to **Luján's** silver-maned predecessor.

In the week since his State of the Union address, Democrats who have felt demoralized since the party's midterm drubbing have said they think their president has a renewed vigor to fight with them to win back seats in 2016. They say his speech touched on the important issues they want to focus on in the next cycle and feel there is a renewed partnership.

The honeymoon could be short-lived with substantial legislative challenges on the horizon, especially when it comes to giving the White House fast-track authority to enter into trade negotiations.

But at least on Thursday night, House Democrats seemed ready to believe that they and Obama were squarely on the same team.

"I'm going to be out there making the case every single day," he said, "and I hope you join me."

Niels Lesniewski contributed to this report.

Correction Jan. 30, 8:09 a.m.

An earlier version of this post misspelled Rep. Sander M. Levin's name.

Related:

Democrats Unite Around Middle-Class Message, Israel Says

House Democrats Brace for Potentially Tense Retreat

White House Helping Democrats Shape Message to Middle Class

The 114th: CQ Roll Call's Guide to the New Congress

Get breaking news alerts and more from Roll Call in your inbox or on your iPhone.

Source: CQ News
©2015 Congressional Quarterly Inc. All Rights Reserved.

LOAD-DATE: February 1, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: NEWSLETTERS

Copyright 2015 CQ-Roll Call, Inc. All Rights Reserved

National Journal Daily Extra AM

January 29, 2015 Thursday

House Democrats' 2016 Hope: GOP Is 'Maxed Out'

BYLINE: Alex Brown

LENGTH: 588 words

PHILADELPHIAOutnumbered House Democrats are here searching for a bright spot in the GOP's historic House majority. Republicans' biggest weakness, say members gathered for a three-day retreat , is in their numbers.

Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Chairman **Ben Ray Lujan** told colleagues Thursday his group would roll back GOP gains in next year's elections. How? According to a source at the meeting, he said he believes the 246-seat House GOP is "maxed out." In the 2014 midterms, Republicans made gains in many districts that President Obama won two years before. They also hold nearly two dozen seats in which Obama fell just shy of a 50 percent margin.

The GOP will have its hands full defending those seats, **Lujan** said, giving it little chance to go on offense elsewhere. Perhaps the biggest targets for Democrats will be the 26 Republicans who represent districts won by Obama in 2012. Another 15 districts are held by Republicans who won by single-digit margins.

Just how much of a dent Democrats expect to make in the GOP majority was left unsaid; in 2012, they found themselves with a 33-seat deficit despite a slim advantage in the overall popular vote.

Speaking to reporters later Thursday, House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer was cautiously optimistic about the party's electoral chances.

"I think we can take back the House in 2016.... Would I tell you to bet a whole lot of money that we're going to take back the House in 2016? I probably wouldn't do that," Hoyer said.

Lujan's pep talk also served as a fundraising pitch, and the source said the DCCC's new finance chairman, Chris Van Hollen, announced that more than $1 million had been raised from caucus leaders and ranking members. Ways and Means Committee ranking member Sander Levin pledged $375,000 from the Democrats on his panel.

While **Lujan** encouraged his colleagues about the electoral math, other party leaders urged the formation of a more focused message that they believe will be key to earning voters' confidence. "We came out of that session absolutely unified on three essential messagesmiddle class, middle class, and middle class," said. Rep. Steve Israel, who preceded **Lujan** atop the DCCC. He contrasted that with past Democratic messaging, that often involved "a 23-point plan" on every issue. "The problem is that we may have had too many messages," he said.

Democrats, while stuck in a legislative minority, said they are counting on President Obama to be their "messenger-in-chief," spotlighting the party's agenda in ways others can'tat least, until the party chooses its 2016 nominee. "People felt really good about the State of the Union address," Van Hollen said. Asked what the party would do differently from a policy standpoint in the coming cycle,

he responded, "There was already a lot new in the president's speech the other night in terms of additional policies aimed squarely at the middle class."

Like Israel, Rep. Donna Edwards said Democrats shouldn't worry about sounding redundant. "We have been really trying to make sure that we construct an agenda that we're able to repeat and repeat and repeat," she said, citing child care and college affordability proposals in Obama's address as policies worthy of repetition.

After a day's worth of panel discussions, Democrats have a few options for Thursday afternoon. They can attend a seminar on how to "Become a Q&A Ninja," attend a tasting of local wines, or visit Independence National Historical Park. President Obama will deliver the retreat's keynote address Thursday night.

LOAD-DATE: February 2, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Magazine

Copyright 2015 The National Journal Group, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

January 24, 2015 Saturday

New Mexico Lawmakers Announce $15.6 Million Expansion Funding for State Veterans' Home

LENGTH: 622 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has approved $15.6 million conditional funding for the New Mexico State Veterans' Home in Truth or Consequences to construct a new 59 bed facility. The construction and expansion project includes 39 Alzheimer's beds, a 20 bed Skilled Nursing Unit, a new rehabilitation section for inpatient and outpatient services, and a new pool. The N.M. State Veterans' Home must complete items the VA has outlined as requirements for final grant award approval within 180 days from the date they received notification of the conditional funding approval.

The conditionally awarded funding is available through the VA's State Home Construction Grant Program, which provides matching grant funds for renovation and construction of state veterans homes and adult day care facilities. The VA matches 65 percent of the project costs, and states fund

the remaining 35 percent. The N.M. State Veterans' Home--the only nursing facility in N.M. dedicated specifically to serving veterans and their families--has planned the construction of a new facility since 2008, and the project is estimated to cost $30 million. It has already secured $12.5 million in state funding and plans to request additional funding during the 2015 state legislative session.

"The New Mexico State Veterans' Home provides top-notch nursing home care for our veterans, and this grant will help with needed updates and an expansion to help better serve elderly and rehabbing patients," Udall said. "As a member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, I am proud to support funding for projects like this to ensure our veterans get the care they have earned. I thank our state legislature for setting aside initial funding for this project, and we ask that state lawmakers provide the full amount so construction can move forward."

"Constructing a new facility at the New Mexico State Veterans' Home will provide our elderly veterans with the best nursing care available," Heinrich said. "This funding ensures that veterans in New Mexico with rehabilitative or disability needs benefit from state-of-the-art inpatient and outpatient services, and a Skilled Nursing Unit. These kinds of investments are critical if we are to fulfill our nation's promise to those who served. Few sacrifices are as selfless as those our military service men and women make in defense of this nation. We owe our veterans and their loved ones more than a debt of gratitude -- we owe them action in both our words and deeds."

"As the one nursing facility in New Mexico that serves only our veterans and their families, the State Veterans' Home helps New Mexico's heroes that come from every corner of the state," **Luján** said. "Funds for an expansion will enable this important facility to assist more of our brave men and women and give them the care they have earned through their service to our nation. The VA's approval for conditional funding represents another important step toward making the new facility a reality for New Mexico's veterans."

"Veterans and their families deserve every opportunity for quality care and skilled nursing that will help them recover from injuries and live with dignity," **Lujan** Grisham said. "I fully support this investment and urge the VA to ensure that residents at the State Veterans' Home have access to quality programs and qualified staff."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 12, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

January 24, 2015 Saturday

Lujan Sponsors Measures to Overturn Citizens United and Increase Transparency in Elections

LENGTH: 413 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he is supporting a pair of measures aimed at limiting money in politics by overturning the Citizens United Supreme Court decision and increasing transparency in elections. **Luján** is a cosponsor of the DISCLOSE Act and the Democracy for All Amendment, which would amend the Constitution.

"Five years ago, Citizens United opened up the floodgates of special-interest money into our political system. Since that time, we've seen the rise of Super PACs that can spend unlimited amounts of money while hiding their donors and preventing the American people from finding the truth behind where their money comes from," Congressman **Luján** said. "The legislation I am supporting would increase transparency in our electoral system and restore accountability, while ensuring that a wealthy few do not drown out the voices of the American people."

The DISCLOSE Act increases transparency through four major requirements:

o Enhances public reporting of campaign-related activity by corporations and other outside groups. All corporations, unions, other outside groups, and Super PACs will have to report to the FEC within 24 hours of making a $10,000 campaign expenditure or financial transfer to other groups which can then be used for campaign-related activity.
o Requires corporations and other outside groups to stand by their ads. All leaders of corporations, unions, other outside groups, and Super PACs that make campaign-related ads will have to stand by their ads and say that he or she "approves this message." Top financial contributors have to be disclosed in television and radio advertisements.
o Requires corporations and other outside groups to disclose campaign-related spending to shareholders and organization members.
o Requires lobbyists to disclose campaign-related expenditures in conjunction with their lobbying activities.

The Democracy for All Amendment amends the Constitution to provide Congress and the states with the authority to determine reasonable campaign finance regulations and distinguish between natural persons and corporations or other artificial entities. A companion bill has been introduced in the Senate by Senator Tom Udall of New Mexico.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 12, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

January 24, 2015 Saturday

Lujan Votes for Legislation to Help Prevent Veteran Suicides

LENGTH: 488 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District applauded the unanimous passage of legislation in the House last night to help prevent suicide among our nation's veterans. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act expands access to mental health services and increases the capacity and efficiency of VA care to address the needs of veterans returning home from war. The bill passed the House last Congress, but did not receive a final vote in the Senate before the end of last session. It was reintroduced this month with **Luján** as a cosponsor.

"I applaud the swift passage of this important legislation after efforts to pass it in the Senate in December fell just short. I hope the Senate will act quickly to send it to the President's desk," **Luján** said. "With an estimated 22 veterans committing suicide every day - more than 8,000 each year, we are facing an epidemic that we cannot ignore. The brave men and women who have sacrificed so much to protect and defend our nation, our values, and our way of life must receive the support they need and have earned. An estimated 600,000 men and women who have served in combat have traumatic brain injury, PTSD, or depression, and we must have the capacity to ensure access to the vital mental health services that can help them heal from the wounds of war. This legislation is an important step forward, and must be part of our continuing effort to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans."

The legislation, which is named in honor of Marine Corporal Clay Hunt, an Iraq and Afghanistan War veteran who was awarded the Purple Heart and dedicated suicide prevention advocate who tragically took his own life, includes a number of provisions to increase access to care. The bill:

o Establishes a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning servicemembers with accessing VA mental health care services;
o Requires the VA to create a one-stop shot, interactive website to serve as a centralized information source regarding all mental health services to veterans;
o Takes steps to address the shortage of mental health care professionals by authorizing the VA to conduct a student loan repayment pilot program aimed at recruiting and retaining psychiatrists;
o Requires yearly evaluations, conducted by a third party, of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the DOD and VA to determine what is working and what is not working and to make recommendations to improve care; and

Veterans Service Organizations, including the Military Officers Association of American and Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America have voiced support for the legislation.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: May 12, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

275 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

January 24, 2015 Saturday

Lujan Sponsors Measures to Overturn Citizens United and Increase Transparency in Elections

LENGTH: 413 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he is supporting a pair of measures aimed at limiting money in politics by overturning the Citizens United Supreme Court decision and increasing transparency in elections. **Luján** is a cosponsor of the DISCLOSE Act and the Democracy for All Amendment, which would amend the Constitution.

"Five years ago, Citizens United opened up the floodgates of special-interest money into our political system. Since that time, we've seen the rise of Super PACs that can spend unlimited amounts of money while hiding their donors and preventing the American people from finding the truth behind where their money comes from," Congressman **Luján** said. "The legislation I am supporting would increase transparency in our electoral system and restore accountability, while ensuring that a wealthy few do not drown out the voices of the American people."

The DISCLOSE Act increases transparency through four major requirements:

o Enhances public reporting of campaign-related activity by corporations and other outside groups. All corporations, unions, other outside groups, and Super PACs will have to report to the FEC within 24 hours of making a $10,000 campaign expenditure or financial transfer to other groups which can then be used for campaign-related activity.
o Requires corporations and other outside groups to stand by their ads. All leaders of corporations, unions, other outside groups, and Super PACs that make campaign-related ads will have to stand by their ads and say that he or she "approves this message." Top financial contributors have to be disclosed in television and radio advertisements.
o Requires corporations and other outside groups to disclose campaign-related spending to shareholders and organization members.

o Requires lobbyists to disclose campaign-related expenditures in conjunction with their lobbying activities.

The Democracy for All Amendment amends the Constitution to provide Congress and the states with the authority to determine reasonable campaign finance regulations and distinguish between natural persons and corporations or other artificial entities. A companion bill has been introduced in the Senate by Senator Tom Udall of New Mexico.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: January 25, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

January 24, 2015 Saturday

Lujan Votes for Legislation to Help Prevent Veteran Suicides

LENGTH: 488 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District applauded the unanimous passage of legislation in the House last night to help prevent suicide among our nation's veterans. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act expands access to mental health services and increases the capacity and efficiency of VA care to address the needs of veterans returning home from war. The bill passed the House last Congress, but did not receive a final vote in the Senate before the end of last session. It was reintroduced this month with **Luján** as a cosponsor.

"I applaud the swift passage of this important legislation after efforts to pass it in the Senate in December fell just short. I hope the Senate will act quickly to send it to the President's desk," **Luján** said. "With an estimated 22 veterans committing suicide every day - more than 8,000 each year, we are facing an epidemic that we cannot ignore. The brave men and women who have sacrificed so much to protect and defend our nation, our values, and our way of life must receive the support they need and have earned. An estimated 600,000 men and women who have served in combat have traumatic brain injury, PTSD, or depression, and we must have the capacity to ensure access to the vital mental health services that can help them heal from the wounds of war. This

legislation is an important step forward, and must be part of our continuing effort to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans."

The legislation, which is named in honor of Marine Corporal Clay Hunt, an Iraq and Afghanistan War veteran who was awarded the Purple Heart and dedicated suicide prevention advocate who tragically took his own life, includes a number of provisions to increase access to care. The bill:

o Establishes a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning servicemembers with accessing VA mental health care services;
o Requires the VA to create a one-stop shot, interactive website to serve as a centralized information source regarding all mental health services to veterans;
o Takes steps to address the shortage of mental health care professionals by authorizing the VA to conduct a student loan repayment pilot program aimed at recruiting and retaining psychiatrists;
o Requires yearly evaluations, conducted by a third party, of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the DOD and VA to determine what is working and what is not working and to make recommendations to improve care; and

Veterans Service Organizations, including the Military Officers Association of American and Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America have voiced support for the legislation.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: January 25, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

277 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

January 23, 2015 Friday

U.S. Veteran Affairs OKs $15.6 million for New Mexico facility

BYLINE: Mike English

LENGTH: 222 words

Members of the New Mexico congressional delegation announced Thursday the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has approved $15.6 million funding for the New Mexico State Veterans' Home in Truth or Consequences to construct a new 59-bed facility.

The construction and expansion project includes 39 Alzheimer's beds, a 20-bed skilled-nursing unit, a new rehabilitation section for inpatient and outpatient services and a new pool.

The project was announced by Sen. Tom Udall, Sen. Martin Heinrich, Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**.

Federal funding for the project comes with some strings. The New Mexico State Veterans' Home must complete items the VA has outlined as requirements for final grant award approval within 180 days, or by late March. It has already secured $12.5 million in state funding and plans to request additional funding during the 2015 state legislative session.

"I thank our state Legislature for setting aside initial funding for this project, and we ask that state lawmakers provide the full amount so construction can move forward," Udall said.

Want Albuquerque news in your inbox? Click here to sign up for our email newsletters.

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: January 23, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

278 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

January 23, 2015 Friday 6:24 PM EST

Rep. Hollen Introduces Bill to Provide Additional Disclosure Requirements for Ccorporations, Other Entities

BYLINE: by MARY GRACE DEJUCOS, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 495 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Jan. 23 -- Rep. Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., has introduced legislation (H.R. 430) to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to "provide for additional disclosure requirements for corporations, labor organizations, and other entities."

The bill was introduced on Jan. 21 and has 77 co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., James E. Clyburn, D-S.C., Xavier Becerra, D-Calif., Joseph Crowley, D-N.Y., Steve Israel, D-N.Y., Rosa L. DeLauro, D-Conn., Donna F. Edwards, D-Md., Robert A. Brady, D-Pa., Sander M. Levin, D-Mich., Adam B. Schiff, D-Calif., Frank Pallone Jr., D-N.J., Raul M. Grijalva, D-Ariz., John Conyers Jr., D-Mich., Eliot L. Engel, D-N.Y., Adam Smith, D-Wash., Nita M. Lowey, D-N.Y., Robert C. Scott, D-Va., Elijah E. Cummings, D-Md., Louise Slaughter, D-N.Y., David E. Price, D-N.C., Brian Higgins, D-N.Y., Betty McCollum, D-Minn., Mike Quigley, D-Ill., Eric Swalwell, D-Calif., Daniel Lipinski, D-Ill., Bill Pascrell Jr., D-N.J., Jim McDermott, D-Wash., Jim Himes, D-Conn., Derek Kilmer, D-Wash., Jim Langevin, D-R.I.,

Suzanne Bonamici, D-Ore., Peter Welch, D-Vt., Susan A. Davis, D-Calif., John C. Carney, D-Del., David Loebsack, D-Iowa, Ted Deutch, D-Fla., Gwen Moore, D-Wis., Niki Tsongas, D-Mass., Suzan DelBene, D-Wash., Juan C. Vargas, D-Calif., Gerald E. Connolly, D-Va., Frederica S. Wilson, D-Fla., Chellie Pingree, D-Maine, John B. Larson, D-Conn., Jared Polis, D-Colo., Stephen F. Lynch, D-Mass., Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill., John Sarbanes, D-Md., Peter J. Visclosky, D-Ind., Denny Heck, D-Wash., Rick Nolan, D-Minn., Sam Farr, D-Calif., Steve Cohen, D-Tenn., Elizabeth Esty, D-Conn., James McGovern, D-Mass., Ann McLane Kuster, D-N.H., Marcy Kaptur, D-Ohio, Paul Tonko, D-N.Y., Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., Doris O. Matsui, D-Calif., Keith Ellison, D-Minn., Michael E. Capuano, D-Mass., Danny K. Davis, D-Ill., Alan Lowenthal, D-Calif., Al Green, D-Texas, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., Mike Thompson, D-Calif., Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., Brad Sherman, D-Calif., Tim Ryan, D-Ohio, Mark DeSaulnier, D-Calif., Lois Capps, D-Calif., Patrick Murphy, D-Fla., Jose E. Serrano, D-N.Y., and Peter A. DeFazio, D-Ore.; and Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton, D-D.C.

The legislation was referred to the House Administration Committee, the House Judiciary Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/LegislativeData.php?&n=BillText. For more information about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information, contact Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; targetednews.com.

18DejucosGrace 150123-kn-1188322

LOAD-DATE: January 23, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

279 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

January 23, 2015 Friday 6:20 PM EST

Rep. Sarbanes Introduces Bill to Reform Congressional Elections Financing

BYLINE: by MARY GRACE DEJUCOS, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 735 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Jan. 23 -- Rep. John Sarbanes, D-Md., has introduced legislation (H.R. 20) to "reform the financing of Congressional elections by broadening participation by small dollar donors."

The bill was introduced on Jan. 21 and has 138 co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., Joyce Beatty, D-Ohio, Xavier Becerra, D-Calif., Don S. Beyer, D-Va., Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., Suzanne Bonamici, D-Ore., Robert A. Brady, D-Pa., Corrine Brown, D-Fla., Julia Brownley, D-Calif., Cheri Bustos, D-Ill., Lois Capps, D-Calif., Michael E. Capuano, D-Mass., John C. Carney, D-Del., Andre Carson, D-Ind., Joaquin Castro, D-Texas, Judy Chu, D-Calif., David N. Cicilline, D-R.I., Katherine M. Clark, D-Mass., Yvette D. Clarke, D-N.Y., James E. Clyburn, D-S.C., Steve Cohen, D-Tenn., Gerald E. Connolly, D-Va., Jim Cooper, D-Tenn., Joe Courtney, D-Conn., Joseph Crowley, D-N.Y., Elijah E. Cummings, D-Md., Susan A. Davis, D-Calif., Peter A. DeFazio, D-Ore., Diana DeGette, D-Colo., John Delaney, D-Md., Rosa L. DeLauro, D-Conn., Suzan DelBene, D-Wash., Mark DeSaulnier, D-Calif., Ted Deutch, D-Fla., Debbie Dingell, D-Mich., Matthew Cartwright, D-Pa., Donna F. Edwards, D-Md., Keith Ellison, D-Minn., Eliot L. Engel, D-N.Y., Elizabeth Esty, D-Conn., Sam Farr, D-Calif., Bill Foster, D-Ill., Lois Frankel, D-Fla., Marcia L. Fudge, D-Ohio, Ruben Gallego, D-Ariz., Alan Grayson, D-Fla., Al Green, D-Texas, Gene Green, D-Texas, Raul M. Grijalva, D-Ariz., Luis V. Gutierrez, D-Ill., Janice Hahn, D-Calif., Alcee L Hastings, D-Fla., Denny Heck, D-Wash., Jim Himes, D-Conn., Mike Honda, D-Calif., Steny H. Hoyer, D-Md., Jared Huffman, D-Calif., Steve Israel, D-N.Y., Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-Texas, Henry C. Johnson, D-Ga., Walter B. Jones, R-N.C., Marcy Kaptur, D-Ohio, Joseph P. Kennedy III, D-Mass., Derek Kilmer, D-Wash., Ron Kind, D-Wis., Ann Kirkpatrick, D-Ariz., Jim Langevin, D-R.I., Rick Larsen, D-Wash., John B. Larson, D-Conn., Barbara Lee, D-Calif., John Lewis, D-Ga., Ted Lieu, D-Calif., David Loebsack, D-Iowa, Zoe Lofgren, D-Calif., Alan Lowenthal, D-Calif., Nita M. Lowey, D-N.Y., Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., Stephen F. Lynch, D-Mass., Carolyn B. Maloney, D-N.Y., Sean Patrick Maloney, D-N.Y., Doris O. Matsui, D-Calif., Betty McCollum, D-Minn., Jim McDermott, D-Wash., James McGovern, D-Mass., Ann McLane Kuster, D-N.H., Jerry McNerney, D-Calif., Gregory W. Meeks, D-N.Y., Grace Meng, D-N.Y., Gwen Moore, D-Wis., Patrick Murphy, D-Fla., Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., Grace F. Napolitano, D-Calif., Rick Nolan, D-Minn., Beto O'Rourke, D-Texas, Frank Pallone Jr., D-N.J., Bill Pascrell Jr., D-N.J., Ed Perlmutter, D-Colo., Scott Peters, D-Calif., Chellie Pingree, D-Maine, Mark Pocan, D-Wis., Jared Polis, D-Colo., Mike Quigley, D-Ill., Charles B. Rangel, D-N.Y., **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., Lucille Roybal-Allard, D-Calif., C.A. "Dutch" Ruppersberger, D-Md., Bobby L. Rush, D-Ill., Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill., Kurt Schrader, D-Ore., Robert C. Scott, D-Va., Jose E. Serrano, D-N.Y., Terri A. Sewell, D-Ala., Brad Sherman, D-Calif., Albio Sires, D-N.J., Louise Slaughter, D-N.Y., Adam Smith, D-Wash., Jackie Speier, D-Calif., Eric Swalwell, D-Calif., Mark Takai, D-Hawaii, Mark Takano, D-Calif., Mike Thompson, D-Calif., Paul Tonko, D-N.Y., Niki Tsongas, D-Mass., Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., Juan C. Vargas, D-Calif., Timothy Walz, D-Minn., Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., Peter Welch, D-Vt., Frederica S. Wilson, D-Fla., John A. Yarmuth, D-Ky., Robin Kelly, D-Ill., Ami Bera, D-Calif., Alma S. Adams, D-N.C., Danny K. Davis, D-Ill., Bonnie Watson Coleman, D-N.J., John Conyers Jr., D-Mich., G.K. Butterfield, D-N.C., and Del.

Eleanor Holmes Norton, D-D.C.

The legislation was referred to the House Administration Committee; House Energy and Commerce Committee; and the House Ways and Means Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/LegislativeData.php?&n=BillText. For more information about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information, contact Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; targetednews.com.

18DejucosGrace 150123-kn-1188314

LOAD-DATE: January 23, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

280 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

January 23, 2015 Friday

New Mexico Lawmakers Announce $15.6 Million Expansion Funding for State Veterans' Home

LENGTH: 656 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Tom Udall, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has approved $15.6 million conditional funding for the New Mexico State Veterans' Home in Truth or Consequences to construct a new 59 bed facility. The construction and expansion project includes 39 Alzheimer's beds, a 20 bed Skilled Nursing Unit, a new rehabilitation section for inpatient and outpatient services, and a new pool. The N.M. State Veterans' Home must complete items the VA has outlined as requirements for final grant award approval within 180 days from the date they received notification of the conditional funding approval.

The conditionally awarded funding is available through the VA's State Home Construction Grant Program, which provides matching grant funds for renovation and construction of state veterans homes and adult day care facilities. The VA matches 65 percent of the project costs, and states fund the remaining 35 percent. The N.M. State Veterans' Home-the only nursing facility in N.M. dedicated specifically to serving veterans and their families-has planned the construction of a new facility since 2008, and the project is estimated to cost $30 million. It has already secured $12.5 million in state funding and plans to request additional funding during the 2015 state legislative session.

"The New Mexico State Veterans' Home provides top-notch nursing home care for our veterans, and this grant will help with needed updates and an expansion to help better serve elderly and rehabbing patients," Udall said. "As a member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, I am proud to support funding for projects like this to ensure our veterans get the care they have earned. I thank our state legislature for setting aside initial funding for this project, and we ask that state lawmakers provide the full amount so construction can move forward."

"Constructing a new facility at the New Mexico State Veterans' Home will provide our elderly veterans with the best nursing care available," Heinrich said. "This funding ensures that veterans in New Mexico with rehabilitative or disability needs benefit from state-of-the-art inpatient and outpatient services, and a Skilled Nursing Unit. These kinds of investments are critical if we are to

fulfill our nation's promise to those who served. Few sacrifices are as selfless as those our military service men and women make in defense of this nation. We owe our veterans and their loved ones more than a debt of gratitude -- we owe them action in both our words and deeds."

"As the one nursing facility in New Mexico that serves only our veterans and their families, the State Veterans' Home helps New Mexico's heroes that come from every corner of the state," **Luján** said. "Funds for an expansion will enable this important facility to assist more of our brave men and women and give them the care they have earned through their service to our nation. The VA's approval for conditional funding represents another important step toward making the new facility a reality for New Mexico's veterans."

"Veterans and their families deserve every opportunity for quality care and skilled nursing that will help them recover from injuries and live with dignity," **Lujan** Grisham said. "I fully support this investment and urge the VA to ensure that residents at the State Veterans' Home have access to quality programs and qualified staff."

The N.M. State Veterans' Home received notice of the conditional funding approval in late September, and therefore must meet the requirements outlined by the VA by late March for final approval of the $15,614,314 award.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: January 23, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

281 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 22, 2015

NEW MEXICO LAWMAKERS ANNOUNCE $15.6 MILLION EXPANSION FUNDING FOR STATE VETERANS' HOME; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 650 words

WASHINGTON - Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has approved $15.6 million conditional funding for the New Mexico State Veterans' Home in Truth or Consequences to construct a new 59 bed facility. The construction and expansion project includes 39 Alzheimer's beds, a 20 bed Skilled Nursing Unit, a new rehabilitation section for inpatient and outpatient services, and a new pool. The N.M. State Veterans' Home must complete items the VA has outlined as

requirements for final grant award approval within 180 days from the date they received notification of the conditional funding approval.

The conditionally awarded funding is available through the VA's State Home Construction Grant Program, which provides matching grant funds for renovation and construction of state veterans homes and adult day care facilities. The VA matches 65 percent of the project costs, and states fund the remaining 35 percent. The N.M. State Veterans' Home--the only nursing facility in N.M. dedicated specifically to serving veterans and their families--has planned the construction of a new facility since 2008, and the project is estimated to cost $30 million. It has already secured $12.5 million in state funding and plans to request additional funding during the 2015 state legislative session.

"The New Mexico State Veterans' Home provides top-notch nursing home care for our veterans, and this grant will help with needed updates and an expansion to help better serve elderly and rehabbing patients," Udall said. "As a member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, I am proud to support funding for projects like this to ensure our veterans get the care they have earned. I thank our state legislature for setting aside initial funding for this project, and we ask that state lawmakers provide the full amount so construction can move forward."

"Constructing a new facility at the New Mexico State Veterans' Home will provide our elderly veterans with the best nursing care available," Heinrich said. "This funding ensures that veterans in New Mexico with rehabilitative or disability needs benefit from state-of-the-art inpatient and outpatient services, and a Skilled Nursing Unit. These kinds of investments are critical if we are to fulfill our nation's promise to those who served. Few sacrifices are as selfless as those our military service men and women make in defense of this nation. We owe our veterans and their loved ones more than a debt of gratitude -- we owe them action in both our words and deeds."

"As the one nursing facility in New Mexico that serves only our veterans and their families, the State Veterans' Home helps New Mexico's heroes that come from every corner of the state," **Lujan** said. "Funds for an expansion will enable this important facility to assist more of our brave men and women and give them the care they have earned through their service to our nation. The VA's approval for conditional funding represents another important step toward making the new facility a reality for New Mexico's veterans."

"Veterans and their families deserve every opportunity for quality care and skilled nursing that will help them recover from injuries and live with dignity," **Lujan** Grisham said. "I fully support this investment and urge the VA to ensure that residents at the State Veterans' Home have access to quality programs and qualified staff."

The N.M. State Veterans' Home received notice of the conditional funding approval in late September, and therefore must meet the requirements outlined by the VA by late March for final approval of the $15,614,314 award.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/new-mexico-lawmakers-announce-156-million-expansion-funding-for-state-veterans-home/

LOAD-DATE: January 23, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

The Frontrunner

January 22, 2015 Thursday

Van Hollen Tapped To Serve As DCCC Finance Chairman

SECTION: HOUSE CAMPAIGN NEWS

LENGTH: 168 words

On its website, the Washington Post (1/21, O'Keefe, 5.17M) reported that MD8 Rep. Chris Van Hollen, a former two-time chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, "will serve as finance chairman" for the committee "during the 2016 political cycle, according to senior Democratic aides familiar with the plans." NM3 Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, current DCCC chief, "announced Van Hollen's selection Wednesday morning at a meeting of top House Democrats, according to aides."

DCCC Chief **Lujan** Gives $150K To Committee.

On its website, The Hill (1/21, Joseph, 224K) reported that new Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee chief **Ben Ray Lujan** is pressing "his colleagues to meet their fundraising goals early - and is leading by example by plunking down $150,000." The New Mexico Democrat's "transfer is one third of the $450,000 in dues the DCCC chairman was expected to raise last cycle. Dues ranged from $800,000 for top Democratic officials to $125,000 for rank-and-file members during the 2014 cycle."

LOAD-DATE: January 22, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Bulletin News Network, Inc.

US Official News

January 22, 2015 Thursday

Washington: ADDITIONAL SPONSORS -- (House of Representatives - January 21, 2015)

LENGTH: 546 words

DATELINE: Washington

The Library of Congress, The Government of USA has issued the following news release:

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 36: Mr. Austin Scott of Georgia, Mr. Moolenaar, and Mr. Abraham.

H.R. 38: Mr. Weber of Texas.

H.R. 90: Ms. Maxine Waters of California, Mr. O'Rourke, and Mr. Peterson.

H.R. 114: Mr. Griffith.

H.R. 131: Mr. Babin.

H.R. 132: Mr. Carter of Texas, Mr. Brooks of Alabama, Mr. DeSantis, Mr. Yoder, Mr. Forbes, Mr. Goodlatte, and Mr. Crawford.

H.R. 139: Ms. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham of New Mexico.

H.R. 143: Mr. Mullin, Mr. Clawson of Florida, and Mr. Franks of Arizona.

H.R. 146: Mr. Hunter and Mr. Coffman.

H.R. 148: Mr. Duncan of South Carolina.

H.R. 153: Mr. Duncan of South Carolina.

H.R. 154: Mr. Foster, Mr. Nadler, Mr. Loebsack, Mr. Engel, and Ms. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham of New Mexico.

H.R. 159: Mr. Cartwright, Mr. Latta, Mr. Poe of Texas, and Ms. Herrera Beutler.

H.R. 167: Ms. Granger, Mr. Young of Alaska, Mr. Nunnelee, and Mr. Blumenauer.

H.R. 169: Mr. Grothman and Mr. Pocan.

H.R. 173: Mr. Allen.

H.R. 187: Mr. Wittman and Mr. Loebsack.

H.R. 197: Mr. Aguilar and Mr. **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico.

H.R. 199: Mr. Walz and Mr. Pocan.

H.R. 204: Mr. Clawson of Florida and Mr. Ribble.

H.R. 210: Mr. Messer, Mr. Palazzo, Mr. Pittenger, and Mr. Schock.

H.R. 217: Mr. Sensenbrenner, Mr. Forbes, Mr. Fitzpatrick, Mr. Luetkemeyer, Mr. Turner, Mr. Gowdy, Mr. Holding, Mr. Guthrie, Mr. Williams, Mr. Westmoreland, Mr. Shuster, Mr. Moolenaar, Mr. Conaway, Mr. Hudson, and Mr. Long.

H.R. 223: Mr. Huizenga of Michigan.

H.R. 243: Ms. Moore.

H.R. 247: Mr. Cohen.

H.R. 270: Mr. Sessions, Mr. Schock, Mr. Harper, Mr. Kelly of Pennsylvania, and Mrs. Black.

H.R. 275: Mr. Beyer.

H.R. 283: Mr. DeSantis.

H.R. 284: Mr. Forbes and Mr. Emmer.

H.R. 285: Mr. Roskam and Ms. Herrera Beutler.

H.R. 290: Mr. Marino.

H.R. 291: Mr. O'Rourke and Ms. Matsui.

H.R. 333: Mr. Amodei, Ms. Esty, and Mr. Forbes.

H.R. 344: Mr. Aguilar and Mr. Nolan.

H.R. 350: Mr. Frelinghuysen, Mr. Cartwright, Mr. Ribble, Mr. Latta, and Mrs. Davis of California.

H.R. 351: Mr. Mullin.

H.R. 353: Mr. Cramer, Mr. Latta, Mr. Nugent, and Ms. McCollum.

H.R. 357: Mr. Kline and Mr. Royce.

H.R. 367: Mr. O'Rourke.

H.R. 383: Mrs. Hartzler and Mr. Nugent.

H.R. 386: Mr. Pocan.

H.R. 388: Mr. Garamendi and Mr. McGovern.

H.R. 393: Mr. Cartwright.

H.R. 399: Mr. Carter of Georgia, Mr. Jolly, Ms. Granger, and Mr. Long.

H.R. 401: Mr. Wilson of South Carolina, Mr. Byrne, Mr. Cook, Mr. Lamborn, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Pittenger, and Mr. Franks of Arizona.

H.R. 402: Mr. Byrne, Mr. Amodei, Mr. Gosar, Mr. Jordan, Mr. Smith of Missouri, and Mr. Heck of Nevada.

H.R. 403: Ms. Moore, Mr. Farr, Ms. Maxine Waters of California, Mr. Grijalva, Mr. McDermott, Mr. Huffman, Ms. McCollum, and Mr. Walz.

H.R. 414: Mr. King of New York.

H.J. Res. 13: Mr. Yoho.

H.J. Res. 22: Mr. Walz, Mr. Becerra, Mr. Courtney, Ms. Roybal-Allard, and Mr. Huffman.

H. Res. 14: Mr. Conyers, Mr. Grayson, and Mr. Pocan.

H. Res. 34: Ms. Slaughter and Mr. McGovern.

H. Res. 35: Mr. Sensenbrenner.

H. Res. 36: Mr. Hastings, Ms. Brown of Florida, Mr. Diaz-Balart, and Ms. Ros-Lehtinen.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: January 22, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

January 22, 2015 Thursday

New Mexico: Congressman Ben Ray Luján Votes for Legislation to Prevent Veteran Suicides

LENGTH: 480 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Democratic Party has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District applauded the unanimous passage of legislation in the House last night to help prevent suicide among our nation's veterans. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act expands access to mental health services and increases the capacity and efficiency of VA care to address the needs of veterans returning home from war. The bill passed the House last Congress, but did not receive a final vote in the Senate before the end of last session. It was reintroduced this month with **Luján** as a cosponsor.

"I applaud the swift passage of this important legislation after efforts to pass it in the Senate in December fell just short. I hope the Senate will act quickly to send it to the President's desk," **Luján** said. "With an estimated 22 veterans committing suicide every day - more than 8,000 each year, we are facing an epidemic that we cannot ignore. The brave men and women who have sacrificed so much to protect and defend our nation, our values, and our way of life must receive the support they need and have earned. An estimated 600,000 men and women who have served in combat have traumatic brain injury, PTSD, or depression, and we must have the capacity to ensure access to the vital mental health services that can help them heal from the wounds of war. This legislation is an important step forward, and must be part of our continuing effort to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans."

The legislation, which is named in honor of Marine Corporal Clay Hunt, an Iraq and Afghanistan War veteran who was awarded the Purple Heart and dedicated suicide prevention advocate who tragically took his own life, includes a number of provisions to increase access to care. The bill:

Establishes a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning service members with accessing VA mental health care services;
Requires the VA to create a one-stop shot, interactive website to serve as a centralized information source regarding all mental health services to veterans;
Takes steps to address the shortage of mental health care professionals by authorizing the VA to conduct a student loan repayment pilot program aimed at recruiting and retaining psychiatrists;
Requires yearly evaluations, conducted by a third party, of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the DOD and VA to determine what is working and what is not working and to make recommendations to improve care; and

Veterans Service Organizations, including the Military Officers Association of American and Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America have voiced support for the legislation.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutioLondon:

LOAD-DATE: April 30, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

285 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

January 22, 2015 Thursday

Washington: ADDITIONAL SPONSORS -- (House of Representatives - January 21, 2015)

LENGTH: 546 words

DATELINE: Washington

The Library of Congress, The Government of USA has issued the following news release:

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 36: Mr. Austin Scott of Georgia, Mr. Moolenaar, and Mr. Abraham.

H.R. 38: Mr. Weber of Texas.

H.R. 90: Ms. Maxine Waters of California, Mr. O'Rourke, and Mr. Peterson.

H.R. 114: Mr. Griffith.

H.R. 131: Mr. Babin.

H.R. 132: Mr. Carter of Texas, Mr. Brooks of Alabama, Mr. DeSantis, Mr. Yoder, Mr. Forbes, Mr. Goodlatte, and Mr. Crawford.

H.R. 139: Ms. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham of New Mexico.

H.R. 143: Mr. Mullin, Mr. Clawson of Florida, and Mr. Franks of Arizona.

H.R. 146: Mr. Hunter and Mr. Coffman.

H.R. 148: Mr. Duncan of South Carolina.

H.R. 153: Mr. Duncan of South Carolina.

H.R. 154: Mr. Foster, Mr. Nadler, Mr. Loebsack, Mr. Engel, and Ms. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham of New Mexico.

H.R. 159: Mr. Cartwright, Mr. Latta, Mr. Poe of Texas, and Ms. Herrera Beutler.

H.R. 167: Ms. Granger, Mr. Young of Alaska, Mr. Nunnelee, and Mr. Blumenauer.

H.R. 169: Mr. Grothman and Mr. Pocan.

H.R. 173: Mr. Allen.

H.R. 187: Mr. Wittman and Mr. Loebsack.

H.R. 197: Mr. Aguilar and Mr. **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico.

H.R. 199: Mr. Walz and Mr. Pocan.

H.R. 204: Mr. Clawson of Florida and Mr. Ribble.

H.R. 210: Mr. Messer, Mr. Palazzo, Mr. Pittenger, and Mr. Schock.

H.R. 217: Mr. Sensenbrenner, Mr. Forbes, Mr. Fitzpatrick, Mr. Luetkemeyer, Mr. Turner, Mr. Gowdy, Mr. Holding, Mr. Guthrie, Mr. Williams, Mr. Westmoreland, Mr. Shuster, Mr. Moolenaar, Mr. Conaway, Mr. Hudson, and Mr. Long.

H.R. 223: Mr. Huizenga of Michigan.

H.R. 243: Ms. Moore.

H.R. 247: Mr. Cohen.

H.R. 270: Mr. Sessions, Mr. Schock, Mr. Harper, Mr. Kelly of Pennsylvania, and Mrs. Black.

H.R. 275: Mr. Beyer.

H.R. 283: Mr. DeSantis.

H.R. 284: Mr. Forbes and Mr. Emmer.

H.R. 285: Mr. Roskam and Ms. Herrera Beutler.

H.R. 290: Mr. Marino.

H.R. 291: Mr. O'Rourke and Ms. Matsui.

H.R. 333: Mr. Amodei, Ms. Esty, and Mr. Forbes.

H.R. 344: Mr. Aguilar and Mr. Nolan.

H.R. 350: Mr. Frelinghuysen, Mr. Cartwright, Mr. Ribble, Mr. Latta, and Mrs. Davis of California.

H.R. 351: Mr. Mullin.

H.R. 353: Mr. Cramer, Mr. Latta, Mr. Nugent, and Ms. McCollum.

H.R. 357: Mr. Kline and Mr. Royce.

H.R. 367: Mr. O'Rourke.

H.R. 383: Mrs. Hartzler and Mr. Nugent.

H.R. 386: Mr. Pocan.

H.R. 388: Mr. Garamendi and Mr. McGovern.

H.R. 393: Mr. Cartwright.

H.R. 399: Mr. Carter of Georgia, Mr. Jolly, Ms. Granger, and Mr. Long.

H.R. 401: Mr. Wilson of South Carolina, Mr. Byrne, Mr. Cook, Mr. Lamborn, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Pittenger, and Mr. Franks of Arizona.

H.R. 402: Mr. Byrne, Mr. Amodei, Mr. Gosar, Mr. Jordan, Mr. Smith of Missouri, and Mr. Heck of Nevada.

H.R. 403: Ms. Moore, Mr. Farr, Ms. Maxine Waters of California, Mr. Grijalva, Mr. McDermott, Mr. Huffman, Ms. McCollum, and Mr. Walz.

H.R. 414: Mr. King of New York.

H.J. Res. 13: Mr. Yoho.

H.J. Res. 22: Mr. Walz, Mr. Becerra, Mr. Courtney, Ms. Roybal-Allard, and Mr. Huffman.

H. Res. 14: Mr. Conyers, Mr. Grayson, and Mr. Pocan.

H. Res. 34: Ms. Slaughter and Mr. McGovern.

H. Res. 35: Mr. Sensenbrenner.

H. Res. 36: Mr. Hastings, Ms. Brown of Florida, Mr. Diaz-Balart, and Ms. Ros-Lehtinen.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: April 30, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

January 21, 2015 Wednesday

NM Dems like tone, proposals in speech; Pearce sees little sign of compromise

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. A4

LENGTH: 521 words

WASHINGTON - Democrats in New Mexico's congressional delegation cheered President Obama's State of the Union address for the emphasis it put on helping middle class families, but the delegation's lone Republican said the speech unwisely discounted the president's need to work with Republicans who control both chambers of Congress.

"It was a different kind of speech and I felt he was really liberated to speak his mind at this point," said Sen. Tom Udall, a Democrat. "It was big themes based on values that were very inspirational."

Udall said the president's call for free community college and expanded family leave in the workplace were the kinds of proposals that will help New Mexicans who are struggling to get ahead financially.

Rep. Steve Pearce, the delegation's lone Republican, said he was taken aback by the go-it-alone tone of the president's speech, especially considering the drubbing Democrats took in the midterm elections.

"Everything felt unilateral - about him and what he's going to do," Pearce said. "The outreach part of it was simply platitudes. Maybe he didn't watch the last election. People spoke very loudly."

Pearce also said Obama's priorities for using his executive powers versus calling on Congress to pass legislation seemed confused.

"He insisted we pass legislation on cyberwarfare and that's probably the place where he's got the most latitude," Pearce said. "Just go and stop them (cyberterrorists)."

Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., said the speech - tailored to highlight proposals for middle-class Americans - would appeal to hardworking New Mexicans who "don't want a free ride; they want a fair shot and a level playing field." He also said Obama has his work cut out finding areas for potential bipartisan agreement in the Republican-led Congress.

"It's going to be interesting finding out where those places are," Heinrich said. "The president is just going to have to be smart about taking leaders who care about specific things and finding out where

is there a path to a majority. That's going to be the key to success, that and wisely using what executive authority he has."

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, a Democrat and chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, said the president's speech laid out a stark difference in the area of tax policy, with Republicans working to shield the wealthiest Americans from tax hikes at the expense of a middle-class agenda. He also said Obama's call for two years of free community college is important to New Mexico.

"It provides an opportunity to people all over the country," **Luján** said. "They provide an education and they provide training and work with local businesses. They are anchors for local economic opportunity."

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., also applauded the president's focus on middle-class issues: expanded access to child care, the community college proposal and expanded family leave proposals. But she said the president should have said more about his plans to improve Veterans Administration health care.

"We're not seeing the kind of progress I expect and the same kind of rigorous attention that we need," she said.

LOAD-DATE: January 21, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Albuquerque Journal

287 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 21, 2015

LUJAN SPONSORS MEASURES TO OVERTURN CITIZENS UNITED AND INCREASE TRANSPARENCY IN ELECTIONS; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 403 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he is supporting a pair of measures aimed at limiting money in politics by overturning the Citizens United Supreme Court decision and increasing transparency in elections. **Lujan** is a cosponsor of the DISCLOSE Act and the Democracy for All Amendment, which would amend the Constitution.

"Five years ago, Citizens United opened up the floodgates of special-interest money into our political system. Since that time, we've seen the rise of Super PACs that can spend unlimited amounts of money while hiding their donors and preventing the American people from finding the truth behind

where their money comes from," Congressman **Lujan** said. "The legislation I am supporting would increase transparency in our electoral system and restore accountability, while ensuring that a wealthy few do not drown out the voices of the American people."

The DISCLOSE Act increases transparency through four major requirements:

*Enhances public reporting of campaign-related activity by corporations and other outside groups. All corporations, unions, other outside groups, and Super PACs will have to report to the FEC within 24 hours of making a $10,000 campaign expenditure or financial transfer to other groups which can then be used for campaign-related activity.

*Requires corporations and other outside groups to stand by their ads. All leaders of corporations, unions, other outside groups, and Super PACs that make campaign-related ads will have to stand by their ads and say that he or she "approves this message." Top financial contributors have to be disclosed in television and radio advertisements.

*Requires corporations and other outside groups to disclose campaign-related spending to shareholders and organization members.

*Requires lobbyists to disclose campaign-related expenditures in conjunction with their lobbying activities.

The Democracy for All Amendment amends the Constitution to provide Congress and the states with the authority to determine reasonable campaign finance regulations and distinguish between natural persons and corporations or other artificial entities. A companion bill has been introduced in the Senate by Senator Tom Udall of New Mexico.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-sponsors-measures-to-overturn-citizens-united-and-increase-transparency-in-elections/

LOAD-DATE: January 22, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

January 21, 2015 Wednesday

LUJAN SPONSORS MEASURES TO OVERTURN CITIZENS UNITED AND INCREASE TRANSPARENCY IN ELECTIONS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 388 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he is supporting a pair of measures aimed at limiting money in politics by overturning the Citizens United Supreme Court decision and increasing transparency in elections. **Lujan** is a cosponsor of the DISCLOSE Act and the Democracy for All Amendment, which would amend the Constitution.

"Five years ago, Citizens United opened up the floodgates of special-interest money into our political system. Since that time, we've seen the rise of Super PACs that can spend unlimited amounts of money while hiding their donors and preventing the American people from finding the truth behind where their money comes from," Congressman **Lujan** said. "The legislation I am supporting would increase transparency in our electoral system and restore accountability, while ensuring that a wealthy few do not drown out the voices of the American people."

The DISCLOSE Act increases transparency through four major requirements:

" Enhances public reporting of campaign-related activity by corporations and other outside groups. All corporations, unions, other outside groups, and Super PACs will have to report to the FEC within 24 hours of making a $10,000 campaign expenditure or financial transfer to other groups which can then be used for campaign-related activity.

" Requires corporations and other outside groups to stand by their ads. All leaders of corporations, unions, other outside groups, and Super PACs that make campaign-related ads will have to stand by their ads and say that he or she "approves this message." Top financial contributors have to be disclosed in television and radio advertisements.

" Requires corporations and other outside groups to disclose campaign-related spending to shareholders and organization members.

" Requires lobbyists to disclose campaign-related expenditures in conjunction with their lobbying activities.

The Democracy for All Amendment amends the Constitution to provide Congress and the states with the authority to determine reasonable campaign finance regulations and distinguish between natural persons and corporations or other artificial entities. A companion bill has been introduced in the Senate by Senator Tom Udall of New Mexico.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: January 25, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

January 21, 2015 Wednesday 9:59 PM EST

Lujan Sponsors Measures to Overturn Citizens United and Increase Transparency in Elections

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 397 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he is supporting a pair of measures aimed at limiting money in politics by overturning the Citizens United Supreme Court decision and increasing transparency in elections. **Lujan** is a cosponsor of the DISCLOSE Act and the Democracy for All Amendment, which would amend the Constitution.

"Five years ago, Citizens United opened up the floodgates of special-interest money into our political system. Since that time, we've seen the rise of Super PACs that can spend unlimited amounts of money while hiding their donors and preventing the American people from finding the truth behind where their money comes from," Congressman **Lujan** said. "The legislation I am supporting would increase transparency in our electoral system and restore accountability, while ensuring that a wealthy few do not drown out the voices of the American people."

The DISCLOSE Act increases transparency through four major requirements:

* Enhances public reporting of campaign-related activity by corporations and other outside groups. All corporations, unions, other outside groups, and Super PACs will have to report to the FEC within 24 hours of making a $10,000 campaign expenditure or financial transfer to other groups which can then be used for campaign-related activity.

* Requires corporations and other outside groups to stand by their ads. All leaders of corporations, unions, other outside groups, and Super PACs that make campaign-related ads will have to stand by their ads and say that he or she "approves this message." Top financial contributors have to be disclosed in television and radio advertisements.

* Requires corporations and other outside groups to disclose campaign-related spending to shareholders and organization members.

* Requires lobbyists to disclose campaign-related expenditures in conjunction with their lobbying activities.

The Democracy for All Amendment amends the Constitution to provide Congress and the states with the authority to determine reasonable campaign finance regulations and distinguish between natural persons and corporations or other artificial entities. A companion bill has been introduced in the Senate by Senator Tom Udall of New Mexico.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-150122-4999512 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: January 21, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Finance Wire

January 20, 2015 Tuesday

STATE OF THE UNION for January 20, 2015, MSNBC

LENGTH: 8327 words

CHRIS MATTHEWS, MSNBC ANCHOR: Good evening. I'm Chris Matthews. Let's make some noise tonight.

By the way, in a defiant and at times soaring speech tonight, President Obama made his appeal to the American people for the final two years of his presidency. It comes at a time when Americans are feeling more optimistic, obviously, about the State of the Union itself than at any time since the president's been in office. And tonight he told the country the worst of times are behind us.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BARACK OBAMA, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: America, for all that we have endured, for all the grit and the hard work required to come back, for all the tasks that lie ahead, know this. The shadow of crisis has passed and the State of the Union is strong.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: And all night tonight you saw that difference with the vice president jumping up like a Jumping Jack every time the president spoke because he supports him, and the speaker of the House sitting there like a toadstool not moving at all for the most of the president's speech. So that was a way of sort of keeping track of what the partisanship was going on there.

Anyway, the president said the country has come back from the brink.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: In every step, we were told our goals were misguided or too ambitious. And we would crush jobs and explode deficits. Instead we've seen the fastest economic growth in over a decade, our deficits cut by two- thirds, a stock market that has doubled, and health care inflation at its lowest rate in 50 years.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: And maybe not on the level of the new deal as the phrase, the president made his case for what he coined as middle class economics, middle class economics, and outlined a proposed new tax plan that would shift more of the burden to the rich.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: And let's close the loopholes that lead to inequality by allowing the top 1 percent to avoid paying taxes on their accumulated wealth. We can use that money to help more families pay for child care and send their kids to college. We need a tax code that truly helps working Americans trying to get a leg up in the new economy. And we can achieve that together.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: It's also case by the president for more humbled foreign policy. By the way, the very phrase that George W. Bush promised us -- humility in foreign policy -- and never delivered.

Tonight the president touted his new policy with Cuba, his outreach to Iran in terms of trying to avoid them going nuclear. He called on Congress to pass a Use of Force Authorization for the war against ISIS. He called once again for the closing of Gitmo and he means that. And he spent a fair amount of time tonight calling for a renewed effort to combat climate change.

In the end he returned to that speech he gave in Boston. The soaring speech he gave back in 2004 that moved many of us who watched him.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: I want them to grow up in a country that shows the world what we still know to be true. That we are still more than a collection of red states and blue states. That we are the United States of America.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: And what will no doubt be one of the most talked about moments, the president adlib a great retort when Republicans applauded him sarcastically, applauded the notion that this is his last campaign is already over.

Let's watch that little back-and-forth.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: I have no more campaigns to run. My only agenda --

(APPLAUSE)

(LAUGHTER)

OBAMA: I know because I won both of them.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Well, that's how he did. He said yes, I know because I won both of them. And then he turned away -- turned away from the sarcasm making clear it was sarcasm to the Democratic side.

Anyway, joining me right now to assess the politics and the policies tonight, U.S. Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan**, he's from New Mexico. He's chair now of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, responsible for, of course, getting a Democratic Congress elected next time.

We also have U.S. Congressman Charlie Dent of Pennsylvania. And the "Washington Post" columnist, the great Eugene Robinson, who is staying up late with me tonight, an MSNBC political analyst as well.

Congressman **Lujan**, first, what did you make of the president's wonderful little repost there to the Republicans after they sort of sarcastically applauded the fact he ain't running anymore?

REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN** (D), NEW MEXICO: Well, look, I think as the president always does he's very in tune with everything that's being said, Chris. But tonight the president -- the president spoke very clearly to the American people about what we have to do to put the middle class first. He made it abundantly clear that trickle-down economics does not make its way to the middle class and that we need to start working on middle class economics.

That should be front and center. And I think that's what the president was trying to adjust at.

MATTHEWS: Did the president's message tonight sell, do you think, in the country? Will they get excited about minimum wage, about the $3,000 child credit, about community college being free? Those elements do you think -- and sick leave and parental leave, if you will? Will they be selling points for the DCCC as you try to win back Congress?

LUJAN: Chris, it's important to all Americans as we see the economy getting stronger, Wall Street doing better, that the middle class is still feeling the squeeze. All of the programs the president put on the table this evening are targeted at making sure that we're paying attention to what the middle class is feeling. That working families understand what's happening when child care is so expensive that it's out of reach to make it easier for them to get by.

We need to even the playing field and make sure that middle class priorities will be at the front of the table and make sure that that what we're going to be prioritizing.

MATTHEWS: Congressman Debt, what did you make of tonight overall? Do you think it will have an impact in either direction for either party?

REP. CHARLIE DENT (R), PENNSYLVANIA: Well, I thought the speech was actually more of a political statement than a governing agenda. You know, that said I think there are probably a few areas of collaboration we can work with the president on, specifically on trade, transportation, infrastructure. I think those are areas. A long-term transportation bill. I think we could -- I'd like to think we can move forward on that.

I'm a little less optimistic on tax reform. You know, if the president wants to talk about a child tax credit, tripling it, I think it has to be done in the broader complex of a more comprehensive tax reform. So those are a few things that I picked up.

On the authorization of the use of military force, I have to tell you, I was a little bit confused. I thought the president said he was operating under an existing AUMF and now he wants a new one. But if he wants an authorization of force he should come to Congress specifically and tell me us what he wants. I have not yet heard that from the president.

MATTHEWS: Let me go to Gene Robinson then.

See, that is the troubling question, is he has the authority but he wants the authority.

EUGENE ROBINSON, MSNBC ANALYST: Yes, which -- I mean, and you cannot reconcile those two things.

MATTHEWS: Right.

ROBINSON: They do not make sense together. And I got to say, Congressman Dent is right. The president did -- certainly did not lay out for the nation what it is exactly he wants. And if he --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: Well, he said no boots on the ground but he had -- more forces.

ROBINSON: Well, does he really want a resolution that limits very specifically what he can do? I would doubt that he wants that.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

ROBINSON: I would bet he wants something much more open-ended.

MATTHEWS: Yes. Well, anyway, as I mentioned the president returned directly to the themes. The upbeat themes from the speech he gave up in Boston back in 2004. The speech I have to tell, right afterwards I said here's our first African-American president. Right now let's look at that.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: You know, just over a decade ago, I gave a speech in Boston where I said there wasn't a liberal America or a conservative America, a black America or a white America, but a United States of America.

Over the past six years the pundits have pointed out more than once that my presidency hasn't delivered on this vision. How ironic they say that our politics seems more divided than ever.

It's held up as proof not just of my own flaws, of which there are many, but also as proof that the vision itself is misguided, naive. That there are too many people in this town who actually benefit from partisanship and gridlock for us to ever do anything about it.

I know how tempting such cynicism may be. But I still think the cynics are wrong. I still believe that we are one people. I still believe that together we can do great things even when the odds are long.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Let me go to Congressman **Lujan**.

I haven't met you before but I want to ask you about that division issue. And, you know, and for the Hispanic people and what we call Anglo people and African-American people, and white people, if you will. I mean, these distinctions, we've lived with them. And do you think they're getting better? Is the president right? Because he seemed to have once again pushed the button of optimism tonight, positively.

LUJAN: Chris, I'm more optimistic than ever that we truly are the United States of America. And what the president outlying tonight was exactly what that vision is.

I'll tell you. What's concerned me all day long is the rhetoric I've heard from my Republican leadership in saying that middle class tax cuts is a nonstarter.

Look, what better place to find something that we can work on than targeting middle class tax cuts to the middle class where it's going to help them in their pockets. That's something that we should unite on. It's what brings us together as a nation and it's what the middle class deserves today.

MATTHEWS: Let me go to Congressman Dent.

You know, you represent Leigh High Valley. I don't have to tell you that. The most probably pivotal part of the state. I grew up in Pennsylvania. You always know which way to win. Check to Leigh High Valley. So I do want to hear from you about this.

Why can't the Republicans who've always supported highway bills, who's always been for infrastructure, it's good money, it's good jobs, it's construction, it's great? The smell of highway building, and we want that back again. Why can't this -- this Republican Congress get it together on building stuff again instead of just letting it rot?

DENT: Look, Chris, I agree we need to do a long term surface transportation bill, five or six years. And we have to be open to revenue sources here. We have to be very open. All of us on all sides of this

equation. You know, but I'll tell you that when the president said that we need to do a transportation bill on the one hand but then he has a hard time with the Keystone Pipeline infrastructure project.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

DENT: Which has bipartisan support, I mean, I think he has to take that small step. Approve --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: Is there a deal there? Is there a deal there possibly?

DENT: I think so. Look, I think there are plenty of potential agreements. We could use the Keystone Pipeline, he wants the minimum wage, we want to repeal the medical device tax.

MATTHEWS: Exciting.

DENT: I could marry up a few of the ideas and advance something that I think both -- a lot of people in both parties could embrace.

MATTHEWS: Who takes the initiative on that? How's that's happen?

DENT: Well --

MATTHEWS: These deals that I figured sitting there.

DENT: Well, look, on transportation, I would -- I think it would be OK at some point to marry up a long-term surface transportation bill with the Keystone Pipeline. Maybe -- you know, maybe we don't go to $10.10 an hour on the minimum wage but something less than that.

MATTHEWS: Sounds like (INAUDIBLE).

DENT: And tie that to repeal the medical device act which is a job-saving proposal, in my view.

MATTHEWS: You sound like the kind of Republicans I grew up with. Thank you so much for coming on.

DENT: Yes.

MATTHEWS: I mean that positively.

DENT: Thank you.

MATTHEWS: Anyway, the president also made a pitch for higher standards for politics as is practiced in D.C. or not practiced. Let's watch him here.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: I served in Congress with many of you. I know many of you well. There are a lot of good people here on both sides of the aisle. And many of you have told me that this isn't what you signed up for. Arguing past each other on cable shows. The constant fundraising. Always looking over your shoulder at how the base will react to every decision.

Imagine if we broke out of these tired old patterns. Imagine if we did something different.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Well, that's what we try to do every night around here and push for deals. I am the greatest dealmaker. I really --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: It's one thing I believe in. Let's talk about race for a second.

ROBINSON: I --

MATTHEWS: I got to --

ROBINSON: Very quickly.

MATTHEWS: Sure.

ROBINSON: We'll get to race. I actually thought that was the weakest passage in his speech.

MATTHEWS: What is this?

ROBINSON: Because --

MATTHEWS: Beefy as with cable?

ROBINSON: He's not exactly the guy who goes over and hugs the guy. So -- you know, it was a good speech but I thought that was the weaker part of it.

MATTHEWS: Yes. Let me --

ROBINSON: Yes, let's talk about --

MATTHEWS: Let me tell you. Listen. I think -- I think you and I disagree. There's a real dichotomy, I think. I think 70 percent of the country really looks up to the first lady. I mean, I think there's a real acceptance of -- and she truly is African-American. She does come from (INAUDIBLE) background.

ROBINSON: Right.

MATTHEWS: Her parents are -- goes all the way back to slavery. They're the original Americans in many cases in terms of 300, 400 years. And yet you have this regular ragging on the president on race.

ROBINSON: Yes.

MATTHEWS: And I see it -- as somebody wrote it the other day in "New York" magazine. And I said, all these things that certain Republican on the right do, they wouldn't do for a white Democrat. It just -- so how do you reconcile what seems to be the acceptance of the first family by maybe three quarters of the American people as African-Americans? And proof that this isn't a white country. And yet you have this grabble rousing out there against them.

I think both are true.

ROBINSON: Well, both are true. You know, there's something about the fact of the first black president irrespective of the individual, I think, that seems to have intensified some people's feelings about race in general.

MATTHEWS: Yes. I agree.

ROBINSON: And, you know, good, bad, you know, hair on fire. Whatever.

MATTHEWS: What percent? What percent?

ROBINSON: Who knows, Chris? I don't know --

MATTHEWS: Is it 10, 20?

ROBINSON: You know, some days I look at my e-mail, I think it's a high percentage. Some days -- you know.

(LAUGHTER)

MATTHEWS: You get the worst.

ROBINSON: I get the worst. And they're very ugly. I mean, you know, I get ugly, ugly things about the president, about the first lady, about the first family. You know, but-- and I get a lot of deliberately unfair and tendentious criticism that is not overtly racial but --

MATTHEWS: You can tell.

ROBINSON: Is of a tenor and of a tone that I have not seen before, and I've not seen against a white president. So.

MATTHEWS: I think a lot of these people are dying. I think they're older.

ROBINSON: Yes.

MATTHEWS: I think younger people, our kids' age, are so farther ahead on this thing. And we're, I think, better off than our parents.

ROBINSON: Yes.

MATTHEWS: And it's just -- it's just -- in terms of -- I'm talking about white people, I guess. But I mean, it just seems like there's something majestic about that first lady tonight. The way she comes out. And I think there's admiration for that family from three quarters of the people. And I agree that --

ROBINSON: I hope you're right.

MATTHEWS: These people that you keep hearing from.

ROBINSON: Well --

MATTHEWS: You're a magnet for this crap.

(LAUGHTER)

ROBINSON: Because you're a great writer and you write positively about the liberal -- the progressive view of race relations and they just don't like it. I guess.

Anyway, thank you. You know you're right.

Anyway, thank you, Congressman **Lujan**, tonight for joining us.

And Congressman Dent of Pennsylvania. I do mean that about the Leigh High Valley and your brand of Republican as some -- Bill Scranton, Republican, as Eisenhower Republicanism. I grew up with it. And Tom ridge Republicanism. It's not so far off anyway.

Coming up right now we've got the results of an online survey. We'll see what Americans thought of the president's speech tonight.

Plus, it didn't take long for Republicans to declare war on President Obama's agenda led by Senator Joni "the castrator" Ernst. It's been a wild couple of hours for the opposition party as they took to spoil the president's hot hand. Well, they tried.

And this is HARDBALL, a place for politics.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: If we're going to have arguments, let's have arguments, but let's make them debates worthy of this body and worthy of this country.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: Tonight, after a breakthrough year for America, our economy is growing and creating jobs at the fastest pace since 1999.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Well, welcome back -- welcome back to HARDBALL.

The president addressed Congress tonight, of course, on economy. His political fortunes and they're on the rise.

MSNBC's Steve Kornacki is with us now with an early look at how Americans received his speech. This is going to be fascinating. Steve.

STEVE KORNACKI, MSNBC'S "UP WITH STEVE KORNACKI": Yes, so we got some new numbers here. These are fresh numbers from an MSNBC online survey.

Let me just explain quickly what these numbers represent before we get to them and how we got then. We say online survey. You might think well, this is just whoever wants to log on to a site, saying their opinion, and you know not that scientific.

Well, what exactly is this, this is a specific sample of people. This was done in conjunction with Survey Monkey. This is a site where two million people come -- I love the name. Two million people come there and take surveys every day. We had a professional team of pollsters take a sample from Survey Monkey, a smaller sample, then they weighted it for age, for sex, for region, for all sorts of things like that. So it's a little more scientific than your standard online survey.

That said, the margin of error on this is 6.8 percent. That's a little -- you know, on the high than we normally see. So take that into account as I take you through these numbers.

First of all, the bottom line question, what did you make of the speech. Enthusiastic, 28 percent. Satisfied but not enthusiastic, 43 percent. So if you add those together basically 71 percent of the people responding here said they were at least somewhat positive in their reaction to the speech. 21 percent saying they're dissatisfied but not angry and 5 percent say they're outright angry. So, again, 26 percent on the negative side there, 71 percent on the positive side.

That's the bottom line of what we're finding in these numbers. If you look at some of the other stuff we asked about here, is the president focused on the right things by a 2-1 margin, people who watched that speech and responded to it said yes. He is focused on the right things. Is Congress, is the Republican Congress, Republicans, are they focused on the right things? Basically the inverse there, 35 percent saying they are, 61 percent saying they are on the wrong things.

If you ask about Obama's proposals, what he laid out tonight, well, unite or divide the country, a little bit of the majority there saying he would unite the country with that 54-40.

And this is an interesting one, specifically on that tax increase on the wealthy the president is talking about that he'd like to use to benefit the middle class, working class, two different ways of looking at it. Is it a bad idea because -- because the wealthy will help grow the economy? 35 percent saying yes, that's a bad idea because that -- and 63 percent saying no, it's a good idea because the wealthy can afford it.

And again that's consistent with polling we've seen down through the years. That's why this is an issue that so many -- the president himself ran in 2012. Democrats like to run on this. And I think again in laying this out tonight that's something the Democrats may very well be running on in 2016.

MATTHEWS: So just going by your margin of error, 6.8 percent, let's get back to the angry figure. The angry figure is 5 percent.

Could it be that there's less people that exist who are angry?

(LAUGHTER)

KORNACKI: The range I guess is negative 2 to 12.

MATTHEWS: I just wondered. With all these, that's 5 percent are angry and it could be off by 6.8. My god, that's good news for the president. I'm just teasing. Nothing is (INAUDIBLE).

Steve Kornacki, great work tonight.

Anyway, it's been a wild couple of hours since the president's State of the Union. Republicans have exploded into a furry of opposition and some of it has gone off the rails.

Michael Steele is chair of the RNC or was, and Howard Fineman is the global now of this international really effort by the Huffington Post to reach everywhere. Both are MSNBC political analyst.

I haven't had chance to give you a chance to broad brush. You want to start, Michael. This speech, I thought he was up.

MICHAEL STEELE, FORMER RNC CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MATTHEWS: And I think being up is -- like in our business just communicating at night. If you're down, people know that, too. He wasn't tired. He had good sleep. He looks healthy as heck.

STEELE: Yes.

MATTHEWS: He seems happy.

STEELE: He was. And I think because for this president he's feeling freed. He's lifting burdens off of his -- off of his shoulders. He's going to go in --

MATTHEWS: Is this a Janice Joplin kind of freedom?

STEELE: It's a Janice --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: Nothing else to lose?

STEELE: Nothing else to lose. And when you think about it, Chris, it's almost coming full circle from 2008, particularly when he puts in a line about not -- you know, I said at one point this would be a

red, white and blue America. So he'd kind of bringing all that back. And I think the president wants to move into his own space and that includes even on trade issues, for example, he knows going to upset Democrats. OK. Deal with it.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

STEELE: So this will be interesting to watch with the Congress in the Senate. The Republicans, I think, are actually in a good position, too, because now they have an opportunity to actually go out and lay out some articulate --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: Why not these two sides -- OK, I'm back to my old Ronald Reagan- Tip O'Neill jag here. Why don't -- you can see the deals on the table.

STEELE: They're right there.

MATTHEWS: You can see them. Lower the corporate tax rates. Do minimum wage. Do something on infrastructure and do Keystone.

STEELE: Yes.

MATTHEWS: I know it's not purity. But it would move things along, Howard.

HOWARD FINEMAN, MSNBC POLITICAL ANALYST: Yes. And trade.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

FINEMAN: And since I'm now global editorial --

MATTHEWS: Well, you are. You've got to look at the big things. You've got to tow back that lens.

FINEMAN: It's not intergalactic.

MATTHEWS: Next.

FINEMAN: Yes. All the pieces are there. You're right, Chris. It's kind of like a puzzle. They could put all these pieces together. And as you're always saying you don't have to agree on each individual.

MATTHEWS: Right. You trade.

FINEMAN: You trade.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

FINEMAN: And all of the pieces are out there on the table to trade around.

MATTHEWS: Well, who's going to be the guy who calls everybody in and say, let's all sit down for all weekend and work out a deal.

FINEMAN: I don't know. But I would tell you one other thing. The other reason that the president was a happy man tonight is that he was able finally to say in his own mind and to the American people that he had accomplished what he'd been hired to do, which is to bring the economy reasonably back.

MATTHEWS: Talking about that couple.

FINEMAN: Yes.

MATTHEWS: The one who wrote the letters.

FINEMAN: Yes. Now what he'd proposed was a whole lot of things to kind of patch the tire in the sense that yes, we've recovered overall from the recession.

STEELE: Right. Right.

FINEMAN: But a lot -- the wages, real wages haven't increased.

STEELE: McDonald's. That's right.

FINEMAN: Which is why he said, don't worry government is going to help you with that.

STEELE: Right.

MATTHEWS: There's no rocking fiscal policy change.

FINEMAN: No.

MATTHEWS: No rocking foreign policy change.

FINEMAN: No. No, no, no.

MATTHEWS: There was no new deal-ish kind of big picture.

(CROSSTALK)

FINEMAN: This is small points to patch the tire, as I said.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

FINEMAN: And he thinks he's in a position to do that because he did the big thing -- things that he wanted to do in his mind.

MATTHEWS: Well, is that politics?

FINEMAN: The economy and health care and so on.

MATTHEWS: Well, remember, people ceased to say, you and I talked have probably talked about it 20 years ago, we've been together so long. Didn't it come out that after all that Bill Clinton did in terms of big economic growth and all that, the most popular thing he did was that leave thing he did?

FINEMAN: Yes. Family medical leave.

MATTHEWS: I mean, medical leave. That that was the one people -- that's was the one I love.

FINEMAN: That was intensely practical and tangible.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

FINEMAN: And I think that's what he trying to do here. Child care, sick leave, paid vacation, paid sick leave.

STEELE: Community --

FINEMAN: Free community college. You know, those are -- and reduction of interest rates for existing student loans. Those are tangible things that he wants to do and that he knows that poll -- all those things poll very well.

STEELE: They poll well but here is the problem.

FINEMAN: They're not going to pass to Congress.

STEELE: They're not going to pass to Congress because the bill to pay for them has not been clarified yet. And it's not just all going to come out of raising taxes on the wealthy or -- you know, increasing the capital gains tax. So I think to your question, this is where you'll have some Republicans, a John Thune maybe and a Joe Manchin on the Democrat side, who find that sweet spot for Mitch McConnell to go to the president and say we can put together a deal.

I think you're going to see, Chris, the House come along and follow behind Mitch more than people are thinking that Boehner and the House are going to be pushing a lot of agenda by themselves.

MATTHEWS: Why do you think Mitch will be a better dealmaker?

STEELE: Because I think he has a better sense of the ultimate purpose and goal here. He's looking holistically at the party, he's looking more broadly at where the party needs to be to keep the Senate in two years.

FINEMAN: I'll tell you why. Not only that. He's a bridge between the congressional Republican Party.

STEELE: Absolutely.

FINEMAN: Which is more no, no, no, we don't want to do anything and the presidential Republican Party.

MATTHEWS: He wants a president.

FINEMAN: He wants to a president.

STEELE: That's right.

FINEMAN: He wants to be the Republican leader who got a president elected.

MATTHEWS: A quick lightening question. Which party loves the presidency more? Wants it more? Covets it more?

STEELE: Republicans.

MATTHEWS: That's what I think. Don't you agree?

FINEMAN: Yes. But president --

MATTHEWS: They love the executive.

FINEMAN: But President Obama is doing a pretty good job of inhabiting the office right now.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

FINEMAN: And that's significant.

MATTHEWS: He was acting president. Has been for a long time. But I get the feeling Republicans really, really, really want that presidency.

STEELE: The executive leadership means stuff.

MATTHEWS: Yes. Commander-in-chief, too.

STEELE: It means a lot.

MATTHEWS: Anyway, Michael Steele. And thank you, Howard Fineman.

Up next, President Obama once again called for equal pay for women. And if Washington is playing catch-up on women's issues, Hollywood is already there. We're lucky enough to be joined tonight by a star outside our usual political sphere. Golden Globe's recent winner, actress Ruth Wilson from "The Affair." Watch it all the time.

This is HARDBALL. The place for politics and Ruth Davis.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: This Congress still needs to pass a law that makes sure a woman is paid the same as a man for doing the same work.

(APPLAUSE)

I mean, it's 2015. It's time.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: We're back to HARDBALL. That was of course my classic laugh there.

That was the president of course this evening closing the pay gap between men and women. A big issue in the workforce, of course. But if the country is still playing catch-up with culture and where we ought to be in values, Hollywood has made some strides.

Many new shows now on television have featured strong, independent women in key roles including Showtime's latest hit series "The Affair." A show about infidelity in the modern age.

Let's take peek.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DOMINIC WEST, "NOAH SOLLOWAY": What do you if I got my own place?

RUTH WILSON, "ALISON BAILEY": What do you mean?

WEST: Just a studio. I could use a little writing space. Finish my book. You could stay there when you come to town.

WILSON: That sounds good.

WEST: I want to move out. It could be our starter apartment.

WILSON: Move out?

WEST: Yes.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Well, that's story on "Affair" which is a really hot show. It's winning all the awards right now. It tells the complex story of an extramarital affair through the varying perspectives of the two lead players, the realistic on-screen performance of those flawed but undeniably human roles. It

earned the show two Golden Globes the other day including Best Actress for Ruth Wilson who's with me right now.

She plays Alison Lockhart, a resort town waitress who's coping with the loss of her son and finds herself in an emotionally charged albeit messy romance. She's now starring on the Broadway play "Constellation" alongside Jake Gyllenhaal in New York and she joins me right now in New York, right here with me, as well as Frank Bernie, of course a very respected "New York Times" critic.

I never know what he's going to do right now. He's giving me the look.

(LAUGHTER)

You know, I want to talk about this because I really do think movies are always about today.

WILSON: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Every time this movie about "MASH" wasn't about Korea. It was about Vietnam. And everything is always about today. And your shows on television now are serials. They grab you and they hold you. A two-hour movie, that's (INAUDIBLE).

Let's talk about that. Why are we -- why are we in love with the serial idea whether it's, you know, "The Good Wife" which I never miss and your show.

WILSON: I think the habits, it's changing the way people watch narratives and dramas these days. People have bigger TV screens. It's almost like a cinema experience at home. They can watch box sets over of course in their own time -- at their own time.

MATTHEWS: On demand.

WILSON: On demand. So they can watch it in their own convenience -- at their own convenience. And -- so I think that writers, and writers are getting the chance to write novelistic kind of dramas. So the character development over 10 episodes or more.

It's brilliant for actors, writers and directors to have that chance to do that. So that's why I think people are moving, dramas are moving to TV, and where they're becoming more sophisticated.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

WILSON: And the audience are incredibly sophisticated, wanting this material. This desire for it. So I think it's about how habits have changed and viewing habits are changed with box sets and on demand.

MATTHEWS: Frank, you're a -- you know the culture scene. What I'm fascinated with is women characters now are the most interesting by far.

FRANK BERNIE, NEW YORK TIMES: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Certainly Mary Crawley on "Downton Abbey" is the only really truly fascinating person in that show.

BERNIE: You mentioned -- you mentioned "The Good Wife" earlier.

MATTHEWS: Right. Right. Good. Julia Margulies. And almost Joan Fontaine, they are flashbacks to the strong women pictures. You know, Greer Garson back in the '40s. A wartime situation. What are we -- are we getting ready sort of as a country for a woman president?

(LAUGHTER)

I think -- I don't think it's a conspiracy. I just think, look, "State of Affairs."

BERNIE: Right. Right.

MATTHEWS: "Madame Secretary of State." African-American woman is president. You've got of course "Madame Secretary" where Tea Leone plays a very impressive, nice actually, secretary of state.

BERNIE: Right.

MATTHEWS: All women.

BERNIE: Well, I mean, but we've done this for a while. I mean, if memory serves me, there was a show years ago called "Commander-in-Chief" with Gina Davis, was there not? I mean, it didn't last long. It does seem like we have a concentration of them now.

MATTHEWS: Well, they didn't know how to do it then.

BERNIE: Right.

MATTHEWS: Some things are tougher now.

BERNIE: I mean, the concentration of it suggests that some -- in some ways we're getting psychologically ready for it, or at least the entertainment industry is trying to get us there. I hope they're trying to get us there because I think if you look at the number of women in the Senate, in the House of Representatives, it's nowhere near the number of strong female characters we see on TV.

WILSON: Yes.

MATTHEWS: You know, when people get together in D.C., they talk about politics, of course. But they also talk about you. And your show.

WILSON: OK.

MATTHEWS: Yes. By the way, can you switch to American now?

WILSON: No.

MATTHEWS: Why can't you --

(LAUGHTER)

MATTHEWS: When you look at a script -- he says, I'm looking at you and your leading man and every show I think of seems to have an Australian or a British actor.

WILSON: I know.

BERNIE: There's a British actor playing LBJ in "Selma." Right?

WILSON: Yes. I mean, it's almost like -- actually Jake Gyllenhaal, that acted the Brit, or the Americans are very straightforward and up front and they say what they think and they say it with passion and clarity.

MATTHEWS: It makes us boring.

WILSON: Well no. But the Brits yet lie all the time. They repress. They're naturally repressed. So they're keeping all these emotions down. And they say something else but they're hiding everything

else. It sort of makes them seemingly more interesting than they are, but it's just because they're perpetually lying all time.

MATTHEWS: You know --

WILSON: There's that laugh but it's like that idea of, like, we don't -- we're not so honest with our emotion.

MATTHEWS: I think you're the it female actress right now. Actor right now.

WILSON: Thank you.

MATTHEWS: I think you're it. I think there's something going on now. I really do.

WILSON: Thank you.

MATTHEWS: When you win that Golden Globe, you could be getting some big awards this season. It's just something else.

WILSON: Thank you very much.

MATTHEWS: No, really. I think you're great. And I think that this show is great. And I watch it. I do have to say I think Julianna Margulies is unbelievable.

WILSON: She's that.

BERNIE: You should -- I hope you saw Ruth in "Luther."

WILSON: Yes. Do watch "Luther."

BERNIE: Yes, watch "Luther."

WILSON: I play a psychopath.

MATTHEWS: So I need more television. Anyway, thank you. Thank you for coming on.

WILSON: Thank you.

MATTHEWS: It's great to come over. You're on the stage tonight. And here you are.

Frank Bernie, we read you. I read you and sometimes I try to often agree with you.

Up next, President Obama's big night tonight. He's looking to go viral on the heels of tonight's address. He's launching a social media blitz on YouTube. But it's unchartered territory for presidential politics in a massive scale.

You're watching HARDBALL. The place for politics.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: I've served in Congress with many of you. I know many of you well. There are a lot of good people here on both sides of the aisle. And many of you have told me that this isn't what you signed up for. Arguing past each other on cable shows. The constant fund raising. Always looking over your shoulder at how the base will react to every decision.

Imagine if we broke out of these tired old patterns. Imagine if we did something different.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: When we make rash decisions, reacting to the headlines, instead of using our heads, when the first response to a challenge is to send in our military, then we risk getting drawn into unnecessary conflicts. And neglect the broader strategy we need for a safer, more prosperous role.

That's what our enemies want us to do. I believe in a smarter kind of American leadership.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Welcome back to HARDBALL.

President Obama is using social media, of course, and the Internet to reach audiences not reached in a live television address. He'll do an interview with YouTube personalities later this week. And we have the data on Google Searches inspired by his State of the Union address so far.

I'm joined right now by the HARDBALL roundtable tonight. We've got Mike Paul, former aide to former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, and former senator, Alfonse D'Amato. He served both those gentlemen. Lizz Winstead, co-creator of "The Daily Show" and Jonathan Alter, of course, a great historian, a "Daily Beast" columnist and an MSNBC political analyst.

So I'm looking here at the list of topics. Apparently, you know, the Google has put out what the people are looking at tonight. And they're looking at the very topics the president brought up. You know, college, I guess community college, taxes, housing, employment, education, health care, Cuba, economy, immigration and racism.

And Lizz, it seems like people now watch television with their hand doing something else. They're now looking up stuff.

LIZZ WINSTEAD, CO-CREATOR, "THE DAILY SHOW": Yes.

MATTHEWS: And they're going right -- well, we mentioned that. I know some of the earlier Google things I've looked at tonight said people wanted to know where -- what is this, the chamber? Explain where we are, I didn't know that. Who sits behind the president. You know, that kind of information.

WINSTEAD: Well, you know, it makes me think that the president was very broad strokey. And we all watched this and we're really in it, right? But when he does say, you know, a single pipeline, he doesn't say the Keystone Pipeline.

You know, when he talks about -- a trade with China but he doesn't say what it's called, I think that you need to be a little bit more specific with some of these folks who are looking it up because I'd rather have them looking up what are the pros and cons of blank rather than what is blank, right?

MATTHEWS: I love these questions like Alan Gross, the president brought him. You know, he brought him tonight. And you know, here it is. He's sitting next to the president because he was in prison in Cuban, right? So here this person writes, "Why was Alan Gross in prison in Cuba?" I mean, these are pretty basic questions.

WINSTEAD: Right.

MATTHEWS: Was he a spy? What was going on down there?

WINSTEAD: Right.

MATTHEWS: And what is the Cuban embargo? Basic information they want. How do you travel to Cuba? What's a community college? A top question here. How much does community college cost? People want a little more background. Clearly.

JONATHAN ALTER, THE DAILY BEAST: I think the important thing about this speech, some of the lines might be remembered, his tone, which was Churchill-ian when he talked about -- you know, Churchill talked about the broad sunlit up lands.

MATTHEWS: Right.

ALTER: That uplift was extremely important. It will be remembered. But I believe what will be most remembered from this over the next 10 to 15 years is the community college part of it. This is Barack Obama's G.I. bill.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

ALTER: And even though it's not going to get enacted in his term, he will always be credited for it.

MATTHEWS: Who are the people -- give me the picture of who's going to need this.

ALTER: And you've got to understand. Just in terms of new media. So the White House has done these videos every day for six years. Right. The one that was done two weeks ago where the president was on Air Force One talking about free community college was the most watched video of his entire presidency.

MATTHEWS: What was it about?

ALTER: It was outlining his free community college program. There is huge interest in this. In Tennessee which is the prototype where 90 percent of high school kids are going to enroll in this, you know, Tennessee community college program. It was more than double what was expected. There is huge demand for this.

MATTHEWS: Yes, of course. I think it's great.

ALTER: Young Americans know it's the only way they're going to be able to compete in a global economy is if they get that --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: Technical. Technical. It's not going back to photography school. I mean, that stuff. It's learning stuff that you get a job with.

ALTER: Right.

MIKE PAUL, FORMER RUDY GIULIANI AID: It's not just that because community colleges are also known as places where you complete your GED first and then you go onto college work. So I think that's one of the reasons when you're talking about the message that you had before, which is this is an inside the beltway message or is it a message for the layman, to the citizens of our country. That's the kind of answer they want.

You need to know that. There are a lot of people that still have not completed their GED. And they're not just interested to go on community college.

MATTHEWS: No.

PAUL: But you're going to help me to complete two things in one. That's a big deal.

(CROSSTALK)

ALTER: That's an important point.

WINSTEAD: And I would say --

ALTER: Nobody asked how do you pay for it? All the Republicans, well, how they're going to pay for it. They're like this is dead on arrival. It's not going to -- the bill passed unanimously in 1944, the G.I. Bill.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

ALTER: Nobody was saying how we're going to pay for it. They understood this is an investment in the future of the country. We need to do this to have a strong nation. And that's what will be interesting to see whether some of that starts to come through.

MATTHEWS: So this means to a kid, with no money from the parents, working kid from the neighborhoods, from the row houses where I grew up originally, and he now or she now knows, look, worse comes to worse, if I can get enough money just to live on, I can go to college.

WINSTEAD: Yes.

PAUL: And I can finish my high school degree, many of them are saying, and I have a lot of guilt and shame surrounding that that many of them have not finished. They might be a little older as well.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

PAUL: They're not 18 years old and going and completing by 20, for example. They might be 19, 20, 25 some of them. And they're going to finish that GED and they're going to continue and get a college degree.

MATTHEWS: And also, from both ends, macro and micro economics, macro, we need a work force. We need trained people.

PAUL: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Who can handle -- you know, like those guys, mostly guys who worked like Euro Motors and fix Mercedes. They're making a lot of money.

WINSTEAD: Yes.

MATTHEWS: And that job needs to get done.

ALTER: So other than Tennessee, Chicago is the other prototype for this. And what Rahm Emanuel did there is he blew up the old community college system. He got 70 local big employers. They took over the curriculums of these schools. One of them is IT. One of them is hospitality. One of them is health care. One of them is advanced manufacturing. And they're actually training kids for the jobs that they need.

The problem is the dropouts are off the charts. So it's like 75 percent dropout nationally. So for these schools to get the money, they have to have programs that get these kids to graduate.

MATTHEWS: All these folks are staying with us. More on this historic night.

I want to get their assessment personally on what they think is going to last from this speech. What's the impact going to be.

But the president clearly had the wind at his back tonight. And I think that Jonathan had it right. There was a tone tonight that was really more optimistic than we've seen in this whole presidency.

This is HARDBALL. Of course the place for politics.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: And everyone in this Congress who still refuses to raise the minimum wage, I say this. If you truly believe you can work full time and support a family on less than $15,000 a year, try it. If not, vote to give millions of the hardest working people in America a raise.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: I have no more campaigns to run. My only agenda --

(APPLAUSE)

(LAUGHTER)

OBAMA: I know because I won both of them.

(APPLAUSE)

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: We're back with the HARDBALL roundtable, Mike, Lizz and Jonathan. And a final question.

I've got to ask you this because you're in show business here. Did you see the combination of what he threw there? First of all, he retorts with a great -- you know, adlib, puts them down. And he does it like he put his spirit and looked away. Like complete insolence in a way.

That was a little cold. I think he (INAUDIBLE). That was a little cold. And then he comes back with that incredible, irresistible smile.

WINSTEAD: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Remember that he can bring on when he wants to?

WINSTEAD: Yes.

MATTHEWS: There was a lot of action there from him in terms of drama, I thought.

WINSTEAD: I -- there is no bigger sign of confidence than silence and reaction. You know, when you can, you feel you might have done something wrong, you take a moment, you give a smile and you take it in because you know you're winning. Like that's when you know you're winning.

MATTHEWS: Control the signs. I agree with you.

WINSTEAD: Absolutely.

MATTHEWS: Jonathan, historically, you're the big picture guy here, I think, it's fair to say. The president, will this matter? Two weeks from now, three weeks from now?

ALTER: Not a huge amount. But there are a couple of interesting things.

MATTHEWS: I mean, you're sunny up. Will they still be sunny two weeks from now?

(LAUGHTER)

ALTER: It's important that he's not going into the last two years of his presidency on the defensive. He is going to enjoy it and the American public wants their president to be sunny and enjoying the job. And in the last couple of years, there were doubts about whether he liked the job. So he's sending a signal on that. And this was the real Obama who both, you know, trash talks a little bit. That's what he's like in private.

And also he has been really concerned about the original promise in Boston in 2004 that we're going to get beyond red state and blue state America. And this defense tonight --

MATTHEWS: Double down.

ALTER: Of what he called a better politics. He really wants to keep people focused on we can do better. We can have a better politics. We can have a functional Washington. That's his big message going into the last couple of years.

PAUL: You know, but the problem with that is the Republicans are weighted, right now, starting tomorrow, first thing in the morning. And they're going to start pounding him, pounding him, with messages of it doesn't touch the heart. It doesn't touch your pocket. There was a glow around the message tonight in my opinion. I think when he was in his campaign there was beyond glow. There was promise. And there was hope.

I don't think people are feeling that strong attachment emotionally to the message tonight that's going to last beyond the punches that are going to come. Because if we were able, for example, to talk about, yes, I feel it in my pocketbook, I feel it in my family, my job is a little bit better. I don't really have to worry about the stress around health care.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

PAUL: And what it costs, and if someone's going to get hurt. Those are things that are emotions and in politics, as you know, where --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: OK. Lizz.

PAUL: From intellectual perspective.

MATTHEWS: Close it down, Lizz. Last words.

WINSTEAD: You see, what I think is he did something that was very brave when he was elected and that is make plans that take a long time in a country that has learned to put a pie in the microwave rather than cook it, bake it, watch it and see it come to fruition. And now he is seeing that pie come out of the oven, with the economy, with health care being successful. And he can take a breath and with gas prices down he is like this is what I was talking about.

And he gets to do that. So he gets to make big plans and talk about community college and bigger things. And I think that when the economy does great, and now the Republicans have come and punch hard, why do you want to cut -- why do you want tax us? They're going to say, you know what, we need to share in that.

MATTHEWS: Well, they're all views that are going to matter in the next couple of weeks.

So I want to thank our roundtable, of course, Mike Paul, Lizz Winstead and Jonathan Alter.

When we return our coverage continues with a replay of President Obama's full State of the Union address. You can watch that right here coming up.

You're watching MSNBC, the place for politics.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED. END

[Copy: Content and programming copyright 2015 MSNBC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. Copyright 2015 CQ-Roll Call, Inc. All materials herein are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of CQ-Roll Call. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.]

LOAD-DATE: January 23, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 66533

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

JOURNAL-CODE: FNCW

Copyright 2015 ProQuest Information and Learning
All Rights Reserved
Copyright 2015 MSNBC

291 of 500 DOCUMENTS

MSNBC

January 20, 2015 Tuesday

SHOW: MSNBC SPECIAL 12:00 AM EST

STATE OF THE UNION for January 20, 2015

BYLINE: Chris Matthews, Steve Kornacki

GUESTS: **Ben Ray Lujan,** Charlie Dent, Eugene Robinson, Michael Steele, Howard Fineman, Ruth Wilson, Frank Bernie; Lizz Winstead, Jonathan Alter, Mike Paul

SECTION: NEWS; Domestic

LENGTH: 8243 words

HIGHLIGHT: President Barack Obama delivered his State of the Union address amidst Republican-controlled Congress and Senate.

CHRIS MATTHEWS, MSNBC ANCHOR: Good evening. I`m Chris Matthews. Let`s make some noise tonight.

By the way, in a defiant and at times soaring speech tonight, President Obama made his appeal to the American people for the final two years of his presidency. It comes at a time when Americans are feeling more optimistic, obviously, about the State of the Union itself than at any time since the president`s been in office. And tonight he told the country the worst of times are behind us.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BARACK OBAMA, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: America, for all that we have endured, for all the grit and the hard work required to come back, for all the tasks that lie ahead, know this. The shadow of crisis has passed and the State of the Union is strong.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: And all night tonight you saw that difference with the vice president jumping up like a Jumping Jack every time the president spoke because he supports him, and the speaker of the House sitting there like a toadstool not moving at all for the most of the president`s speech. So that was a way of sort of keeping track of what the partisanship was going on there.

Anyway, the president said the country has come back from the brink.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: In every step, we were told our goals were misguided or too ambitious. And we would crush jobs and explode deficits. Instead we`ve seen the fastest economic growth in over a decade, our deficits cut by two- thirds, a stock market that has doubled, and health care inflation at its lowest rate in 50 years.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: And maybe not on the level of the new deal as the phrase, the president made his case for what he coined as middle class economics, middle class economics, and outlined a proposed new tax plan that would shift more of the burden to the rich.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: And let`s close the loopholes that lead to inequality by allowing the top 1 percent to avoid paying taxes on their accumulated wealth. We can use that money to help more families pay for child care and send their kids to college. We need a tax code that truly helps working Americans trying to get a leg up in the new economy. And we can achieve that together.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: It`s also case by the president for more humbled foreign policy. By the way, the very phrase that George W. Bush promised us -- humility in foreign policy -- and never delivered.

Tonight the president touted his new policy with Cuba, his outreach to Iran in terms of trying to avoid them going nuclear. He called on Congress to pass a Use of Force Authorization for the war against ISIS. He called once again for the closing of Gitmo and he means that. And he spent a fair amount of time tonight calling for a renewed effort to combat climate change.

In the end he returned to that speech he gave in Boston. The soaring speech he gave back in 2004 that moved many of us who watched him.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: I want them to grow up in a country that shows the world what we still know to be true. That we are still more than a collection of red states and blue states. That we are the United States of America.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: And what will no doubt be one of the most talked about moments, the president adlib a great retort when Republicans applauded him sarcastically, applauded the notion that this is his last campaign is already over.

Let`s watch that little back-and-forth.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: I have no more campaigns to run. My only agenda --

(APPLAUSE)

(LAUGHTER)

OBAMA: I know because I won both of them.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Well, that`s how he did. He said yes, I know because I won both of them. And then he turned away -- turned away from the sarcasm making clear it was sarcasm to the Democratic side.

Anyway, joining me right now to assess the politics and the policies tonight, U.S. Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan**, he`s from New Mexico. He`s chair now of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, responsible for, of course, getting a Democratic Congress elected next time.

We also have U.S. Congressman Charlie Dent of Pennsylvania. And the "Washington Post" columnist, the great Eugene Robinson, who is staying up late with me tonight, an MSNBC political analyst as well.

Congressman **Lujan**, first, what did you make of the president`s wonderful little repost there to the Republicans after they sort of sarcastically applauded the fact he ain`t running anymore?

REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN** (D), NEW MEXICO: Well, look, I think as the president always does he`s very in tune with everything that`s being said, Chris. But tonight the president -- the president spoke very clearly to the American people about what we have to do to put the middle class first. He made it abundantly clear that trickle-down economics does not make its way to the middle class and that we need to start working on middle class economics.

That should be front and center. And I think that`s what the president was trying to adjust at.

MATTHEWS: Did the president`s message tonight sell, do you think, in the country? Will they get excited about minimum wage, about the $3,000 child credit, about community college being free? Those elements do you think -- and sick leave and parental leave, if you will? Will they be selling points for the DCCC as you try to win back Congress?

LUJAN: Chris, it`s important to all Americans as we see the economy getting stronger, Wall Street doing better, that the middle class is still feeling the squeeze. All of the programs the president put on the table this evening are targeted at making sure that we`re paying attention to what the middle class is feeling. That working families understand what`s happening when child care is so expensive that it`s out of reach to make it easier for them to get by.

We need to even the playing field and make sure that middle class priorities will be at the front of the table and make sure that that what we`re going to be prioritizing.

MATTHEWS: Congressman Debt, what did you make of tonight overall? Do you think it will have an impact in either direction for either party?

REP. CHARLIE DENT (R), PENNSYLVANIA: Well, I thought the speech was actually more of a political statement than a governing agenda. You know, that said I think there are probably a few areas of collaboration we can work with the president on, specifically on trade, transportation, infrastructure. I think those are areas. A long-term transportation bill. I think we could -- I`d like to think we can move forward on that.

I`m a little less optimistic on tax reform. You know, if the president wants to talk about a child tax credit, tripling it, I think it has to be done in the broader complex of a more comprehensive tax reform. So those are a few things that I picked up.

On the authorization of the use of military force, I have to tell you, I was a little bit confused. I thought the president said he was operating under an existing AUMF and now he wants a new one. But if he wants an authorization of force he should come to Congress specifically and tell me us what he wants. I have not yet heard that from the president.

MATTHEWS: Let me go to Gene Robinson then.

See, that is the troubling question, is he has the authority but he wants the authority.

EUGENE ROBINSON, MSNBC ANALYST: Yes, which -- I mean, and you cannot reconcile those two things.

MATTHEWS: Right.

ROBINSON: They do not make sense together. And I got to say, Congressman Dent is right. The president did -- certainly did not lay out for the nation what it is exactly he wants. And if he --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: Well, he said no boots on the ground but he had -- more forces.

ROBINSON: Well, does he really want a resolution that limits very specifically what he can do? I would doubt that he wants that.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

ROBINSON: I would bet he wants something much more open-ended.

MATTHEWS: Yes. Well, anyway, as I mentioned the president returned directly to the themes. The upbeat themes from the speech he gave up in Boston back in 2004. The speech I have to tell, right afterwards I said here`s our first African-American president. Right now let`s look at that.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: You know, just over a decade ago, I gave a speech in Boston where I said there wasn`t a liberal America or a conservative America, a black America or a white America, but a United States of America.

Over the past six years the pundits have pointed out more than once that my presidency hasn`t delivered on this vision. How ironic they say that our politics seems more divided than ever.

It`s held up as proof not just of my own flaws, of which there are many, but also as proof that the vision itself is misguided, naive. That there are too many people in this town who actually benefit from partisanship and gridlock for us to ever do anything about it.

I know how tempting such cynicism may be. But I still think the cynics are wrong. I still believe that we are one people. I still believe that together we can do great things even when the odds are long.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Let me go to Congressman **Lujan**.

I haven`t met you before but I want to ask you about that division issue. And, you know, and for the Hispanic people and what we call Anglo people and African-American people, and white people, if you will. I mean, these distinctions, we`ve lived with them. And do you think they`re getting better? Is the president right? Because he seemed to have once again pushed the button of optimism tonight, positively.

LUJAN: Chris, I`m more optimistic than ever that we truly are the United States of America. And what the president outlying tonight was exactly what that vision is.

I`ll tell you. What`s concerned me all day long is the rhetoric I`ve heard from my Republican leadership in saying that middle class tax cuts is a nonstarter.

Look, what better place to find something that we can work on than targeting middle class tax cuts to the middle class where it`s going to help them in their pockets. That`s something that we should unite on. It`s what brings us together as a nation and it`s what the middle class deserves today.

MATTHEWS: Let me go to Congressman Dent.

You know, you represent Leigh High Valley. I don`t have to tell you that. The most probably pivotal part of the state. I grew up in Pennsylvania. You always know which way to win. Check to Leigh High Valley. So I do want to hear from you about this.

Why can`t the Republicans who`ve always supported highway bills, who`s always been for infrastructure, it`s good money, it`s good jobs, it`s construction, it`s great? The smell of highway building, and we want that back again. Why can`t this -- this Republican Congress get it together on building stuff again instead of just letting it rot?

DENT: Look, Chris, I agree we need to do a long term surface transportation bill, five or six years. And we have to be open to revenue sources here. We have to be very open. All of us on all sides of this equation. You know, but I`ll tell you that when the president said that we need to do a transportation bill on the one hand but then he has a hard time with the Keystone Pipeline infrastructure project.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

DENT: Which has bipartisan support, I mean, I think he has to take that small step. Approve --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: Is there a deal there? Is there a deal there possibly?

DENT: I think so. Look, I think there are plenty of potential agreements. We could use the Keystone Pipeline, he wants the minimum wage, we want to repeal the medical device tax.

MATTHEWS: Exciting.

DENT: I could marry up a few of the ideas and advance something that I think both -- a lot of people in both parties could embrace.

MATTHEWS: Who takes the initiative on that? How`s that`s happen?

DENT: Well --

MATTHEWS: These deals that I figured sitting there.

DENT: Well, look, on transportation, I would -- I think it would be OK at some point to marry up a long-term surface transportation bill with the Keystone Pipeline. Maybe -- you know, maybe we don`t go to $10.10 an hour on the minimum wage but something less than that.

MATTHEWS: Sounds like (INAUDIBLE).

DENT: And tie that to repeal the medical device act which is a job-saving proposal, in my view.

MATTHEWS: You sound like the kind of Republicans I grew up with. Thank you so much for coming on.

DENT: Yes.

MATTHEWS: I mean that positively.

DENT: Thank you.

MATTHEWS: Anyway, the president also made a pitch for higher standards for politics as is practiced in D.C. or not practiced. Let`s watch him here.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: I served in Congress with many of you. I know many of you well. There are a lot of good people here on both sides of the aisle. And many of you have told me that this isn`t what you signed up for. Arguing past each other on cable shows. The constant fundraising. Always looking over your shoulder at how the base will react to every decision.

Imagine if we broke out of these tired old patterns. Imagine if we did something different.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Well, that`s what we try to do every night around here and push for deals. I am the greatest dealmaker. I really --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: It`s one thing I believe in. Let`s talk about race for a second.

ROBINSON: I --

MATTHEWS: I got to --

ROBINSON: Very quickly.

MATTHEWS: Sure.

ROBINSON: We`ll get to race. I actually thought that was the weakest passage in his speech.

MATTHEWS: What is this?

ROBINSON: Because --

MATTHEWS: Beefy as with cable?

ROBINSON: He`s not exactly the guy who goes over and hugs the guy. So -- you know, it was a good speech but I thought that was the weaker part of it.

MATTHEWS: Yes. Let me --

ROBINSON: Yes, let`s talk about --

MATTHEWS: Let me tell you. Listen. I think -- I think you and I disagree. There`s a real dichotomy, I think. I think 70 percent of the country really looks up to the first lady. I mean, I think there`s a real acceptance of -- and she truly is African-American. She does come from (INAUDIBLE) background.

ROBINSON: Right.

MATTHEWS: Her parents are -- goes all the way back to slavery. They`re the original Americans in many cases in terms of 300, 400 years. And yet you have this regular ragging on the president on race.

ROBINSON: Yes.

MATTHEWS: And I see it -- as somebody wrote it the other day in "New York" magazine. And I said, all these things that certain Republican on the right do, they wouldn`t do for a white Democrat. It just -- so how do you reconcile what seems to be the acceptance of the first family by maybe three quarters of the American people as African-Americans? And proof that this isn`t a white country. And yet you have this grabble rousing out there against them.

I think both are true.

ROBINSON: Well, both are true. You know, there`s something about the fact of the first black president irrespective of the individual, I think, that seems to have intensified some people`s feelings about race in general.

MATTHEWS: Yes. I agree.

ROBINSON: And, you know, good, bad, you know, hair on fire. Whatever.

MATTHEWS: What percent? What percent?

ROBINSON: Who knows, Chris? I don`t know --

MATTHEWS: Is it 10, 20?

ROBINSON: You know, some days I look at my e-mail, I think it`s a high percentage. Some days -- you know.

(LAUGHTER)

MATTHEWS: You get the worst.

ROBINSON: I get the worst. And they`re very ugly. I mean, you know, I get ugly, ugly things about the president, about the first lady, about the first family. You know, but-- and I get a lot of deliberately unfair and tendentious criticism that is not overtly racial but --

MATTHEWS: You can tell.

ROBINSON: Is of a tenor and of a tone that I have not seen before, and I`ve not seen against a white president. So.

MATTHEWS: I think a lot of these people are dying. I think they`re older.

ROBINSON: Yes.

MATTHEWS: I think younger people, our kids` age, are so farther ahead on this thing. And we`re, I think, better off than our parents.

ROBINSON: Yes.

MATTHEWS: And it`s just -- it`s just -- in terms of -- I`m talking about white people, I guess. But I mean, it just seems like there`s something majestic about that first lady tonight. The way she comes out. And I think there`s admiration for that family from three quarters of the people. And I agree that --

ROBINSON: I hope you`re right.

MATTHEWS: These people that you keep hearing from.

ROBINSON: Well --

MATTHEWS: You`re a magnet for this crap.

(LAUGHTER)

ROBINSON: Because you`re a great writer and you write positively about the liberal -- the progressive view of race relations and they just don`t like it. I guess.

Anyway, thank you. You know you`re right.

Anyway, thank you, Congressman **Lujan**, tonight for joining us.

And Congressman Dent of Pennsylvania. I do mean that about the Leigh High Valley and your brand of Republican as some -- Bill Scranton, Republican, as Eisenhower Republicanism. I grew up with it. And Tom ridge Republicanism. It`s not so far off anyway.

Coming up right now we`ve got the results of an online survey. We`ll see what Americans thought of the president`s speech tonight.

Plus, it didn`t take long for Republicans to declare war on President Obama`s agenda led by Senator Joni "the castrator" Ernst. It`s been a wild couple of hours for the opposition party as they took to spoil the president`s hot hand. Well, they tried.

And this is HARDBALL, a place for politics.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: If we`re going to have arguments, let`s have arguments, but let`s make them debates worthy of this body and worthy of this country.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: Tonight, after a breakthrough year for America, our economy is growing and creating jobs at the fastest pace since 1999.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Well, welcome back -- welcome back to HARDBALL.

The president addressed Congress tonight, of course, on economy. His political fortunes and they`re on the rise.

MSNBC`s Steve Kornacki is with us now with an early look at how Americans received his speech. This is going to be fascinating. Steve.

STEVE KORNACKI, MSNBC`S "UP WITH STEVE KORNACKI": Yes, so we got some new numbers here. These are fresh numbers from an MSNBC online survey.

Let me just explain quickly what these numbers represent before we get to them and how we got then. We say online survey. You might think well, this is just whoever wants to log on to a site, saying their opinion, and you know not that scientific.

Well, what exactly is this, this is a specific sample of people. This was done in conjunction with Survey Monkey. This is a site where two million people come -- I love the name. Two million people come there and take surveys every day. We had a professional team of pollsters take a sample from Survey Monkey, a smaller sample, then they weighted it for age, for sex, for region, for all sorts of things like that. So it`s a little more scientific than your standard online survey.

That said, the margin of error on this is 6.8 percent. That`s a little -- you know, on the high than we normally see. So take that into account as I take you through these numbers.

First of all, the bottom line question, what did you make of the speech. Enthusiastic, 28 percent. Satisfied but not enthusiastic, 43 percent. So if you add those together basically 71 percent of the people responding here said they were at least somewhat positive in their reaction to the speech. 21 percent saying they`re dissatisfied but not angry and 5 percent say they`re outright angry. So, again, 26 percent on the negative side there, 71 percent on the positive side.

That`s the bottom line of what we`re finding in these numbers. If you look at some of the other stuff we asked about here, is the president focused on the right things by a 2-1 margin, people who watched that speech and responded to it said yes. He is focused on the right things. Is Congress, is the Republican Congress, Republicans, are they focused on the right things? Basically the inverse there, 35 percent saying they are, 61 percent saying they are on the wrong things.

If you ask about Obama`s proposals, what he laid out tonight, well, unite or divide the country, a little bit of the majority there saying he would unite the country with that 54-40.

And this is an interesting one, specifically on that tax increase on the wealthy the president is talking about that he`d like to use to benefit the middle class, working class, two different ways of looking at it. Is it a bad idea because -- because the wealthy will help grow the economy? 35 percent saying yes, that`s a bad idea because that -- and 63 percent saying no, it`s a good idea because the wealthy can afford it.

And again that`s consistent with polling we`ve seen down through the years. That`s why this is an issue that so many -- the president himself ran in 2012. Democrats like to run on this. And I think again in laying this out tonight that`s something the Democrats may very well be running on in 2016.

MATTHEWS: So just going by your margin of error, 6.8 percent, let`s get back to the angry figure. The angry figure is 5 percent.

Could it be that there`s less people that exist who are angry?

(LAUGHTER)

KORNACKI: The range I guess is negative 2 to 12.

MATTHEWS: I just wondered. With all these, that`s 5 percent are angry and it could be off by 6.8. My god, that`s good news for the president. I`m just teasing. Nothing is (INAUDIBLE).

Steve Kornacki, great work tonight.

Anyway, it`s been a wild couple of hours since the president`s State of the Union. Republicans have exploded into a furry of opposition and some of it has gone off the rails.

Michael Steele is chair of the RNC or was, and Howard Fineman is the global now of this international really effort by the Huffington Post to reach everywhere. Both are MSNBC political analyst.

I haven`t had chance to give you a chance to broad brush. You want to start, Michael. This speech, I thought he was up.

MICHAEL STEELE, FORMER RNC CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MATTHEWS: And I think being up is -- like in our business just communicating at night. If you`re down, people know that, too. He wasn`t tired. He had good sleep. He looks healthy as heck.

STEELE: Yes.

MATTHEWS: He seems happy.

STEELE: He was. And I think because for this president he`s feeling freed. He`s lifting burdens off of his -- off of his shoulders. He`s going to go in --

MATTHEWS: Is this a Janice Joplin kind of freedom?

STEELE: It`s a Janice --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: Nothing else to lose?

STEELE: Nothing else to lose. And when you think about it, Chris, it`s almost coming full circle from 2008, particularly when he puts in a line about not -- you know, I said at one point this would be a red, white and blue America. So he`d kind of bringing all that back. And I think the president wants to move into his own space and that includes even on trade issues, for example, he knows going to upset Democrats. OK. Deal with it.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

STEELE: So this will be interesting to watch with the Congress in the Senate. The Republicans, I think, are actually in a good position, too, because now they have an opportunity to actually go out and lay out some articulate --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: Why not these two sides -- OK, I`m back to my old Ronald Reagan- Tip O`Neill jag here. Why don`t -- you can see the deals on the table.

STEELE: They`re right there.

MATTHEWS: You can see them. Lower the corporate tax rates. Do minimum wage. Do something on infrastructure and do Keystone.

STEELE: Yes.

MATTHEWS: I know it`s not purity. But it would move things along, Howard.

HOWARD FINEMAN, MSNBC POLITICAL ANALYST: Yes. And trade.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

FINEMAN: And since I`m now global editorial --

MATTHEWS: Well, you are. You`ve got to look at the big things. You`ve got to tow back that lens.

FINEMAN: It`s not intergalactic.

MATTHEWS: Next.

FINEMAN: Yes. All the pieces are there. You`re right, Chris. It`s kind of like a puzzle. They could put all these pieces together. And as you`re always saying you don`t have to agree on each individual.

MATTHEWS: Right. You trade.

FINEMAN: You trade.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

FINEMAN: And all of the pieces are out there on the table to trade around.

MATTHEWS: Well, who`s going to be the guy who calls everybody in and say, let`s all sit down for all weekend and work out a deal.

FINEMAN: I don`t know. But I would tell you one other thing. The other reason that the president was a happy man tonight is that he was able finally to say in his own mind and to the American people that he had accomplished what he`d been hired to do, which is to bring the economy reasonably back.

MATTHEWS: Talking about that couple.

FINEMAN: Yes.

MATTHEWS: The one who wrote the letters.

FINEMAN: Yes. Now what he`d proposed was a whole lot of things to kind of patch the tire in the sense that yes, we`ve recovered overall from the recession.

STEELE: Right. Right.

FINEMAN: But a lot -- the wages, real wages haven`t increased.

STEELE: McDonald`s. That`s right.

FINEMAN: Which is why he said, don`t worry government is going to help you with that.

STEELE: Right.

MATTHEWS: There`s no rocking fiscal policy change.

FINEMAN: No.

MATTHEWS: No rocking foreign policy change.

FINEMAN: No. No, no, no.

MATTHEWS: There was no new deal-ish kind of big picture.

(CROSSTALK)

FINEMAN: This is small points to patch the tire, as I said.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

FINEMAN: And he thinks he`s in a position to do that because he did the big thing -- things that he wanted to do in his mind.

MATTHEWS: Well, is that politics?

FINEMAN: The economy and health care and so on.

MATTHEWS: Well, remember, people ceased to say, you and I talked have probably talked about it 20 years ago, we`ve been together so long. Didn`t it come out that after all that Bill Clinton did in terms of big economic growth and all that, the most popular thing he did was that leave thing he did?

FINEMAN: Yes. Family medical leave.

MATTHEWS: I mean, medical leave. That that was the one people -- that`s was the one I love.

FINEMAN: That was intensely practical and tangible.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

FINEMAN: And I think that`s what he trying to do here. Child care, sick leave, paid vacation, paid sick leave.

STEELE: Community --

FINEMAN: Free community college. You know, those are -- and reduction of interest rates for existing student loans. Those are tangible things that he wants to do and that he knows that poll -- all those things poll very well.

STEELE: They poll well but here is the problem.

FINEMAN: They`re not going to pass to Congress.

STEELE: They`re not going to pass to Congress because the bill to pay for them has not been clarified yet. And it`s not just all going to come out of raising taxes on the wealthy or -- you know, increasing the capital gains tax. So I think to your question, this is where you`ll have some Republicans, a John Thune maybe and a Joe Manchin on the Democrat side, who find that sweet spot for Mitch McConnell to go to the president and say we can put together a deal.

I think you`re going to see, Chris, the House come along and follow behind Mitch more than people are thinking that Boehner and the House are going to be pushing a lot of agenda by themselves.

MATTHEWS: Why do you think Mitch will be a better dealmaker?

STEELE: Because I think he has a better sense of the ultimate purpose and goal here. He`s looking holistically at the party, he`s looking more broadly at where the party needs to be to keep the Senate in two years.

FINEMAN: I`ll tell you why. Not only that. He`s a bridge between the congressional Republican Party.

STEELE: Absolutely.

FINEMAN: Which is more no, no, no, we don`t want to do anything and the presidential Republican Party.

MATTHEWS: He wants a president.

FINEMAN: He wants to a president.

STEELE: That`s right.

FINEMAN: He wants to be the Republican leader who got a president elected.

MATTHEWS: A quick lightening question. Which party loves the presidency more? Wants it more? Covets it more?

STEELE: Republicans.

MATTHEWS: That`s what I think. Don`t you agree?

FINEMAN: Yes. But president --

MATTHEWS: They love the executive.

FINEMAN: But President Obama is doing a pretty good job of inhabiting the office right now.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

FINEMAN: And that`s significant.

MATTHEWS: He was acting president. Has been for a long time. But I get the feeling Republicans really, really, really want that presidency.

STEELE: The executive leadership means stuff.

MATTHEWS: Yes. Commander-in-chief, too.

STEELE: It means a lot.

MATTHEWS: Anyway, Michael Steele. And thank you, Howard Fineman.

Up next, President Obama once again called for equal pay for women. And if Washington is playing catch-up on women`s issues, Hollywood is already there. We`re lucky enough to be joined tonight by a star outside our usual political sphere. Golden Globe`s recent winner, actress Ruth Wilson from "The Affair." Watch it all the time.

This is HARDBALL. The place for politics and Ruth Davis.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: This Congress still needs to pass a law that makes sure a woman is paid the same as a man for doing the same work.

(APPLAUSE)

I mean, it`s 2015. It`s time.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: We`re back to HARDBALL. That was of course my classic laugh there.

That was the president of course this evening closing the pay gap between men and women. A big issue in the workforce, of course. But if the country is still playing catch-up with culture and where we ought to be in values, Hollywood has made some strides.

Many new shows now on television have featured strong, independent women in key roles including Showtime`s latest hit series "The Affair." A show about infidelity in the modern age.

Let`s take peek.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DOMINIC WEST, "NOAH SOLLOWAY": What do you if I got my own place?

RUTH WILSON, "ALISON BAILEY": What do you mean?

WEST: Just a studio. I could use a little writing space. Finish my book. You could stay there when you come to town.

WILSON: That sounds good.

WEST: I want to move out. It could be our starter apartment.

WILSON: Move out?

WEST: Yes.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Well, that`s story on "Affair" which is a really hot show. It`s winning all the awards right now. It tells the complex story of an extramarital affair through the varying perspectives of the two lead players, the realistic on-screen performance of those flawed but undeniably human roles. It earned the show two Golden Globes the other day including Best Actress for Ruth Wilson who`s with me right now.

She plays Alison Lockhart, a resort town waitress who`s coping with the loss of her son and finds herself in an emotionally charged albeit messy romance. She`s now starring on the Broadway play "Constellation" alongside Jake Gyllenhaal in New York and she joins me right now in New York, right here with me, as well as Frank Bernie, of course a very respected "New York Times" critic.

I never know what he`s going to do right now. He`s giving me the look.

(LAUGHTER)

You know, I want to talk about this because I really do think movies are always about today.

WILSON: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Every time this movie about "MASH" wasn`t about Korea. It was about Vietnam. And everything is always about today. And your shows on television now are serials. They grab you and they hold you. A two-hour movie, that`s (INAUDIBLE).

Let`s talk about that. Why are we -- why are we in love with the serial idea whether it`s, you know, "The Good Wife" which I never miss and your show.

WILSON: I think the habits, it`s changing the way people watch narratives and dramas these days. People have bigger TV screens. It`s almost like a cinema experience at home. They can watch box sets over of course in their own time -- at their own time.

MATTHEWS: On demand.

WILSON: On demand. So they can watch it in their own convenience -- at their own convenience. And -- so I think that writers, and writers are getting the chance to write novelistic kind of dramas. So the character development over 10 episodes or more.

It`s brilliant for actors, writers and directors to have that chance to do that. So that`s why I think people are moving, dramas are moving to TV, and where they`re becoming more sophisticated.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

WILSON: And the audience are incredibly sophisticated, wanting this material. This desire for it. So I think it`s about how habits have changed and viewing habits are changed with box sets and on demand.

MATTHEWS: Frank, you`re a -- you know the culture scene. What I`m fascinated with is women characters now are the most interesting by far.

FRANK BERNIE, NEW YORK TIMES: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Certainly Mary Crawley on "Downton Abbey" is the only really truly fascinating person in that show.

BERNIE: You mentioned -- you mentioned "The Good Wife" earlier.

MATTHEWS: Right. Right. Good. Julia Margulies. And almost Joan Fontaine, they are flashbacks to the strong women pictures. You know, Greer Garson back in the `40s. A wartime situation. What are we -- are we getting ready sort of as a country for a woman president?

(LAUGHTER)

I think -- I don`t think it`s a conspiracy. I just think, look, "State of Affairs."

BERNIE: Right. Right.

MATTHEWS: "Madame Secretary of State." African-American woman is president. You`ve got of course "Madame Secretary" where Tea Leone plays a very impressive, nice actually, secretary of state.

BERNIE: Right.

MATTHEWS: All women.

BERNIE: Well, I mean, but we`ve done this for a while. I mean, if memory serves me, there was a show years ago called "Commander-in-Chief" with Gina Davis, was there not? I mean, it didn`t last long. It does seem like we have a concentration of them now.

MATTHEWS: Well, they didn`t know how to do it then.

BERNIE: Right.

MATTHEWS: Some things are tougher now.

BERNIE: I mean, the concentration of it suggests that some -- in some ways we`re getting psychologically ready for it, or at least the entertainment industry is trying to get us there. I hope they`re trying to get us there because I think if you look at the number of women in the Senate, in the House of Representatives, it`s nowhere near the number of strong female characters we see on TV.

WILSON: Yes.

MATTHEWS: You know, when people get together in D.C., they talk about politics, of course. But they also talk about you. And your show.

WILSON: OK.

MATTHEWS: Yes. By the way, can you switch to American now?

WILSON: No.

MATTHEWS: Why can`t you --

(LAUGHTER)

MATTHEWS: When you look at a script -- he says, I`m looking at you and your leading man and every show I think of seems to have an Australian or a British actor.

WILSON: I know.

BERNIE: There`s a British actor playing LBJ in "Selma." Right?

WILSON: Yes. I mean, it`s almost like -- actually Jake Gyllenhaal, that acted the Brit, or the Americans are very straightforward and up front and they say what they think and they say it with passion and clarity.

MATTHEWS: It makes us boring.

WILSON: Well no. But the Brits yet lie all the time. They repress. They`re naturally repressed. So they`re keeping all these emotions down. And they say something else but they`re hiding everything else. It sort of makes them seemingly more interesting than they are, but it`s just because they`re perpetually lying all time.

MATTHEWS: You know --

WILSON: There`s that laugh but it`s like that idea of, like, we don`t -- we`re not so honest with our emotion.

MATTHEWS: I think you`re the it female actress right now. Actor right now.

WILSON: Thank you.

MATTHEWS: I think you`re it. I think there`s something going on now. I really do.

WILSON: Thank you.

MATTHEWS: When you win that Golden Globe, you could be getting some big awards this season. It`s just something else.

WILSON: Thank you very much.

MATTHEWS: No, really. I think you`re great. And I think that this show is great. And I watch it. I do have to say I think Julianna Margulies is unbelievable.

WILSON: She`s that.

BERNIE: You should -- I hope you saw Ruth in "Luther."

WILSON: Yes. Do watch "Luther."

BERNIE: Yes, watch "Luther."

WILSON: I play a psychopath.

MATTHEWS: So I need more television. Anyway, thank you. Thank you for coming on.

WILSON: Thank you.

MATTHEWS: It`s great to come over. You`re on the stage tonight. And here you are.

Frank Bernie, we read you. I read you and sometimes I try to often agree with you.

Up next, President Obama`s big night tonight. He`s looking to go viral on the heels of tonight`s address. He`s launching a social media blitz on YouTube. But it`s unchartered territory for presidential politics in a massive scale.

You`re watching HARDBALL. The place for politics.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: I`ve served in Congress with many of you. I know many of you well. There are a lot of good people here on both sides of the aisle. And many of you have told me that this isn`t what you signed up for. Arguing past each other on cable shows. The constant fund raising. Always looking over your shoulder at how the base will react to every decision.

Imagine if we broke out of these tired old patterns. Imagine if we did something different.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: When we make rash decisions, reacting to the headlines, instead of using our heads, when the first response to a challenge is to send in our military, then we risk getting drawn into unnecessary conflicts. And neglect the broader strategy we need for a safer, more prosperous role.

That`s what our enemies want us to do. I believe in a smarter kind of American leadership.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Welcome back to HARDBALL.

President Obama is using social media, of course, and the Internet to reach audiences not reached in a live television address. He`ll do an interview with YouTube personalities later this week. And we have the data on Google Searches inspired by his State of the Union address so far.

I`m joined right now by the HARDBALL roundtable tonight. We`ve got Mike Paul, former aide to former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, and former senator, Alfonse D`Amato. He served both those gentlemen. Lizz Winstead, co-creator of "The Daily Show" and Jonathan Alter, of course, a great historian, a "Daily Beast" columnist and an MSNBC political analyst.

So I`m looking here at the list of topics. Apparently, you know, the Google has put out what the people are looking at tonight. And they`re looking at the very topics the president brought up. You know, college, I guess community college, taxes, housing, employment, education, health care, Cuba, economy, immigration and racism.

And Lizz, it seems like people now watch television with their hand doing something else. They`re now looking up stuff.

LIZZ WINSTEAD, CO-CREATOR, "THE DAILY SHOW": Yes.

MATTHEWS: And they`re going right -- well, we mentioned that. I know some of the earlier Google things I`ve looked at tonight said people wanted to know where -- what is this, the chamber? Explain where we are, I didn`t know that. Who sits behind the president. You know, that kind of information.

WINSTEAD: Well, you know, it makes me think that the president was very broad strokey. And we all watched this and we`re really in it, right? But when he does say, you know, a single pipeline, he doesn`t say the Keystone Pipeline.

You know, when he talks about -- a trade with China but he doesn`t say what it`s called, I think that you need to be a little bit more specific with some of these folks who are looking it up because I`d rather have them looking up what are the pros and cons of blank rather than what is blank, right?

MATTHEWS: I love these questions like Alan Gross, the president brought him. You know, he brought him tonight. And you know, here it is. He`s sitting next to the president because he was in prison in Cuban, right? So here this person writes, "Why was Alan Gross in prison in Cuba?" I mean, these are pretty basic questions.

WINSTEAD: Right.

MATTHEWS: Was he a spy? What was going on down there?

WINSTEAD: Right.

MATTHEWS: And what is the Cuban embargo? Basic information they want. How do you travel to Cuba? What`s a community college? A top question here. How much does community college cost? People want a little more background. Clearly.

JONATHAN ALTER, THE DAILY BEAST: I think the important thing about this speech, some of the lines might be remembered, his tone, which was Churchill-ian when he talked about -- you know, Churchill talked about the broad sunlit up lands.

MATTHEWS: Right.

ALTER: That uplift was extremely important. It will be remembered. But I believe what will be most remembered from this over the next 10 to 15 years is the community college part of it. This is Barack Obama`s G.I. bill.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

ALTER: And even though it`s not going to get enacted in his term, he will always be credited for it.

MATTHEWS: Who are the people -- give me the picture of who`s going to need this.

ALTER: And you`ve got to understand. Just in terms of new media. So the White House has done these videos every day for six years. Right. The one that was done two weeks ago where the president was on Air Force One talking about free community college was the most watched video of his entire presidency.

MATTHEWS: What was it about?

ALTER: It was outlining his free community college program. There is huge interest in this. In Tennessee which is the prototype where 90 percent of high school kids are going to enroll in this, you know, Tennessee community college program. It was more than double what was expected. There is huge demand for this.

MATTHEWS: Yes, of course. I think it`s great.

ALTER: Young Americans know it`s the only way they`re going to be able to compete in a global economy is if they get that --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: Technical. Technical. It`s not going back to photography school. I mean, that stuff. It`s learning stuff that you get a job with.

ALTER: Right.

MIKE PAUL, FORMER RUDY GIULIANI AID: It`s not just that because community colleges are also known as places where you complete your GED first and then you go onto college work. So I think that`s one of the reasons when you`re talking about the message that you had before, which is this is an inside the beltway message or is it a message for the layman, to the citizens of our country. That`s the kind of answer they want.

You need to know that. There are a lot of people that still have not completed their GED. And they`re not just interested to go on community college.

MATTHEWS: No.

PAUL: But you`re going to help me to complete two things in one. That`s a big deal.

(CROSSTALK)

ALTER: That`s an important point.

WINSTEAD: And I would say --

ALTER: Nobody asked how do you pay for it? All the Republicans, well, how they`re going to pay for it. They`re like this is dead on arrival. It`s not going to -- the bill passed unanimously in 1944, the G.I. Bill.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

ALTER: Nobody was saying how we`re going to pay for it. They understood this is an investment in the future of the country. We need to do this to have a strong nation. And that`s what will be interesting to see whether some of that starts to come through.

MATTHEWS: So this means to a kid, with no money from the parents, working kid from the neighborhoods, from the row houses where I grew up originally, and he now or she now knows, look, worse comes to worse, if I can get enough money just to live on, I can go to college.

WINSTEAD: Yes.

PAUL: And I can finish my high school degree, many of them are saying, and I have a lot of guilt and shame surrounding that that many of them have not finished. They might be a little older as well.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

PAUL: They`re not 18 years old and going and completing by 20, for example. They might be 19, 20, 25 some of them. And they`re going to finish that GED and they`re going to continue and get a college degree.

MATTHEWS: And also, from both ends, macro and micro economics, macro, we need a work force. We need trained people.

PAUL: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Who can handle -- you know, like those guys, mostly guys who worked like Euro Motors and fix Mercedes. They`re making a lot of money.

WINSTEAD: Yes.

MATTHEWS: And that job needs to get done.

ALTER: So other than Tennessee, Chicago is the other prototype for this. And what Rahm Emanuel did there is he blew up the old community college system. He got 70 local big employers. They took over the curriculums of these schools. One of them is IT. One of them is hospitality. One of them is health care. One of them is advanced manufacturing. And they`re actually training kids for the jobs that they need.

The problem is the dropouts are off the charts. So it`s like 75 percent dropout nationally. So for these schools to get the money, they have to have programs that get these kids to graduate.

MATTHEWS: All these folks are staying with us. More on this historic night.

I want to get their assessment personally on what they think is going to last from this speech. What`s the impact going to be.

But the president clearly had the wind at his back tonight. And I think that Jonathan had it right. There was a tone tonight that was really more optimistic than we`ve seen in this whole presidency.

This is HARDBALL. Of course the place for politics.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: And everyone in this Congress who still refuses to raise the minimum wage, I say this. If you truly believe you can work full time and support a family on less than $15,000 a year, try it. If not, vote to give millions of the hardest working people in America a raise.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: I have no more campaigns to run. My only agenda --

(APPLAUSE)

(LAUGHTER)

OBAMA: I know because I won both of them.

(APPLAUSE)

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: We`re back with the HARDBALL roundtable, Mike, Lizz and Jonathan. And a final question.

I`ve got to ask you this because you`re in show business here. Did you see the combination of what he threw there? First of all, he retorts with a great -- you know, adlib, puts them down. And he does it like he put his spirit and looked away. Like complete insolence in a way.

That was a little cold. I think he (INAUDIBLE). That was a little cold. And then he comes back with that incredible, irresistible smile.

WINSTEAD: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Remember that he can bring on when he wants to?

WINSTEAD: Yes.

MATTHEWS: There was a lot of action there from him in terms of drama, I thought.

WINSTEAD: I -- there is no bigger sign of confidence than silence and reaction. You know, when you can, you feel you might have done something wrong, you take a moment, you give a smile and you take it in because you know you`re winning. Like that`s when you know you`re winning.

MATTHEWS: Control the signs. I agree with you.

WINSTEAD: Absolutely.

MATTHEWS: Jonathan, historically, you`re the big picture guy here, I think, it`s fair to say. The president, will this matter? Two weeks from now, three weeks from now?

ALTER: Not a huge amount. But there are a couple of interesting things.

MATTHEWS: I mean, you`re sunny up. Will they still be sunny two weeks from now?

(LAUGHTER)

ALTER: It`s important that he`s not going into the last two years of his presidency on the defensive. He is going to enjoy it and the American public wants their president to be sunny and enjoying the job. And in the last couple of years, there were doubts about whether he liked the job. So he`s sending a signal on that. And this was the real Obama who both, you know, trash talks a little bit. That`s what he`s like in private.

And also he has been really concerned about the original promise in Boston in 2004 that we`re going to get beyond red state and blue state America. And this defense tonight --

MATTHEWS: Double down.

ALTER: Of what he called a better politics. He really wants to keep people focused on we can do better. We can have a better politics. We can have a functional Washington. That`s his big message going into the last couple of years.

PAUL: You know, but the problem with that is the Republicans are weighted, right now, starting tomorrow, first thing in the morning. And they`re going to start pounding him, pounding him, with messages of it doesn`t touch the heart. It doesn`t touch your pocket. There was a glow around the message tonight in my opinion. I think when he was in his campaign there was beyond glow. There was promise. And there was hope.

I don`t think people are feeling that strong attachment emotionally to the message tonight that`s going to last beyond the punches that are going to come. Because if we were able, for example, to talk about, yes, I feel it in my pocketbook, I feel it in my family, my job is a little bit better. I don`t really have to worry about the stress around health care.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

PAUL: And what it costs, and if someone`s going to get hurt. Those are things that are emotions and in politics, as you know, where --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: OK. Lizz.

PAUL: From intellectual perspective.

MATTHEWS: Close it down, Lizz. Last words.

WINSTEAD: You see, what I think is he did something that was very brave when he was elected and that is make plans that take a long time in a country that has learned to put a pie in the microwave rather than cook it, bake it, watch it and see it come to fruition. And now he is seeing that pie come out of the oven, with the economy, with health care being successful. And he can take a breath and with gas prices down he is like this is what I was talking about.

And he gets to do that. So he gets to make big plans and talk about community college and bigger things. And I think that when the economy does great, and now the Republicans have come and punch hard, why do you want to cut -- why do you want tax us? They`re going to say, you know what, we need to share in that.

MATTHEWS: Well, they`re all views that are going to matter in the next couple of weeks.

So I want to thank our roundtable, of course, Mike Paul, Lizz Winstead and Jonathan Alter.

When we return our coverage continues with a replay of President Obama`s full State of the Union address. You can watch that right here coming up.

You`re watching MSNBC, the place for politics.

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

LOAD-DATE: January 22, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

TRANSCRIPT: 012005cb.455

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Show

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Transcript

Copyright 2015 CQ-Roll Call, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Copyright 2015 MSNBC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

January 20, 2015 Tuesday 12:10 AM EST

Rep. Lujan Posts Congressional Biography on Capitol Hill Web Site

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 753 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., a member of the 114th Congress, has posted the following biography:

Born and raised in New Mexico, Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** grew up in Nambe, a small farming community north of Santa Fe bordered by the pueblos of Nambe and Pojoaque. There he learned the time-honored traditions and values of New Mexico.

Since he was sworn into Congress, job creation, reforming health insurance, building a clean energy economy, and standing up for consumers have been key priorities for Rep. **Lujan**.

He has stood up for New Mexicans who are struggling in these difficult economic times by voting to provide tax cuts for families and small businesses, working to reform our broken health insurance system, and fighting to reform Wall Street. He has worked for the people of New Mexico's 3rd Congressional District, passing legislation that invests in scientific research at New Mexico's national laboratories, fighting for Tribal Colleges and Universities and Hispanic Serving Institutions in the America COMPETES Act, and advocating for tribal communities by improving infrastructure, education, and health care.

Rep. **Lujan** represents his diverse district by participating in a variety of Caucuses including the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the Native American Caucus, and the Natural Gas Caucus.

Rep. **Lujan** sits on the Energy and Commerce Committee, which enables him to serve the many needs of the district which spans from San Juan County in the Northwest to Roosevelt County in the Southeast - and the treasured lands in between.

As a member of Communications and Technology Subcommittee, Rep. **Lujan** is working to expand broadband access in rural communities and see that new opportunities are created through increased access to the latest technological advances. From his position on the Health Subcommittee, **Lujan** is focusing on increased access to health care, reducing health disparities, and addressing drug abuse that has impacted too many families in New Mexico.

At the beginning of the 112th Congress, Rep. **Lujan**, together with co-chair Frank Wolf of Virginia, founded the bipartisan Technology Transfer Caucus to bring together members who share the goal of strengthening our economy by helping move technological innovations that are occurring at New Mexico's national labs and universities into the marketplace. **Lujan** will also serve as a co-chair of the bipartisan National Labs Caucus, which will raise awareness about the importance of the national labs to the long-term economic vitality and security of the nation.

At the beginning of the 113th Congress, Rep. **Lujan** was appointed to the House Democratic Leadership as a Chief Deputy Whip. In this position, he is promoting the Democratic agenda to create jobs and build a brighter future for all Americans. At the end of 2014, **Lujan** was named Chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, and will serve in this role during the 114th Congress.

Prior to his election to Congress, Rep. **Lujan** served as the Chairman of the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission. As a Commissioner, Rep. **Lujan** worked with his colleagues to develop a renewable portfolio standard to increase renewable energy production by New Mexico utilities to 20 percent of their total production by 2020 and to diversify utilities' renewable portfolios to include solar energy. On behalf of the state of New Mexico, Rep. **Lujan** joined his fellow Commissioners from California, Oregon, and Washington to sign onto the Joint Action Framework on Climate Change to create regional solutions to climate change.

With the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission, Rep. **Lujan** advocated for first responders. He worked with firefighters, the state legislature, and other officials to overhaul the New Mexico Fire Fund so that all distributions from the fund would go to improving fire services in New Mexico.

Rep. **Lujan** also worked to improve health care as a member of the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission by investigating the denial practices of the health insurance industry. The investigation led to the development of legislation that expanded access to insurance and closed loopholes the industry had been using to unfairly deny medical claims and void policies. Prior to that, he served as New Mexico Cultural Affairs Department's director of administrative services and chief financial officer.

Rep. **Lujan** earned his Bachelor's degree from New Mexico Highlands University in Business Administration.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 24KuanRap-150118-4996522 MSTRUCK

LOAD-DATE: January 20, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

293 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Technology Wire

January 20, 2015 Tuesday

STATE OF THE UNION for January 20, 2015, MSNBC

LENGTH: 8327 words

CHRIS MATTHEWS, MSNBC ANCHOR: Good evening. I'm Chris Matthews. Let's make some noise tonight.

By the way, in a defiant and at times soaring speech tonight, President Obama made his appeal to the American people for the final two years of his presidency. It comes at a time when Americans are feeling more optimistic, obviously, about the State of the Union itself than at any time since the president's been in office. And tonight he told the country the worst of times are behind us.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BARACK OBAMA, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: America, for all that we have endured, for all the grit and the hard work required to come back, for all the tasks that lie ahead, know this. The shadow of crisis has passed and the State of the Union is strong.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: And all night tonight you saw that difference with the vice president jumping up like a Jumping Jack every time the president spoke because he supports him, and the speaker of the House sitting there like a toadstool not moving at all for the most of the president's speech. So that was a way of sort of keeping track of what the partisanship was going on there.

Anyway, the president said the country has come back from the brink.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: In every step, we were told our goals were misguided or too ambitious. And we would crush jobs and explode deficits. Instead we've seen the fastest economic growth in over a decade, our deficits cut by two- thirds, a stock market that has doubled, and health care inflation at its lowest rate in 50 years.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: And maybe not on the level of the new deal as the phrase, the president made his case for what he coined as middle class economics, middle class economics, and outlined a proposed new tax plan that would shift more of the burden to the rich.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: And let's close the loopholes that lead to inequality by allowing the top 1 percent to avoid paying taxes on their accumulated wealth. We can use that money to help more families pay for child care and send their kids to college. We need a tax code that truly helps working Americans trying to get a leg up in the new economy. And we can achieve that together.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: It's also case by the president for more humbled foreign policy. By the way, the very phrase that George W. Bush promised us -- humility in foreign policy -- and never delivered.

Tonight the president touted his new policy with Cuba, his outreach to Iran in terms of trying to avoid them going nuclear. He called on Congress to pass a Use of Force Authorization for the war against ISIS. He called once again for the closing of Gitmo and he means that. And he spent a fair amount of time tonight calling for a renewed effort to combat climate change.

In the end he returned to that speech he gave in Boston. The soaring speech he gave back in 2004 that moved many of us who watched him.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: I want them to grow up in a country that shows the world what we still know to be true. That we are still more than a collection of red states and blue states. That we are the United States of America.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: And what will no doubt be one of the most talked about moments, the president adlib a great retort when Republicans applauded him sarcastically, applauded the notion that this is his last campaign is already over.

Let's watch that little back-and-forth.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: I have no more campaigns to run. My only agenda --

(APPLAUSE)

(LAUGHTER)

OBAMA: I know because I won both of them.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Well, that's how he did. He said yes, I know because I won both of them. And then he turned away -- turned away from the sarcasm making clear it was sarcasm to the Democratic side.

Anyway, joining me right now to assess the politics and the policies tonight, U.S. Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan**, he's from New Mexico. He's chair now of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, responsible for, of course, getting a Democratic Congress elected next time.

We also have U.S. Congressman Charlie Dent of Pennsylvania. And the "Washington Post" columnist, the great Eugene Robinson, who is staying up late with me tonight, an MSNBC political analyst as well.

Congressman **Lujan**, first, what did you make of the president's wonderful little repost there to the Republicans after they sort of sarcastically applauded the fact he ain't running anymore?

REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN** (D), NEW MEXICO: Well, look, I think as the president always does he's very in tune with everything that's being said, Chris. But tonight the president -- the president spoke very clearly to the American people about what we have to do to put the middle class first. He made it abundantly clear that trickle-down economics does not make its way to the middle class and that we need to start working on middle class economics.

That should be front and center. And I think that's what the president was trying to adjust at.

MATTHEWS: Did the president's message tonight sell, do you think, in the country? Will they get excited about minimum wage, about the $3,000 child credit, about community college being free? Those elements do you think -- and sick leave and parental leave, if you will? Will they be selling points for the DCCC as you try to win back Congress?

LUJAN: Chris, it's important to all Americans as we see the economy getting stronger, Wall Street doing better, that the middle class is still feeling the squeeze. All of the programs the president put on the table this evening are targeted at making sure that we're paying attention to what the middle class is feeling. That working families understand what's happening when child care is so expensive that it's out of reach to make it easier for them to get by.

We need to even the playing field and make sure that middle class priorities will be at the front of the table and make sure that that what we're going to be prioritizing.

MATTHEWS: Congressman Debt, what did you make of tonight overall? Do you think it will have an impact in either direction for either party?

REP. CHARLIE DENT (R), PENNSYLVANIA: Well, I thought the speech was actually more of a political statement than a governing agenda. You know, that said I think there are probably a few areas of collaboration we can work with the president on, specifically on trade, transportation, infrastructure. I think those are areas. A long-term transportation bill. I think we could -- I'd like to think we can move forward on that.

I'm a little less optimistic on tax reform. You know, if the president wants to talk about a child tax credit, tripling it, I think it has to be done in the broader complex of a more comprehensive tax reform. So those are a few things that I picked up.

On the authorization of the use of military force, I have to tell you, I was a little bit confused. I thought the president said he was operating under an existing AUMF and now he wants a new one. But if he wants an authorization of force he should come to Congress specifically and tell me us what he wants. I have not yet heard that from the president.

MATTHEWS: Let me go to Gene Robinson then.

See, that is the troubling question, is he has the authority but he wants the authority.

EUGENE ROBINSON, MSNBC ANALYST: Yes, which -- I mean, and you cannot reconcile those two things.

MATTHEWS: Right.

ROBINSON: They do not make sense together. And I got to say, Congressman Dent is right. The president did -- certainly did not lay out for the nation what it is exactly he wants. And if he --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: Well, he said no boots on the ground but he had -- more forces.

ROBINSON: Well, does he really want a resolution that limits very specifically what he can do? I would doubt that he wants that.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

ROBINSON: I would bet he wants something much more open-ended.

MATTHEWS: Yes. Well, anyway, as I mentioned the president returned directly to the themes. The upbeat themes from the speech he gave up in Boston back in 2004. The speech I have to tell, right afterwards I said here's our first African-American president. Right now let's look at that.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: You know, just over a decade ago, I gave a speech in Boston where I said there wasn't a liberal America or a conservative America, a black America or a white America, but a United States of America.

Over the past six years the pundits have pointed out more than once that my presidency hasn't delivered on this vision. How ironic they say that our politics seems more divided than ever.

It's held up as proof not just of my own flaws, of which there are many, but also as proof that the vision itself is misguided, naive. That there are too many people in this town who actually benefit from partisanship and gridlock for us to ever do anything about it.

I know how tempting such cynicism may be. But I still think the cynics are wrong. I still believe that we are one people. I still believe that together we can do great things even when the odds are long.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Let me go to Congressman **Lujan**.

I haven't met you before but I want to ask you about that division issue. And, you know, and for the Hispanic people and what we call Anglo people and African-American people, and white people, if you will. I mean, these distinctions, we've lived with them. And do you think they're getting better? Is the president right? Because he seemed to have once again pushed the button of optimism tonight, positively.

LUJAN: Chris, I'm more optimistic than ever that we truly are the United States of America. And what the president outlying tonight was exactly what that vision is.

I'll tell you. What's concerned me all day long is the rhetoric I've heard from my Republican leadership in saying that middle class tax cuts is a nonstarter.

Look, what better place to find something that we can work on than targeting middle class tax cuts to the middle class where it's going to help them in their pockets. That's something that we should unite on. It's what brings us together as a nation and it's what the middle class deserves today.

MATTHEWS: Let me go to Congressman Dent.

You know, you represent Leigh High Valley. I don't have to tell you that. The most probably pivotal part of the state. I grew up in Pennsylvania. You always know which way to win. Check to Leigh High Valley. So I do want to hear from you about this.

Why can't the Republicans who've always supported highway bills, who's always been for infrastructure, it's good money, it's good jobs, it's construction, it's great? The smell of highway building, and we want that back again. Why can't this -- this Republican Congress get it together on building stuff again instead of just letting it rot?

DENT: Look, Chris, I agree we need to do a long term surface transportation bill, five or six years. And we have to be open to revenue sources here. We have to be very open. All of us on all sides of this equation. You know, but I'll tell you that when the president said that we need to do a transportation bill on the one hand but then he has a hard time with the Keystone Pipeline infrastructure project.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

DENT: Which has bipartisan support, I mean, I think he has to take that small step. Approve --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: Is there a deal there? Is there a deal there possibly?

DENT: I think so. Look, I think there are plenty of potential agreements. We could use the Keystone Pipeline, he wants the minimum wage, we want to repeal the medical device tax.

MATTHEWS: Exciting.

DENT: I could marry up a few of the ideas and advance something that I think both -- a lot of people in both parties could embrace.

MATTHEWS: Who takes the initiative on that? How's that's happen?

DENT: Well --

MATTHEWS: These deals that I figured sitting there.

DENT: Well, look, on transportation, I would -- I think it would be OK at some point to marry up a long-term surface transportation bill with the Keystone Pipeline. Maybe -- you know, maybe we don't go to $10.10 an hour on the minimum wage but something less than that.

MATTHEWS: Sounds like (INAUDIBLE).

DENT: And tie that to repeal the medical device act which is a job-saving proposal, in my view.

MATTHEWS: You sound like the kind of Republicans I grew up with. Thank you so much for coming on.

DENT: Yes.

MATTHEWS: I mean that positively.

DENT: Thank you.

MATTHEWS: Anyway, the president also made a pitch for higher standards for politics as is practiced in D.C. or not practiced. Let's watch him here.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: I served in Congress with many of you. I know many of you well. There are a lot of good people here on both sides of the aisle. And many of you have told me that this isn't what you signed up for. Arguing past each other on cable shows. The constant fundraising. Always looking over your shoulder at how the base will react to every decision.

Imagine if we broke out of these tired old patterns. Imagine if we did something different.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Well, that's what we try to do every night around here and push for deals. I am the greatest dealmaker. I really --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: It's one thing I believe in. Let's talk about race for a second.

ROBINSON: I --

MATTHEWS: I got to --

ROBINSON: Very quickly.

MATTHEWS: Sure.

ROBINSON: We'll get to race. I actually thought that was the weakest passage in his speech.

MATTHEWS: What is this?

ROBINSON: Because --

MATTHEWS: Beefy as with cable?

ROBINSON: He's not exactly the guy who goes over and hugs the guy. So -- you know, it was a good speech but I thought that was the weaker part of it.

MATTHEWS: Yes. Let me --

ROBINSON: Yes, let's talk about --

MATTHEWS: Let me tell you. Listen. I think -- I think you and I disagree. There's a real dichotomy, I think. I think 70 percent of the country really looks up to the first lady. I mean, I think there's a real acceptance of -- and she truly is African-American. She does come from (INAUDIBLE) background.

ROBINSON: Right.

MATTHEWS: Her parents are -- goes all the way back to slavery. They're the original Americans in many cases in terms of 300, 400 years. And yet you have this regular ragging on the president on race.

ROBINSON: Yes.

MATTHEWS: And I see it -- as somebody wrote it the other day in "New York" magazine. And I said, all these things that certain Republican on the right do, they wouldn't do for a white Democrat. It just -- so how do you reconcile what seems to be the acceptance of the first family by maybe three quarters of the American people as African-Americans? And proof that this isn't a white country. And yet you have this grabble rousing out there against them.

I think both are true.

ROBINSON: Well, both are true. You know, there's something about the fact of the first black president irrespective of the individual, I think, that seems to have intensified some people's feelings about race in general.

MATTHEWS: Yes. I agree.

ROBINSON: And, you know, good, bad, you know, hair on fire. Whatever.

MATTHEWS: What percent? What percent?

ROBINSON: Who knows, Chris? I don't know --

MATTHEWS: Is it 10, 20?

ROBINSON: You know, some days I look at my e-mail, I think it's a high percentage. Some days -- you know.

(LAUGHTER)

MATTHEWS: You get the worst.

ROBINSON: I get the worst. And they're very ugly. I mean, you know, I get ugly, ugly things about the president, about the first lady, about the first family. You know, but-- and I get a lot of deliberately unfair and tendentious criticism that is not overtly racial but --

MATTHEWS: You can tell.

ROBINSON: Is of a tenor and of a tone that I have not seen before, and I've not seen against a white president. So.

MATTHEWS: I think a lot of these people are dying. I think they're older.

ROBINSON: Yes.

MATTHEWS: I think younger people, our kids' age, are so farther ahead on this thing. And we're, I think, better off than our parents.

ROBINSON: Yes.

MATTHEWS: And it's just -- it's just -- in terms of -- I'm talking about white people, I guess. But I mean, it just seems like there's something majestic about that first lady tonight. The way she comes out. And I think there's admiration for that family from three quarters of the people. And I agree that --

ROBINSON: I hope you're right.

MATTHEWS: These people that you keep hearing from.

ROBINSON: Well --

MATTHEWS: You're a magnet for this crap.

(LAUGHTER)

ROBINSON: Because you're a great writer and you write positively about the liberal -- the progressive view of race relations and they just don't like it. I guess.

Anyway, thank you. You know you're right.

Anyway, thank you, Congressman **Lujan**, tonight for joining us.

And Congressman Dent of Pennsylvania. I do mean that about the Leigh High Valley and your brand of Republican as some -- Bill Scranton, Republican, as Eisenhower Republicanism. I grew up with it. And Tom ridge Republicanism. It's not so far off anyway.

Coming up right now we've got the results of an online survey. We'll see what Americans thought of the president's speech tonight.

Plus, it didn't take long for Republicans to declare war on President Obama's agenda led by Senator Joni "the castrator" Ernst. It's been a wild couple of hours for the opposition party as they took to spoil the president's hot hand. Well, they tried.

And this is HARDBALL, a place for politics.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: If we're going to have arguments, let's have arguments, but let's make them debates worthy of this body and worthy of this country.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: Tonight, after a breakthrough year for America, our economy is growing and creating jobs at the fastest pace since 1999.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Well, welcome back -- welcome back to HARDBALL.

The president addressed Congress tonight, of course, on economy. His political fortunes and they're on the rise.

MSNBC's Steve Kornacki is with us now with an early look at how Americans received his speech. This is going to be fascinating. Steve.

STEVE KORNACKI, MSNBC'S "UP WITH STEVE KORNACKI": Yes, so we got some new numbers here. These are fresh numbers from an MSNBC online survey.

Let me just explain quickly what these numbers represent before we get to them and how we got then. We say online survey. You might think well, this is just whoever wants to log on to a site, saying their opinion, and you know not that scientific.

Well, what exactly is this, this is a specific sample of people. This was done in conjunction with Survey Monkey. This is a site where two million people come -- I love the name. Two million people come there and take surveys every day. We had a professional team of pollsters take a sample from Survey Monkey, a smaller sample, then they weighted it for age, for sex, for region, for all sorts of things like that. So it's a little more scientific than your standard online survey.

That said, the margin of error on this is 6.8 percent. That's a little -- you know, on the high than we normally see. So take that into account as I take you through these numbers.

First of all, the bottom line question, what did you make of the speech. Enthusiastic, 28 percent. Satisfied but not enthusiastic, 43 percent. So if you add those together basically 71 percent of the people responding here said they were at least somewhat positive in their reaction to the speech. 21 percent saying they're dissatisfied but not angry and 5 percent say they're outright angry. So, again, 26 percent on the negative side there, 71 percent on the positive side.

That's the bottom line of what we're finding in these numbers. If you look at some of the other stuff we asked about here, is the president focused on the right things by a 2-1 margin, people who watched that speech and responded to it said yes. He is focused on the right things. Is Congress, is the Republican Congress, Republicans, are they focused on the right things? Basically the inverse there, 35 percent saying they are, 61 percent saying they are on the wrong things.

If you ask about Obama's proposals, what he laid out tonight, well, unite or divide the country, a little bit of the majority there saying he would unite the country with that 54-40.

And this is an interesting one, specifically on that tax increase on the wealthy the president is talking about that he'd like to use to benefit the middle class, working class, two different ways of looking at it. Is it a bad idea because -- because the wealthy will help grow the economy? 35 percent saying yes, that's a bad idea because that -- and 63 percent saying no, it's a good idea because the wealthy can afford it.

And again that's consistent with polling we've seen down through the years. That's why this is an issue that so many -- the president himself ran in 2012. Democrats like to run on this. And I think again in laying this out tonight that's something the Democrats may very well be running on in 2016.

MATTHEWS: So just going by your margin of error, 6.8 percent, let's get back to the angry figure. The angry figure is 5 percent.

Could it be that there's less people that exist who are angry?

(LAUGHTER)

KORNACKI: The range I guess is negative 2 to 12.

MATTHEWS: I just wondered. With all these, that's 5 percent are angry and it could be off by 6.8. My god, that's good news for the president. I'm just teasing. Nothing is (INAUDIBLE).

Steve Kornacki, great work tonight.

Anyway, it's been a wild couple of hours since the president's State of the Union. Republicans have exploded into a furry of opposition and some of it has gone off the rails.

Michael Steele is chair of the RNC or was, and Howard Fineman is the global now of this international really effort by the Huffington Post to reach everywhere. Both are MSNBC political analyst.

I haven't had chance to give you a chance to broad brush. You want to start, Michael. This speech, I thought he was up.

MICHAEL STEELE, FORMER RNC CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MATTHEWS: And I think being up is -- like in our business just communicating at night. If you're down, people know that, too. He wasn't tired. He had good sleep. He looks healthy as heck.

STEELE: Yes.

MATTHEWS: He seems happy.

STEELE: He was. And I think because for this president he's feeling freed. He's lifting burdens off of his -- off of his shoulders. He's going to go in --

MATTHEWS: Is this a Janice Joplin kind of freedom?

STEELE: It's a Janice --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: Nothing else to lose?

STEELE: Nothing else to lose. And when you think about it, Chris, it's almost coming full circle from 2008, particularly when he puts in a line about not -- you know, I said at one point this would be a red, white and blue America. So he'd kind of bringing all that back. And I think the president wants to move into his own space and that includes even on trade issues, for example, he knows going to upset Democrats. OK. Deal with it.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

STEELE: So this will be interesting to watch with the Congress in the Senate. The Republicans, I think, are actually in a good position, too, because now they have an opportunity to actually go out and lay out some articulate --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: Why not these two sides -- OK, I'm back to my old Ronald Reagan- Tip O'Neill jag here. Why don't -- you can see the deals on the table.

STEELE: They're right there.

MATTHEWS: You can see them. Lower the corporate tax rates. Do minimum wage. Do something on infrastructure and do Keystone.

STEELE: Yes.

MATTHEWS: I know it's not purity. But it would move things along, Howard.

HOWARD FINEMAN, MSNBC POLITICAL ANALYST: Yes. And trade.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

FINEMAN: And since I'm now global editorial --

MATTHEWS: Well, you are. You've got to look at the big things. You've got to tow back that lens.

FINEMAN: It's not intergalactic.

MATTHEWS: Next.

FINEMAN: Yes. All the pieces are there. You're right, Chris. It's kind of like a puzzle. They could put all these pieces together. And as you're always saying you don't have to agree on each individual.

MATTHEWS: Right. You trade.

FINEMAN: You trade.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

FINEMAN: And all of the pieces are out there on the table to trade around.

MATTHEWS: Well, who's going to be the guy who calls everybody in and say, let's all sit down for all weekend and work out a deal.

FINEMAN: I don't know. But I would tell you one other thing. The other reason that the president was a happy man tonight is that he was able finally to say in his own mind and to the American people that he had accomplished what he'd been hired to do, which is to bring the economy reasonably back.

MATTHEWS: Talking about that couple.

FINEMAN: Yes.

MATTHEWS: The one who wrote the letters.

FINEMAN: Yes. Now what he'd proposed was a whole lot of things to kind of patch the tire in the sense that yes, we've recovered overall from the recession.

STEELE: Right. Right.

FINEMAN: But a lot -- the wages, real wages haven't increased.

STEELE: McDonald's. That's right.

FINEMAN: Which is why he said, don't worry government is going to help you with that.

STEELE: Right.

MATTHEWS: There's no rocking fiscal policy change.

FINEMAN: No.

MATTHEWS: No rocking foreign policy change.

FINEMAN: No. No, no, no.

MATTHEWS: There was no new deal-ish kind of big picture.

(CROSSTALK)

FINEMAN: This is small points to patch the tire, as I said.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

FINEMAN: And he thinks he's in a position to do that because he did the big thing -- things that he wanted to do in his mind.

MATTHEWS: Well, is that politics?

FINEMAN: The economy and health care and so on.

MATTHEWS: Well, remember, people ceased to say, you and I talked have probably talked about it 20 years ago, we've been together so long. Didn't it come out that after all that Bill Clinton did in terms of big economic growth and all that, the most popular thing he did was that leave thing he did?

FINEMAN: Yes. Family medical leave.

MATTHEWS: I mean, medical leave. That that was the one people -- that's was the one I love.

FINEMAN: That was intensely practical and tangible.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

FINEMAN: And I think that's what he trying to do here. Child care, sick leave, paid vacation, paid sick leave.

STEELE: Community --

FINEMAN: Free community college. You know, those are -- and reduction of interest rates for existing student loans. Those are tangible things that he wants to do and that he knows that poll -- all those things poll very well.

STEELE: They poll well but here is the problem.

FINEMAN: They're not going to pass to Congress.

STEELE: They're not going to pass to Congress because the bill to pay for them has not been clarified yet. And it's not just all going to come out of raising taxes on the wealthy or -- you know, increasing the capital gains tax. So I think to your question, this is where you'll have some Republicans, a John Thune maybe and a Joe Manchin on the Democrat side, who find that sweet spot for Mitch McConnell to go to the president and say we can put together a deal.

I think you're going to see, Chris, the House come along and follow behind Mitch more than people are thinking that Boehner and the House are going to be pushing a lot of agenda by themselves.

MATTHEWS: Why do you think Mitch will be a better dealmaker?

STEELE: Because I think he has a better sense of the ultimate purpose and goal here. He's looking holistically at the party, he's looking more broadly at where the party needs to be to keep the Senate in two years.

FINEMAN: I'll tell you why. Not only that. He's a bridge between the congressional Republican Party.

STEELE: Absolutely.

FINEMAN: Which is more no, no, no, we don't want to do anything and the presidential Republican Party.

MATTHEWS: He wants a president.

FINEMAN: He wants to a president.

STEELE: That's right.

FINEMAN: He wants to be the Republican leader who got a president elected.

MATTHEWS: A quick lightening question. Which party loves the presidency more? Wants it more? Covets it more?

STEELE: Republicans.

MATTHEWS: That's what I think. Don't you agree?

FINEMAN: Yes. But president --

MATTHEWS: They love the executive.

FINEMAN: But President Obama is doing a pretty good job of inhabiting the office right now.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

FINEMAN: And that's significant.

MATTHEWS: He was acting president. Has been for a long time. But I get the feeling Republicans really, really, really want that presidency.

STEELE: The executive leadership means stuff.

MATTHEWS: Yes. Commander-in-chief, too.

STEELE: It means a lot.

MATTHEWS: Anyway, Michael Steele. And thank you, Howard Fineman.

Up next, President Obama once again called for equal pay for women. And if Washington is playing catch-up on women's issues, Hollywood is already there. We're lucky enough to be joined tonight by a star outside our usual political sphere. Golden Globe's recent winner, actress Ruth Wilson from "The Affair." Watch it all the time.

This is HARDBALL. The place for politics and Ruth Davis.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: This Congress still needs to pass a law that makes sure a woman is paid the same as a man for doing the same work.

(APPLAUSE)

I mean, it's 2015. It's time.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: We're back to HARDBALL. That was of course my classic laugh there.

That was the president of course this evening closing the pay gap between men and women. A big issue in the workforce, of course. But if the country is still playing catch-up with culture and where we ought to be in values, Hollywood has made some strides.

Many new shows now on television have featured strong, independent women in key roles including Showtime's latest hit series "The Affair." A show about infidelity in the modern age.

Let's take peek.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DOMINIC WEST, "NOAH SOLLOWAY": What do you if I got my own place?

RUTH WILSON, "ALISON BAILEY": What do you mean?

WEST: Just a studio. I could use a little writing space. Finish my book. You could stay there when you come to town.

WILSON: That sounds good.

WEST: I want to move out. It could be our starter apartment.

WILSON: Move out?

WEST: Yes.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Well, that's story on "Affair" which is a really hot show. It's winning all the awards right now. It tells the complex story of an extramarital affair through the varying perspectives of the two lead players, the realistic on-screen performance of those flawed but undeniably human roles. It earned the show two Golden Globes the other day including Best Actress for Ruth Wilson who's with me right now.

She plays Alison Lockhart, a resort town waitress who's coping with the loss of her son and finds herself in an emotionally charged albeit messy romance. She's now starring on the Broadway play "Constellation" alongside Jake Gyllenhaal in New York and she joins me right now in New York, right here with me, as well as Frank Bernie, of course a very respected "New York Times" critic.

I never know what he's going to do right now. He's giving me the look.

(LAUGHTER)

You know, I want to talk about this because I really do think movies are always about today.

WILSON: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Every time this movie about "MASH" wasn't about Korea. It was about Vietnam. And everything is always about today. And your shows on television now are serials. They grab you and they hold you. A two-hour movie, that's (INAUDIBLE).

Let's talk about that. Why are we -- why are we in love with the serial idea whether it's, you know, "The Good Wife" which I never miss and your show.

WILSON: I think the habits, it's changing the way people watch narratives and dramas these days. People have bigger TV screens. It's almost like a cinema experience at home. They can watch box sets over of course in their own time -- at their own time.

MATTHEWS: On demand.

WILSON: On demand. So they can watch it in their own convenience -- at their own convenience. And -- so I think that writers, and writers are getting the chance to write novelistic kind of dramas. So the character development over 10 episodes or more.

It's brilliant for actors, writers and directors to have that chance to do that. So that's why I think people are moving, dramas are moving to TV, and where they're becoming more sophisticated.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

WILSON: And the audience are incredibly sophisticated, wanting this material. This desire for it. So I think it's about how habits have changed and viewing habits are changed with box sets and on demand.

MATTHEWS: Frank, you're a -- you know the culture scene. What I'm fascinated with is women characters now are the most interesting by far.

FRANK BERNIE, NEW YORK TIMES: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Certainly Mary Crawley on "Downton Abbey" is the only really truly fascinating person in that show.

BERNIE: You mentioned -- you mentioned "The Good Wife" earlier.

MATTHEWS: Right. Right. Good. Julia Margulies. And almost Joan Fontaine, they are flashbacks to the strong women pictures. You know, Greer Garson back in the '40s. A wartime situation. What are we -- are we getting ready sort of as a country for a woman president?

(LAUGHTER)

I think -- I don't think it's a conspiracy. I just think, look, "State of Affairs."

BERNIE: Right. Right.

MATTHEWS: "Madame Secretary of State." African-American woman is president. You've got of course "Madame Secretary" where Tea Leone plays a very impressive, nice actually, secretary of state.

BERNIE: Right.

MATTHEWS: All women.

BERNIE: Well, I mean, but we've done this for a while. I mean, if memory serves me, there was a show years ago called "Commander-in-Chief" with Gina Davis, was there not? I mean, it didn't last long. It does seem like we have a concentration of them now.

MATTHEWS: Well, they didn't know how to do it then.

BERNIE: Right.

MATTHEWS: Some things are tougher now.

BERNIE: I mean, the concentration of it suggests that some -- in some ways we're getting psychologically ready for it, or at least the entertainment industry is trying to get us there. I hope they're trying to get us there because I think if you look at the number of women in the Senate, in the House of Representatives, it's nowhere near the number of strong female characters we see on TV.

WILSON: Yes.

MATTHEWS: You know, when people get together in D.C., they talk about politics, of course. But they also talk about you. And your show.

WILSON: OK.

MATTHEWS: Yes. By the way, can you switch to American now?

WILSON: No.

MATTHEWS: Why can't you --

(LAUGHTER)

MATTHEWS: When you look at a script -- he says, I'm looking at you and your leading man and every show I think of seems to have an Australian or a British actor.

WILSON: I know.

BERNIE: There's a British actor playing LBJ in "Selma." Right?

WILSON: Yes. I mean, it's almost like -- actually Jake Gyllenhaal, that acted the Brit, or the Americans are very straightforward and up front and they say what they think and they say it with passion and clarity.

MATTHEWS: It makes us boring.

WILSON: Well no. But the Brits yet lie all the time. They repress. They're naturally repressed. So they're keeping all these emotions down. And they say something else but they're hiding everything else. It sort of makes them seemingly more interesting than they are, but it's just because they're perpetually lying all time.

MATTHEWS: You know --

WILSON: There's that laugh but it's like that idea of, like, we don't -- we're not so honest with our emotion.

MATTHEWS: I think you're the it female actress right now. Actor right now.

WILSON: Thank you.

MATTHEWS: I think you're it. I think there's something going on now. I really do.

WILSON: Thank you.

MATTHEWS: When you win that Golden Globe, you could be getting some big awards this season. It's just something else.

WILSON: Thank you very much.

MATTHEWS: No, really. I think you're great. And I think that this show is great. And I watch it. I do have to say I think Julianna Margulies is unbelievable.

WILSON: She's that.

BERNIE: You should -- I hope you saw Ruth in "Luther."

WILSON: Yes. Do watch "Luther."

BERNIE: Yes, watch "Luther."

WILSON: I play a psychopath.

MATTHEWS: So I need more television. Anyway, thank you. Thank you for coming on.

WILSON: Thank you.

MATTHEWS: It's great to come over. You're on the stage tonight. And here you are.

Frank Bernie, we read you. I read you and sometimes I try to often agree with you.

Up next, President Obama's big night tonight. He's looking to go viral on the heels of tonight's address. He's launching a social media blitz on YouTube. But it's unchartered territory for presidential politics in a massive scale.

You're watching HARDBALL. The place for politics.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: I've served in Congress with many of you. I know many of you well. There are a lot of good people here on both sides of the aisle. And many of you have told me that this isn't what you signed up for. Arguing past each other on cable shows. The constant fund raising. Always looking over your shoulder at how the base will react to every decision.

Imagine if we broke out of these tired old patterns. Imagine if we did something different.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: When we make rash decisions, reacting to the headlines, instead of using our heads, when the first response to a challenge is to send in our military, then we risk getting drawn into unnecessary conflicts. And neglect the broader strategy we need for a safer, more prosperous role.

That's what our enemies want us to do. I believe in a smarter kind of American leadership.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: Welcome back to HARDBALL.

President Obama is using social media, of course, and the Internet to reach audiences not reached in a live television address. He'll do an interview with YouTube personalities later this week. And we have the data on Google Searches inspired by his State of the Union address so far.

I'm joined right now by the HARDBALL roundtable tonight. We've got Mike Paul, former aide to former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, and former senator, Alfonse D'Amato. He served both those gentlemen. Lizz Winstead, co-creator of "The Daily Show" and Jonathan Alter, of course, a great historian, a "Daily Beast" columnist and an MSNBC political analyst.

So I'm looking here at the list of topics. Apparently, you know, the Google has put out what the people are looking at tonight. And they're looking at the very topics the president brought up. You know, college, I guess community college, taxes, housing, employment, education, health care, Cuba, economy, immigration and racism.

And Lizz, it seems like people now watch television with their hand doing something else. They're now looking up stuff.

LIZZ WINSTEAD, CO-CREATOR, "THE DAILY SHOW": Yes.

MATTHEWS: And they're going right -- well, we mentioned that. I know some of the earlier Google things I've looked at tonight said people wanted to know where -- what is this, the chamber? Explain where we are, I didn't know that. Who sits behind the president. You know, that kind of information.

WINSTEAD: Well, you know, it makes me think that the president was very broad strokey. And we all watched this and we're really in it, right? But when he does say, you know, a single pipeline, he doesn't say the Keystone Pipeline.

You know, when he talks about -- a trade with China but he doesn't say what it's called, I think that you need to be a little bit more specific with some of these folks who are looking it up because I'd rather have them looking up what are the pros and cons of blank rather than what is blank, right?

MATTHEWS: I love these questions like Alan Gross, the president brought him. You know, he brought him tonight. And you know, here it is. He's sitting next to the president because he was in prison in Cuban, right? So here this person writes, "Why was Alan Gross in prison in Cuba?" I mean, these are pretty basic questions.

WINSTEAD: Right.

MATTHEWS: Was he a spy? What was going on down there?

WINSTEAD: Right.

MATTHEWS: And what is the Cuban embargo? Basic information they want. How do you travel to Cuba? What's a community college? A top question here. How much does community college cost? People want a little more background. Clearly.

JONATHAN ALTER, THE DAILY BEAST: I think the important thing about this speech, some of the lines might be remembered, his tone, which was Churchill-ian when he talked about -- you know, Churchill talked about the broad sunlit up lands.

MATTHEWS: Right.

ALTER: That uplift was extremely important. It will be remembered. But I believe what will be most remembered from this over the next 10 to 15 years is the community college part of it. This is Barack Obama's G.I. bill.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

ALTER: And even though it's not going to get enacted in his term, he will always be credited for it.

MATTHEWS: Who are the people -- give me the picture of who's going to need this.

ALTER: And you've got to understand. Just in terms of new media. So the White House has done these videos every day for six years. Right. The one that was done two weeks ago where the president was on Air Force One talking about free community college was the most watched video of his entire presidency.

MATTHEWS: What was it about?

ALTER: It was outlining his free community college program. There is huge interest in this. In Tennessee which is the prototype where 90 percent of high school kids are going to enroll in this, you know, Tennessee community college program. It was more than double what was expected. There is huge demand for this.

MATTHEWS: Yes, of course. I think it's great.

ALTER: Young Americans know it's the only way they're going to be able to compete in a global economy is if they get that --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: Technical. Technical. It's not going back to photography school. I mean, that stuff. It's learning stuff that you get a job with.

ALTER: Right.

MIKE PAUL, FORMER RUDY GIULIANI AID: It's not just that because community colleges are also known as places where you complete your GED first and then you go onto college work. So I think that's one of the reasons when you're talking about the message that you had before, which is this is an inside the beltway message or is it a message for the layman, to the citizens of our country. That's the kind of answer they want.

You need to know that. There are a lot of people that still have not completed their GED. And they're not just interested to go on community college.

MATTHEWS: No.

PAUL: But you're going to help me to complete two things in one. That's a big deal.

(CROSSTALK)

ALTER: That's an important point.

WINSTEAD: And I would say --

ALTER: Nobody asked how do you pay for it? All the Republicans, well, how they're going to pay for it. They're like this is dead on arrival. It's not going to -- the bill passed unanimously in 1944, the G.I. Bill.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

ALTER: Nobody was saying how we're going to pay for it. They understood this is an investment in the future of the country. We need to do this to have a strong nation. And that's what will be interesting to see whether some of that starts to come through.

MATTHEWS: So this means to a kid, with no money from the parents, working kid from the neighborhoods, from the row houses where I grew up originally, and he now or she now knows, look, worse comes to worse, if I can get enough money just to live on, I can go to college.

WINSTEAD: Yes.

PAUL: And I can finish my high school degree, many of them are saying, and I have a lot of guilt and shame surrounding that that many of them have not finished. They might be a little older as well.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

PAUL: They're not 18 years old and going and completing by 20, for example. They might be 19, 20, 25 some of them. And they're going to finish that GED and they're going to continue and get a college degree.

MATTHEWS: And also, from both ends, macro and micro economics, macro, we need a work force. We need trained people.

PAUL: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Who can handle -- you know, like those guys, mostly guys who worked like Euro Motors and fix Mercedes. They're making a lot of money.

WINSTEAD: Yes.

MATTHEWS: And that job needs to get done.

ALTER: So other than Tennessee, Chicago is the other prototype for this. And what Rahm Emanuel did there is he blew up the old community college system. He got 70 local big employers. They took over the curriculums of these schools. One of them is IT. One of them is hospitality. One of them is health care. One of them is advanced manufacturing. And they're actually training kids for the jobs that they need.

The problem is the dropouts are off the charts. So it's like 75 percent dropout nationally. So for these schools to get the money, they have to have programs that get these kids to graduate.

MATTHEWS: All these folks are staying with us. More on this historic night.

I want to get their assessment personally on what they think is going to last from this speech. What's the impact going to be.

But the president clearly had the wind at his back tonight. And I think that Jonathan had it right. There was a tone tonight that was really more optimistic than we've seen in this whole presidency.

This is HARDBALL. Of course the place for politics.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: And everyone in this Congress who still refuses to raise the minimum wage, I say this. If you truly believe you can work full time and support a family on less than $15,000 a year, try it. If not, vote to give millions of the hardest working people in America a raise.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

OBAMA: I have no more campaigns to run. My only agenda --

(APPLAUSE)

(LAUGHTER)

OBAMA: I know because I won both of them.

(APPLAUSE)

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: We're back with the HARDBALL roundtable, Mike, Lizz and Jonathan. And a final question.

I've got to ask you this because you're in show business here. Did you see the combination of what he threw there? First of all, he retorts with a great -- you know, adlib, puts them down. And he does it like he put his spirit and looked away. Like complete insolence in a way.

That was a little cold. I think he (INAUDIBLE). That was a little cold. And then he comes back with that incredible, irresistible smile.

WINSTEAD: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Remember that he can bring on when he wants to?

WINSTEAD: Yes.

MATTHEWS: There was a lot of action there from him in terms of drama, I thought.

WINSTEAD: I -- there is no bigger sign of confidence than silence and reaction. You know, when you can, you feel you might have done something wrong, you take a moment, you give a smile and you take it in because you know you're winning. Like that's when you know you're winning.

MATTHEWS: Control the signs. I agree with you.

WINSTEAD: Absolutely.

MATTHEWS: Jonathan, historically, you're the big picture guy here, I think, it's fair to say. The president, will this matter? Two weeks from now, three weeks from now?

ALTER: Not a huge amount. But there are a couple of interesting things.

MATTHEWS: I mean, you're sunny up. Will they still be sunny two weeks from now?

(LAUGHTER)

ALTER: It's important that he's not going into the last two years of his presidency on the defensive. He is going to enjoy it and the American public wants their president to be sunny and enjoying the job. And in the last couple of years, there were doubts about whether he liked the job. So he's sending a signal on that. And this was the real Obama who both, you know, trash talks a little bit. That's what he's like in private.

And also he has been really concerned about the original promise in Boston in 2004 that we're going to get beyond red state and blue state America. And this defense tonight --

MATTHEWS: Double down.

ALTER: Of what he called a better politics. He really wants to keep people focused on we can do better. We can have a better politics. We can have a functional Washington. That's his big message going into the last couple of years.

PAUL: You know, but the problem with that is the Republicans are weighted, right now, starting tomorrow, first thing in the morning. And they're going to start pounding him, pounding him, with messages of it doesn't touch the heart. It doesn't touch your pocket. There was a glow around the message tonight in my opinion. I think when he was in his campaign there was beyond glow. There was promise. And there was hope.

I don't think people are feeling that strong attachment emotionally to the message tonight that's going to last beyond the punches that are going to come. Because if we were able, for example, to talk about, yes, I feel it in my pocketbook, I feel it in my family, my job is a little bit better. I don't really have to worry about the stress around health care.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

PAUL: And what it costs, and if someone's going to get hurt. Those are things that are emotions and in politics, as you know, where --

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: OK. Lizz.

PAUL: From intellectual perspective.

MATTHEWS: Close it down, Lizz. Last words.

WINSTEAD: You see, what I think is he did something that was very brave when he was elected and that is make plans that take a long time in a country that has learned to put a pie in the microwave rather than cook it, bake it, watch it and see it come to fruition. And now he is seeing that pie come out of the oven, with the economy, with health care being successful. And he can take a breath and with gas prices down he is like this is what I was talking about.

And he gets to do that. So he gets to make big plans and talk about community college and bigger things. And I think that when the economy does great, and now the Republicans have come and punch hard, why do you want to cut -- why do you want tax us? They're going to say, you know what, we need to share in that.

MATTHEWS: Well, they're all views that are going to matter in the next couple of weeks.

So I want to thank our roundtable, of course, Mike Paul, Lizz Winstead and Jonathan Alter.

When we return our coverage continues with a replay of President Obama's full State of the Union address. You can watch that right here coming up.

You're watching MSNBC, the place for politics.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED. END

[Copy: Content and programming copyright 2015 MSNBC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. Copyright 2015 CQ-Roll Call, Inc. All materials herein are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of CQ-Roll Call. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.]

LOAD-DATE: January 23, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 66537

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: TCHW

Copyright 2015 ProQuest Information and Learning
All Rights Reserved
Copyright 2015 MSNBC

US Official News

January 19, 2015 Monday

New Mexico: Congressman Ben Ray Luján Votes for Legislation to Prevent Veteran Suicides

LENGTH: 480 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Democratic Party has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District applauded the unanimous passage of legislation in the House last night to help prevent suicide among our nation's veterans. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act expands access to mental health services and increases the capacity and efficiency of VA care to address the needs of veterans returning home from war. The bill passed the House last Congress, but did not receive a final vote in the Senate before the end of last session. It was reintroduced this month with **Luján** as a cosponsor.

"I applaud the swift passage of this important legislation after efforts to pass it in the Senate in December fell just short. I hope the Senate will act quickly to send it to the President's desk," **Luján** said. "With an estimated 22 veterans committing suicide every day - more than 8,000 each year, we are facing an epidemic that we cannot ignore. The brave men and women who have sacrificed so much to protect and defend our nation, our values, and our way of life must receive the support they need and have earned. An estimated 600,000 men and women who have served in combat have traumatic brain injury, PTSD, or depression, and we must have the capacity to ensure access to the vital mental health services that can help them heal from the wounds of war. This legislation is an important step forward, and must be part of our continuing effort to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans."

The legislation, which is named in honor of Marine Corporal Clay Hunt, an Iraq and Afghanistan War veteran who was awarded the Purple Heart and dedicated suicide prevention advocate who tragically took his own life, includes a number of provisions to increase access to care. The bill:

Establishes a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning service members with accessing VA mental health care services;
Requires the VA to create a one-stop shot, interactive website to serve as a centralized information source regarding all mental health services to veterans;
Takes steps to address the shortage of mental health care professionals by authorizing the VA to conduct a student loan repayment pilot program aimed at recruiting and retaining psychiatrists;
Requires yearly evaluations, conducted by a third party, of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the DOD and VA to determine what is working and what is not working and to make recommendations to improve care; and

Veterans Service Organizations, including the Military Officers Association of American and Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America have voiced support for the legislation.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutioLondon:

LOAD-DATE: April 29, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

January 19, 2015 Monday

New Mexico: Congressman Ben Ray Luján Votes for Legislation to Prevent Veteran Suicides

LENGTH: 480 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Democratic Party has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District applauded the unanimous passage of legislation in the House last night to help prevent suicide among our nation's veterans. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act expands access to mental health services and increases the capacity and efficiency of VA care to address the needs of veterans returning home from war. The bill passed the House last Congress, but did not receive a final vote in the Senate before the end of last session. It was reintroduced this month with **Luján** as a cosponsor.

"I applaud the swift passage of this important legislation after efforts to pass it in the Senate in December fell just short. I hope the Senate will act quickly to send it to the President's desk," **Luján** said. "With an estimated 22 veterans committing suicide every day - more than 8,000 each year, we are facing an epidemic that we cannot ignore. The brave men and women who have sacrificed so much to protect and defend our nation, our values, and our way of life must receive the support they need and have earned. An estimated 600,000 men and women who have served in combat have traumatic brain injury, PTSD, or depression, and we must have the capacity to ensure access to the vital mental health services that can help them heal from the wounds of war. This legislation is an important step forward, and must be part of our continuing effort to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans."

The legislation, which is named in honor of Marine Corporal Clay Hunt, an Iraq and Afghanistan War veteran who was awarded the Purple Heart and dedicated suicide prevention advocate who tragically took his own life, includes a number of provisions to increase access to care. The bill:

Establishes a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning service members with accessing VA mental health care services;
Requires the VA to create a one-stop shot, interactive website to serve as a centralized information source regarding all mental health services to veterans;
Takes steps to address the shortage of mental health care professionals by authorizing the VA to conduct a student loan repayment pilot program aimed at recruiting and retaining psychiatrists;
Requires yearly evaluations, conducted by a third party, of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the DOD and VA to determine what is working and what is not working and to make recommendations to improve care; and

Veterans Service Organizations, including the Military Officers Association of American and Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America have voiced support for the legislation.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutioLondon:

LOAD-DATE: January 20, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

296 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

January 17, 2015 Saturday

New Mexico: Congressman Ben Ray Luján Votes for Legislation to Prevent Veteran Suicides

LENGTH: 451 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Democratic Party has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District applauded the unanimous passage of legislation in the House last night to help prevent suicide among our nation's veterans. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act expands access to mental health services and increases the capacity and efficiency of VA care to address the needs of veterans returning home from war. The bill passed the House last Congress, but did not receive a final vote in the Senate before the end of last session. It was reintroduced this month with **Luján** as a cosponsor.

"I applaud the swift passage of this important legislation after efforts to pass it in the Senate in December fell just short. I hope the Senate will act quickly to send it to the President's desk," **Luján** said. "With an estimated 22 veterans committing suicide every day - more than 8,000 each year, we are facing an epidemic that we cannot ignore. The brave men and women who have sacrificed so much to protect and defend our nation, our values, and our way of life must receive the support they need and have earned. An estimated 600,000 men and women who have served in combat have traumatic brain injury, PTSD, or depression, and we must have the capacity to ensure access to the vital mental health services that can help them heal from the wounds of war. This legislation is an important step forward, and must be part of our continuing effort to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans."

The legislation, which is named in honor of Marine Corporal Clay Hunt, an Iraq and Afghanistan War veteran who was awarded the Purple Heart and dedicated suicide prevention advocate who tragically took his own life, includes a number of provisions to increase access to care. The bill:

Establishes a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning service members with accessing VA mental health care services;
Requires the VA to create a one-stop shot, interactive website to serve as a centralized information source regarding all mental health services to veterans;
Takes steps to address the shortage of mental health care professionals by authorizing the VA to conduct a student loan repayment pilot program aimed at recruiting and retaining psychiatrists;
Requires yearly evaluations, conducted by a third party, of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the DOD and VA to determine what is working and what is not working and to make recommendations to improve care; and

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutioLondon:

LOAD-DATE: April 28, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

297 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

January 17, 2015 Saturday

New Mexico: Congressman Ben Ray Luján Votes for Legislation to Prevent Veteran Suicides

LENGTH: 451 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Democratic Party has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District applauded the unanimous passage of legislation in the House last night to help prevent suicide among our nation's veterans. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act expands access to mental health services and increases the capacity and efficiency of VA care to address the needs of veterans returning home from war. The bill passed the House last Congress, but did not receive a final vote in the Senate before the end of last session. It was reintroduced this month with **Luján** as a cosponsor.

"I applaud the swift passage of this important legislation after efforts to pass it in the Senate in December fell just short. I hope the Senate will act quickly to send it to the President's desk," **Luján** said. "With an estimated 22 veterans committing suicide every day - more than 8,000 each year, we are facing an epidemic that we cannot ignore. The brave men and women who have sacrificed so much to protect and defend our nation, our values, and our way of life must receive the support they need and have earned. An estimated 600,000 men and women who have served in

combat have traumatic brain injury, PTSD, or depression, and we must have the capacity to ensure access to the vital mental health services that can help them heal from the wounds of war. This legislation is an important step forward, and must be part of our continuing effort to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans."

The legislation, which is named in honor of Marine Corporal Clay Hunt, an Iraq and Afghanistan War veteran who was awarded the Purple Heart and dedicated suicide prevention advocate who tragically took his own life, includes a number of provisions to increase access to care. The bill:

Establishes a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning service members with accessing VA mental health care services;
Requires the VA to create a one-stop shot, interactive website to serve as a centralized information source regarding all mental health services to veterans;
Takes steps to address the shortage of mental health care professionals by authorizing the VA to conduct a student loan repayment pilot program aimed at recruiting and retaining psychiatrists;
Requires yearly evaluations, conducted by a third party, of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the DOD and VA to determine what is working and what is not working and to make recommendations to improve care; and

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutioLondon:

LOAD-DATE: February 13, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

298 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Energy Monitor Worldwide

January 14, 2015 Wednesday

Funds for aviation fuel line approved

LENGTH: 236 words

The Tucumcari City Commission approved a $200,000 expenditure to make improvements to aviation fuel lines from tanks to dispensing equipment at Tucumcari Municipal Airport.

About $180,000 of the fuel line improvements will be financed through the New Mexico Department of Transportation's aviation division, with the rest coming from city funds, according to Ralph Lopez, a project manager with the city's Community Development Department.
The commission also renewed the city's five-year lease agreement with Versa Tech Industries, a paving contractor, and the Tucumcari Chamber of Commerce's $1-per-year sub-lease of office space

to U. S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**. The office houses **Lujan's** field representative Ron Wilmot.
Lopez said transportation department inspectors had found the current fuel aviation fuel line was worn and needed to be replaced. Lopez said he found grant funds, and applied.
For the Versa Tech lease, the city will receive $1,700 per month in rent for property kn the 700 block of Campbell Avenue, and $225 a month for property on the 800 block of West Maple Street.
Patsy Gresham, executive director of the Tucumcari Chamber of Commerce, requested the continuation of the sublease for Rep. **Lujan's** office space. The chamber leases space from the city for its headquarters at Fifth Street and Route 66 Boulevard, and the chamber essentially donates the office for Rep. **Lujan**. 2014 Global Data Point.

LOAD-DATE: January 27, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Publication

JOURNAL-CODE: 1606

Copyright 2015 Global Data Point
Provided by Syndigate Media Inc.*(Syndigate.info)*
All Rights Reserved

299 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

January 14, 2015 Wednesday

New Mexico: Congressman Ben Ray Luján Votes for Legislation to Prevent Veteran Suicides

LENGTH: 480 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Democratic Party has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District applauded the unanimous passage of legislation in the House last night to help prevent suicide among our nation's veterans. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act expands access to mental health services and increases the capacity and efficiency of VA care to address the needs of veterans returning home from war. The bill passed the House last Congress, but did not receive a final vote in the Senate before the end of last session. It was reintroduced this month with **Luján** as a cosponsor.

"I applaud the swift passage of this important legislation after efforts to pass it in the Senate in December fell just short. I hope the Senate will act quickly to send it to the President's desk," **Luján** said. "With an estimated 22 veterans committing suicide every day - more than 8,000 each year, we are facing an epidemic that we cannot ignore. The brave men and women who have sacrificed so much to protect and defend our nation, our values, and our way of life must receive the support they need and have earned. An estimated 600,000 men and women who have served in

combat have traumatic brain injury, PTSD, or depression, and we must have the capacity to ensure access to the vital mental health services that can help them heal from the wounds of war. This legislation is an important step forward, and must be part of our continuing effort to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans."

The legislation, which is named in honor of Marine Corporal Clay Hunt, an Iraq and Afghanistan War veteran who was awarded the Purple Heart and dedicated suicide prevention advocate who tragically took his own life, includes a number of provisions to increase access to care. The bill:

Establishes a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning service members with accessing VA mental health care services;
Requires the VA to create a one-stop shot, interactive website to serve as a centralized information source regarding all mental health services to veterans;
Takes steps to address the shortage of mental health care professionals by authorizing the VA to conduct a student loan repayment pilot program aimed at recruiting and retaining psychiatrists;
Requires yearly evaluations, conducted by a third party, of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the DOD and VA to determine what is working and what is not working and to make recommendations to improve care; and

Veterans Service Organizations, including the Military Officers Association of American and Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America have voiced support for the legislation.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutioLondon:

LOAD-DATE: April 19, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

300 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

January 14, 2015 Wednesday

New Mexico: Congressman Ben Ray Luján Votes for Legislation to Prevent Veteran Suicides

LENGTH: 480 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Democratic Party has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District applauded the unanimous passage of legislation in the House last night to help prevent suicide among our nation's veterans. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act expands access to mental health services and increases the capacity and efficiency of VA care to address the needs of veterans returning home from war. The bill passed the House last Congress, but did not receive a final vote in the Senate before the end of last session. It was reintroduced this month with **Luján** as a cosponsor.

"I applaud the swift passage of this important legislation after efforts to pass it in the Senate in December fell just short. I hope the Senate will act quickly to send it to the President's desk," **Luján** said. "With an estimated 22 veterans committing suicide every day - more than 8,000 each year, we are facing an epidemic that we cannot ignore. The brave men and women who have sacrificed so much to protect and defend our nation, our values, and our way of life must receive the support they need and have earned. An estimated 600,000 men and women who have served in combat have traumatic brain injury, PTSD, or depression, and we must have the capacity to ensure access to the vital mental health services that can help them heal from the wounds of war. This legislation is an important step forward, and must be part of our continuing effort to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans."

The legislation, which is named in honor of Marine Corporal Clay Hunt, an Iraq and Afghanistan War veteran who was awarded the Purple Heart and dedicated suicide prevention advocate who tragically took his own life, includes a number of provisions to increase access to care. The bill:

Establishes a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning service members with accessing VA mental health care services;
Requires the VA to create a one-stop shot, interactive website to serve as a centralized information source regarding all mental health services to veterans;
Takes steps to address the shortage of mental health care professionals by authorizing the VA to conduct a student loan repayment pilot program aimed at recruiting and retaining psychiatrists;
Requires yearly evaluations, conducted by a third party, of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the DOD and VA to determine what is working and what is not working and to make recommendations to improve care; and

Veterans Service Organizations, including the Military Officers Association of American and Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America have voiced support for the legislation.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutioLondon:

LOAD-DATE: January 15, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 13, 2015

LUJAN VOTES FOR LEGISLATION TO HELP PREVENT VETERAN SUICIDES;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 473 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District applauded the unanimous passage of legislation in the House last night to help prevent suicide among our nation's veterans. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act expands access to mental health services and increases the capacity and efficiency of VA care to address the needs of veterans returning home from war. The bill passed the House last Congress, but did not receive a final vote in the Senate before the end of last session. It was reintroduced this month with **Lujan** as a cosponsor.

"I applaud the swift passage of this important legislation after efforts to pass it in the Senate in December fell just short. I hope the Senate will act quickly to send it to the President's desk," **Lujan** said. "With an estimated 22 veterans committing suicide every day - more than 8,000 each year, we are facing an epidemic that we cannot ignore. The brave men and women who have sacrificed so much to protect and defend our nation, our values, and our way of life must receive the support they need and have earned. An estimated 600,000 men and women who have served in combat have traumatic brain injury, PTSD, or depression, and we must have the capacity to ensure access to the vital mental health services that can help them heal from the wounds of war. This legislation is an important step forward, and must be part of our continuing effort to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans."

The legislation, which is named in honor of Marine Corporal Clay Hunt, an Iraq and Afghanistan War veteran who was awarded the Purple Heart and dedicated suicide prevention advocate who tragically took his own life, includes a number of provisions to increase access to care. The bill:

* Establishes a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning servicemembers with accessing VA mental health care services;

* Requires the VA to create a one-stop shot, interactive website to serve as a centralized information source regarding all mental health services to veterans;

* Takes steps to address the shortage of mental health care professionals by authorizing the VA to conduct a student loan repayment pilot program aimed at recruiting and retaining psychiatrists;

* Requires yearly evaluations, conducted by a third party, of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the DOD and VA to determine what is working and what is not working and to make recommendations to improve care; and

Veterans Service Organizations, including the Military Officers Association of American and Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America have voiced support for the legislation.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-votes-for-legislation-to-help-prevent-veteran-suicides/

LOAD-DATE: January 14, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Greenwire

January 13, 2015 Tuesday

HOUSE: Dems' campaign committee announces leadership team for 2016

SECTION: Congress Vol. 10 No. 9

LENGTH: 219 words

Daniel Bush, E&E reporter

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee today announced its executive leadership team for the 2016 elections, when the party will try to whittle away at the GOP's massive majority in the House.

Hayley Dierker will serve as the DCCC's chief operating officer and chief of staff. Dierker previously was chief of staff to former two-term DCCC Chairman Steve Israel (D-N.Y.), who was recently replaced as chairman by Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D-N.M.) last year.

Brandon English will run the committee's digital communications and fundraising effort. English served as digital director last cycle, when the DCCC raised a record $70 million in online donations.

The DCCC also tapped Dan Sena to coordinate voter contact and serve as a senior adviser to **Luján**. Sena ran Sen. Tom Udall's (D-N.M.) re-election campaign last year and was political director for the Democratic Governors Association in 2012.

The committee also brought back Jackie Forte-Mackay as its chief financial officer for the 11th cycle in a row and hired Aaron Trujillo to serve as another top adviser to **Luján**, among other staff changes.

"These are a diverse group of experienced veterans who know how to build quality campaigns, recruit top candidates and win tough races," DCCC Executive Director Kelly Ward said in a statement.

LOAD-DATE: February 10, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Environment and Energy Publishing, LLC

Quay County Sun (Tucumcari, New Mexico)

Distributed by Tribune Content Agency

January 13, 2015 Tuesday

Funds for aviation fuel line approved

BYLINE: Quay County Sun, Tucumcari, N.M.

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 260 words

Jan. 13--The Tucumcari City Commission approved a $200,000 expenditure to make improvements to aviation fuel lines from tanks to dispensing equipment at Tucumcari Municipal Airport.

About $180,000 of the fuel line improvements will be financed through the New Mexico Department of Transportation's aviation division, with the rest coming from city funds, according to Ralph Lopez, a project manager with the city's Community Development Department.

The commission also renewed the city's five-year lease agreement with Versa Tech Industries, a paving contractor, and the Tucumcari Chamber of Commerce's $1-per-year sub-lease of office space to U. S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**. The office houses **Lujan's** field representative Ron Wilmot.

Lopez said transportation department inspectors had found the current fuel aviation fuel line was worn and needed to be replaced. Lopez said he found grant funds, and applied.

For the Versa Tech lease, the city will receive $1,700 per month in rent for property kn the 700 block of Campbell Avenue, and $225 a month for property on the 800 block of West Maple Street.

Patsy Gresham, executive director of the Tucumcari Chamber of Commerce, requested the continuation of the sublease for Rep. **Lujan's** office space. The chamber leases space from the city for its headquarters at Fifth Street and Route 66 Boulevard, and the chamber essentially donates the office for Rep. **Lujan**.

___ (c)2015 the Quay County Sun (Tucumcari, N.M.) Visit the Quay County Sun (Tucumcari, N.M.) at www.qcsunonline.com Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC

LOAD-DATE: January 14, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20150113-QY-Funds-for-aviation-fuel-line-approved-0113-20150113

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: QY

Copyright 2015 Quay County Sun

States News Service

January 13, 2015 Tuesday

LUJAN VOTES FOR LEGISLATION TO HELP PREVENT VETERAN SUICIDES

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 463 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District applauded the unanimous passage of legislation in the House last night to help prevent suicide among our nation's veterans. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act expands access to mental health services and increases the capacity and efficiency of VA care to address the needs of veterans returning home from war. The bill passed the House last Congress, but did not receive a final vote in the Senate before the end of last session. It was reintroduced this month with **Lujan** as a cosponsor.

"I applaud the swift passage of this important legislation after efforts to pass it in the Senate in December fell just short. I hope the Senate will act quickly to send it to the President's desk," **Lujan** said. "With an estimated 22 veterans committing suicide every day - more than 8,000 each year, we are facing an epidemic that we cannot ignore. The brave men and women who have sacrificed so much to protect and defend our nation, our values, and our way of life must receive the support they need and have earned. An estimated 600,000 men and women who have served in combat have traumatic brain injury, PTSD, or depression, and we must have the capacity to ensure access to the vital mental health services that can help them heal from the wounds of war. This legislation is an important step forward, and must be part of our continuing effort to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans."

The legislation, which is named in honor of Marine Corporal Clay Hunt, an Iraq and Afghanistan War veteran who was awarded the Purple Heart and dedicated suicide prevention advocate who tragically took his own life, includes a number of provisions to increase access to care. The bill:

" Establishes a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning servicemembers with accessing VA mental health care services;

" Requires the VA to create a one-stop shot, interactive website to serve as a centralized information source regarding all mental health services to veterans;

" Takes steps to address the shortage of mental health care professionals by authorizing the VA to conduct a student loan repayment pilot program aimed at recruiting and retaining psychiatrists;

" Requires yearly evaluations, conducted by a third party, of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the DOD and VA to determine what is working and what is not working and to make recommendations to improve care; and

Veterans Service Organizations, including the Military Officers Association of American and Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America have voiced support for the legislation.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: January 15, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

January 12, 2015 Monday

Navajo president says Republican led Congress could aid self-sufficiency goals

BYLINE: Kathy Helms navajo1@gallupindependent.com, DIN É BUREAU

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1

LENGTH: 1155 words

DATELINE: WINDOW ROCK

WINDOW ROCK -- Now that the Republicans control Congress, the Navajo Nation, which is predominantly Democrat, has an opportunity to begin working with the majority party and "really tell our story and how we'd like to be self-sufficient," Deswood Tome, policy adviser to Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly, said Saturday.

"The Republican Party very much supports self-sufficiency and it would be great for us to connect with the GOP and show them that in the long run, self-sufficiency is what we want," Tome said. "We'd like to put an agenda together on self-sufficiency and a plan and work with them to get measures passed by Congress that put us on a long-term mission to truly become self-sufficient."

Part of that plan would include amending laws that Congress has not addressed in decades, he said.

After capturing control of both houses of Congress in the November elections, the Republicans have a majority in the Senate of 54-46 and in the House of Representatives of 246-188, according to the Navajo Nation Washington Office. There are 13 new senators and 58 new members of the House of Representatives.

Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., is the new Senate Majority Leader and Harry Reid, D-Nev., retains his Democrat leadership role as the Senate minority leader. John Boehner, R-Ohio., was reelected as the House speaker and Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., remains the House minority leader.

Impact to Navajo

There were no changes in Senate representation from Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. However, Arizona has two new legislators in the House of Representatives.

Ruben Gallego, a Democrat, takes over for the retired Ed Pastor in District 7 and Martha McSally, a Republican, takes over for District 2 Democrat Ron Barber. Democrat Reps. Ann Kirkpatrick, Raúl Grijalva and Kyrsten Simena, and Republican Reps. Paul Gosar, Matt Salmon, David Schweikert, and Trent Franks, all return to the House of Representatives.

The three incumbent representatives from New Mexico -- Democrat Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and **Ben Ray Luján** Jr., and Republican Rep. Steve Pearce -- are all returning.

Utah will have one new legislator coming into office. Mia Love, Republican, replaces District 4 Democrat Jim Matheson. Republican Reps. Rob Bishop, Chris Stewart and Jason Chaffetz are all returning to the House of Representatives.

Committee leverage

With the thousands of bills competing to get through Congress, tribes are low priority, Tome said, but there have been some committee assignments made in the Senate that could be favorable to Navajo.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., will be on the Indian Affairs Committee, Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. He also will chair the Armed Services Committee.

"McCain has served on Indian Affairs for a long time throughout his career," Tome said. "He's going to continue to work on behalf of tribes from a conservative standpoint of view."

Sen. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., is on the Foreign Relations Committee, the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, the Judiciary Committee and the Special Committee on Aging.

From Utah, Republican Sen. Mike Lee is on the Armed Services Committee, Energy and Natural Resources, the Joint Economic Committee, and the Judiciary Committee. Orin Hatch, R-Utah., is on Finance Committee, Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, Judiciary Committee and the Special Committee on Aging.

On behalf of New Mexico, Democrat Sen. Tom Udall is on the Appropriations Committee, Commerce Committee, Foreign Relations Committee, Rules Committee and the Indian Affairs Committee.

Udall is the ranking Democrat on the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies. The subcommittee has jurisdiction over the U.S. Forest Service, a part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Indian Health Service, a part of the Department of Health and Human Services, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, among other agencies.

Martin Heinrich, D-N. M., is on the Armed Services Committee, Energy Committee, Intelligence Committee and the Joint Economic Committee.

Much of the committee rosters from the House were not available as of the first day of the new Congress, however Rep. Rob Bishop, R-Utah., will lead the Natural Resources committee, which is the committee of jurisdiction over Indian affairs.

Appropriations

Tome, who worked at the Navajo Nation Washington Office during Presidents Albert Hale and Joe Shirley Jr.'s administrations, monitored appropriations and gave strategic input into getting projects moved into the appropriations bills.

The president of the United States puts projects into his budget and then hands it over to Congress, and then they work to pass those measures, Tome said.

"Strategically, you've got to get your projects into the president's budget, and sometimes that requires working three fiscal years to do so," he said.

With Udall being on the Appropriations Committee, he can make decisions that are advantageous to Navajo because he gets to be a part of determining how appropriations are made, Tome said.

"In bills passed by Congress, there are authorizations made, and an authorization is a dollar figure," he said. "But authorizing the money is not where the battle is. The battle is getting the money appropriated. Getting it authorized is one thing; getting it appropriated is the tougher challenge."

Energy issues

It is expected that Don Young, R-Alaska., will remain the chair of the subcommittee on Indian and Alaska Native Affairs. Paul Gosar, R-Ariz., and Raul Grijalva, D-Ariz., are also expected to be on the subcommittee.

The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will include Chairman John Barrasso, McCain, Lisa Murkowski, John Hoeven, Mike Crapo, and new members Steve Daines, James Lankford and Jerry Moran. Democrats include Jon Tester, Maria Cantwell, Udall, Al Franken, Brian Schatz and Heidi Heitkamp.

"Senator John Barrasso being the new chairman on the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs is good for Navajo because we have a working dialogue and relationship with him," Tome said. "Navajo has always had the ability to transcend party lines and work well with members of both sides of the aisle. I'm very pleased that John Barrasso is the chair because he has shown the tribes that he is very genuine. He very much is supportive of self-sufficiency."

In 2000, Congress passed a law which gave Navajo the ability to develop the General Leasing Act provisions.

"Now, all matters of land only require Navajo government approval," Tome said. "We need more laws like that passed. I think if we could do more changes in law that regard land status and energy, we could really build a new legacy of self-sufficiency.

Congressman Don Young introduced a House bill in the 113th Congress which would have cut federal red tape on energy development for tribes.

"That bill almost got through," Tome said. "I'd like to see Don Young's bill come back alive again in this new Congress."

LOAD-DATE: January 15, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

306 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

January 11, 2015 Sunday

NM delegation adapting to power shift in Congress

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. B2

LENGTH: 763 words

As the U.S. House and Senate get back to work in Washington this month, some New Mexicans are worried about their delegation's power in the new 114th Congress.

They should be.

After all, four of the state's five members of Congress are Democrats. That creates an undeniable power problem when Republicans now control both the House and Senate. And not only is four-fifths of the delegation Democrat, but our Democrats are fairly low on the totem pole.

Sen. Tom Udall just started his second term, which makes him 47th in the 100-member Senate in terms of seniority. Not a rookie, but not exactly a high-ranking member either.

Sen. Martin Heinrich - two years into his first term - ranks 79th in Senate seniority.

So, New Mexico has two relatively junior, minority-party senators serving in a chamber where Republicans now rule and seniority is paramount. Not good.

But there is a silver lining. Udall remains on the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee and Heinrich was just appointed to the House Armed Services Committee. That means federally-dependent New Mexico still has an advocate at the table when Congress cuts checks, and our military-heavy economy has an ally on the Senate panel controlling Pentagon policy.

New Mexico will need Udall and Heinrich to make the absolute most of those roles.

On the House side, Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, now in his fourth term, has finally started to acquire some seniority and rank - in the mostly powerless House Democratic caucus.

Luján is also the new chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. It's a plum assignment that should help the Hispanic congressman boost his own national profile. But the DCCC job will require a lot of heavy lifting if **Luján** hopes to do it well enough to get Democrats back in contention for a House takeover.

New Mexico Republicans already are licking their chops at the notion that **Luján** could become distracted by the national job at the expense of his district, making him vulnerable to a GOP challenge. That's wishful thinking - at least for now - and **Luján** assures me he can work just as hard for his constituents despite his new role. We'll see.

Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, a Democrat representing Albuquerque, is starting her second term in Congress. **Lujan** Grisham proved popular in her first term, getting herself elected president of the freshman class. Winning the popularity contest immediately raised the former Bernalillo County commissioner's profile in Washington.

Lujan Grisham has proven to be well-liked in the House, and she works hard, but that doesn't guarantee she can bring home the bacon in a Republican-controlled chamber. The congresswoman knows she has her work cut out for her.

That brings us to Rep. Steve Pearce, the delegation's lone Republican. Pearce is not only in the majority party, he's also a relatively senior member of the House, now serving his sixth term. That should bode well for Pearce - and more importantly, for New Mexico.

The problem is that he marginalized himself in the House power structure when he voted against John Boehner for speaker in the last Congress. Pearce's vote against Boehner was popular with his tea party constituents back home, but he's paid a price in Washington.

For several years, Pearce has angled - to no avail - for seats on either the House Armed Services or Energy and Commerce Committees. Boehner, who doles out assignments, gave Pearce the cold shoulder in the form of an unglamorous post on the House Financial Services Committee last Congress. Pearce, to his credit, gamely worked the role and was among the most aggressive members of the committee in questioning the administration's fiscal policies. But the former oil industry executive would rather be leading a charge for more domestic drilling on the energy committee, or working to secure New Mexico's military bases on Armed Services.

In a vote for his own political relevance, Pearce reversed course and supported Boehner for House speaker last week. It was a smart move that might already be paying dividends. I'm told Pearce has a face-to-face meeting scheduled with Boehner this week to talk about his committee assignments in the new Congress.

Last week, I asked Heinrich about the delegation's precarious power perch. He put a brave face on the situation, noting that it will require some bipartisan creativity to get things done.

"It just means there are different opportunities," Heinrich said. "You have to be nimble and you have to think about where the places are that you can get (consensus). There are always opportunities to get things done for the state."

LOAD-DATE: January 12, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2015 Albuquerque Journal

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 8, 2015

LUJAN TO CONTINUE SERVING ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE, WILL SIT ON HEALTH AND COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY SUBCOMMITTEES;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 441 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he will continue to serve on the House Energy and Commerce Committee in the 114th Congress and will sit on the Health Subcommittee and the Communications and Technology Subcommittee.

"I am honored to serve on the Health Subcommittee this Congress and I am ready to dive into critical health issues that are so important to New Mexico. From increasing access to health care and reducing health disparities to addressing drug abuse that has torn apart too many families in New Mexico, a seat on this important subcommittee will strengthen my ability to advocate for my

constituents and for New Mexico," Congressman **Lujan** said. "I also look forward to continuing my work on the Communications and Technology Subcommittee and building on my efforts to promote broadband expansion in rural communities across New Mexico and to encourage increased access to the latest technologies that have the potential to promote economic growth and new opportunities."

The Health Subcommittee has jurisdiction over public health and quarantine; hospital construction; mental health; biomedical research and development; health information technology, privacy, and cybersecurity; public health insurance and private health insurance; medical malpractice and medical malpractice insurance; the regulation of food, drugs, and cosmetics; drug abuse. In addition, the subcommittee oversees the Department of Health and Human Services; the National Institutes of Health; the Center for Disease Control, Indian Health Service; and relevant aspects of the Department of Homeland Security.

The Communications and Technology Subcommittee has responsibility over electronic communications, both interstate and foreign, including voice, video, audio, and data, whether transmitted by wire or wirelessly, and whether transmitted by telecommunications, commercial or private mobile service, broadcast, cable, satellite, microwave, or other mode. Its jurisdiction also includes emergency and public safety communications; cybersecurity, privacy, and data security; and overseeing the Federal Communications Commission, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, and the Office of Emergency Communications in the Department of Homeland Security.

Last Congress, **Lujan** served on the Communications and Technology Subcommittee and the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-to-continue-serving-on-energy-and-commerce-committee-will-sit-on-health-and-communications-and-technology-subcommittees/

LOAD-DATE: January 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 8, 2015

LUJAN: REPUBLICANS' LATEST ATTACK ON ACA WILL INCREASE THE NUMBER OF UNINSURED AND INCREASE THE DEFICIT; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 426 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted today against House Republicans' latest effort to undermine the Affordable Care Act (ACA) by changing the requirement that large employers offer health coverage to employees who work 30 or more hours a week or face a penalty. The Republicans' legislation raises the threshold to 40 hours a week, which will increase the number of uninsured Americans, result in a million people losing their employer-sponsored coverage, and increase the deficit by billions of dollars.

"Nobody should want to see workers' hours reduced in an effort by businesses to avoid providing health care coverage to their workers, but this change to the ACA makes it easier for large businesses to do just that. It undermines the effort to ensure that more workers receive access to affordable, quality health care," Congressman **Lujan** said. "As a result of the ACA, the number of uninsured Americans has dropped to a record low, yet this bill threatens to remove one million people from their employer-sponsored coverage and move hundreds of thousands of people back to the ranks of the uninsured. And if that wasn't bad enough, this effort to dismantle a key provision of the Affordable Care Act will add $53 billion to the deficit. Clearly House Republicans' claim that they are committed to deficit reduction is nothing more than empty rhetoric."

According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, changing the 30-hour threshold - which was designed to minimize gamesmanship by employers to avoid the law's requirement - to 40 hours, will:

* Increase the federal deficit by $53 billion over the next decade;

* Result in one million people losing their employer-sponsored coverage;

* Increase the number of uninsured by up to 500,000; and

* Increase the number of people obtaining coverage through Medicaid, CHIP, and Health Insurance Marketplaces by 500,000 to one million people.

Since the Affordable Care Act was enacted part-time workers as a share of all workers has fallen from 19.7 percent to 18.2 percent. With only about 7 percent of employees working 30 to 34 hours a week and 44 percent working 40 hours a week, this legislation makes a shift toward part-time employment much more likely, making it easier for employers to cut back hours from 40 to 39 for their workers in order to avoid having to offer health coverage.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-republicans-latest-attack-on-aca-will-increase-the-number-of-uninsured-and-increase-the-deficit/

LOAD-DATE: January 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

January 8, 2015 Thursday

DCCC Kicks Off 2016 Recruitment

BYLINE: By Alexis Levinson

LENGTH: 549 words

House Democrats will formally start recruitment efforts for 2016 this week, kicking off with the cycle's first meeting of new committee leadership and a weekend trip to Illinois to find prospective candidates.

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee will name Rep. Denny Heck of Washington as recruitment chairman for 2016, according to information provided first to CQ Roll Call. Rep. Jan Schakowsky of Illinois will aid the DCCC's recruitment efforts as the national chairman for candidate services, and the committee's chairman, **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico, will take a leading role in seeking stellar candidates for 2016.

House Democrats took a beating in 2014, leaving the DCCC with a formidable task this cycle: It must pick up a net of 30 seats to secure the majority. But the DCCC also has plenty of offensive opportunities, with 26 House Republicans occupying districts President Barack Obama won in 2012. It's why recruitment - finding and supporting the best candidates - will be key for the DCCC.

The DCCC's newly formed, 25-member recruitment committee includes Reps. Cheri Bustos of Illinois, Lois Frankel of Florida, Joseph P. Kennedy III of Massachusetts, Ann McLane Kuster of New Hampshire, Mark Pocan of Wisconsin, Cedric L. Richmond of Louisiana, Raul Ruiz of California and Terri A. Sewell of Alabama. Reps. Steve Israel of New York and Chris Van Hollen of Maryland, both former DCCC chairmen, will also serve on the committee.

The recruitment committee will hold its first meeting Thursday morning. This weekend, Heck will travel to Illinois to meet with potential candidates in the 12th and 13th districts, currently held by Republican Reps. Mike Bost and Rodney Davis, respectively.

While the meeting marks the formal start of recruitment season, it is not the first time DCCC leadership has reached out to potential candidates this cycle. **Luján** made his first outreach on Nov. 17, the day he was selected to run the committee, per a DCCC official.

Republicans currently hold a historic 246-seat majority in the House; Democrats hold 188 seats. One seat is vacant, pending a special election in New York's 11th District, but Republicans are favored to win that race.

In addition to the 26 Republicans representing districts the president won, there are 23 districts where Obama took at least 48 percent of the vote. To compare, only five House Democrats occupy districts that Mitt Romney carried in 2012.

"House Democrats begin 2016 on offense as Republicans in Congress are marred in scandal and stuck defending their agenda that sells out the middle class to stack the deck for the special interests," **Luján** said in a statement. "Democrats will recruit strong candidates who fit their districts, can build winning campaigns and can make the case to the American people that it's time for a Congress that puts the middle class first. That starts now."

Related:

Kevin McCarthy, **Ben Ray Luján** Among Capitol Hill's Big Winners in 2014

Luján Pledges to Bring Farmer's Work Ethic to DCCC

10 Races to Watch in 2016: New York's 11th District

DCCC With $12 Million Debt After Midterms

The 114th: CQ Roll Call's Guide to the New Congress

Get breaking news alerts and more from Roll Call in your inbox or on your iPhone.

Source: CQ News
©2015 Congressional Quarterly Inc. All Rights Reserved.

LOAD-DATE: January 10, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: NEWSLETTERS

Copyright 2015 CQ-Roll Call, Inc. All Rights Reserved

States News Service

January 8, 2015 Thursday

LUJAN TO CONTINUE SERVING ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE, WILL SIT ON HEALTH AND COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY SUBCOMMITTEES

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 420 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he will continue to serve on the House Energy and Commerce Committee in the 114th Congress and will sit on the Health Subcommittee and the Communications and Technology Subcommittee.

"I am honored to serve on the Health Subcommittee this Congress and I am ready to dive into critical health issues that are so important to New Mexico. From increasing access to health care and reducing health disparities to addressing drug abuse that has torn apart too many families in New Mexico, a seat on this important subcommittee will strengthen my ability to advocate for my constituents and for New Mexico," Congressman **Lujan** said. "I also look forward to continuing my work on the Communications and Technology Subcommittee and building on my efforts to promote broadband expansion in rural communities across New Mexico and to encourage increased access to the latest technologies that have the potential to promote economic growth and new opportunities."

The Health Subcommittee has jurisdiction over public health and quarantine; hospital construction; mental health; biomedical research and development; health information technology, privacy, and cybersecurity; public health insurance and private health insurance; medical malpractice and medical malpractice insurance; the regulation of food, drugs, and cosmetics; drug abuse. In addition, the subcommittee oversees the Department of Health and Human Services; the National Institutes of Health; the Center for Disease Control, Indian Health Service; and relevant aspects of the Department of Homeland Security.

The Communications and Technology Subcommittee has responsibility over electronic communications, both interstate and foreign, including voice, video, audio, and data, whether transmitted by wire or wirelessly, and whether transmitted by telecommunications, commercial or private mobile service, broadcast, cable, satellite, microwave, or other mode. Its jurisdiction also includes emergency and public safety communications; cybersecurity, privacy, and data security; and overseeing the Federal Communications Commission, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, and the Office of Emergency Communications in the Department of Homeland Security.

Last Congress, **Lujan** served on the Communications and Technology Subcommittee and the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: January 10, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

States News Service

January 8, 2015 Thursday

LUJAN: REPUBLICANS' LATEST ATTACK ON ACA WILL INCREASE THE NUMBER OF UNINSURED AND INCREASE THE DEFICIT

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 409 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted today against House Republicans' latest effort to undermine the Affordable Care Act (ACA) by changing the requirement that large employers offer health coverage to employees who work 30 or more hours a week or face a penalty. The Republicans' legislation raises the threshold to 40 hours a week, which will increase the number

of uninsured Americans, result in a million people losing their employer-sponsored coverage, and increase the deficit by billions of dollars.

"Nobody should want to see workers' hours reduced in an effort by businesses to avoid providing health care coverage to their workers, but this change to the ACA makes it easier for large businesses to do just that. It undermines the effort to ensure that more workers receive access to affordable, quality health care," Congressman **Lujan** said. "As a result of the ACA, the number of uninsured Americans has dropped to a record low, yet this bill threatens to remove one million people from their employer-sponsored coverage and move hundreds of thousands of people back to the ranks of the uninsured. And if that wasn't bad enough, this effort to dismantle a key provision of the Affordable Care Act will add $53 billion to the deficit. Clearly House Republicans' claim that they are committed to deficit reduction is nothing more than empty rhetoric."

According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, changing the 30-hour threshold - which was designed to minimize gamesmanship by employers to avoid the law's requirement - to 40 hours, will:

" Increase the federal deficit by $53 billion over the next decade;

" Result in one million people losing their employer-sponsored coverage;

" Increase the number of uninsured by up to 500,000; and

" Increase the number of people obtaining coverage through Medicaid, CHIP, and Health Insurance Marketplaces by 500,000 to one million people.

Since the Affordable Care Act was enacted part-time workers as a share of all workers has fallen from 19.7 percent to 18.2 percent. With only about 7 percent of employees working 30 to 34 hours a week and 44 percent working 40 hours a week, this legislation makes a shift toward part-time employment much more likely, making it easier for employers to cut back hours from 40 to 39 for their workers in order to avoid having to offer health coverage.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: January 10, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 States News Service

Targeted News Service

January 8, 2015 Thursday 9:25 PM EST

Lujan to Continue Serving on Energy and Commerce Committee, Will Sit on Health and Communications and Technology Subcommittees

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 429 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he will continue to serve on the House Energy and Commerce Committee in the 114th Congress and will sit on the Health Subcommittee and the Communications and Technology Subcommittee.

"I am honored to serve on the Health Subcommittee this Congress and I am ready to dive into critical health issues that are so important to New Mexico. From increasing access to health care and reducing health disparities to addressing drug abuse that has torn apart too many families in New Mexico, a seat on this important subcommittee will strengthen my ability to advocate for my constituents and for New Mexico," Congressman **Lujan** said. "I also look forward to continuing my work on the Communications and Technology Subcommittee and building on my efforts to promote broadband expansion in rural communities across New Mexico and to encourage increased access to the latest technologies that have the potential to promote economic growth and new opportunities."

The Health Subcommittee has jurisdiction over public health and quarantine; hospital construction; mental health; biomedical research and development; health information technology, privacy, and cybersecurity; public health insurance and private health insurance; medical malpractice and medical malpractice insurance; the regulation of food, drugs, and cosmetics; drug abuse. In addition, the subcommittee oversees the Department of Health and Human Services; the National Institutes of Health; the Center for Disease Control, Indian Health Service; and relevant aspects of the Department of Homeland Security.

The Communications and Technology Subcommittee has responsibility over electronic communications, both interstate and foreign, including voice, video, audio, and data, whether transmitted by wire or wirelessly, and whether transmitted by telecommunications, commercial or private mobile service, broadcast, cable, satellite, microwave, or other mode. Its jurisdiction also includes emergency and public safety communications; cybersecurity, privacy, and data security; and overseeing the Federal Communications Commission, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, and the Office of Emergency Communications in the Department of Homeland Security.

Last Congress, **Lujan** served on the Communications and Technology Subcommittee and the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-150109-4985089 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: January 8, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

January 8, 2015 Thursday

Lujan to Continue Serving on Energy and Commerce Committee, Will Sit on Health and Communications and Technology Subcommittees

LENGTH: 443 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he will continue to serve on the House Energy and Commerce Committee in the 114th Congress and will sit on the Health Subcommittee and the Communications and Technology Subcommittee.

"I am honored to serve on the Health Subcommittee this Congress and I am ready to dive into critical health issues that are so important to New Mexico. From increasing access to health care and reducing health disparities to addressing drug abuse that has torn apart too many families in New Mexico, a seat on this important subcommittee will strengthen my ability to advocate for my constituents and for New Mexico," Congressman **Luján** said. "I also look forward to continuing my work on the Communications and Technology Subcommittee and building on my efforts to promote broadband expansion in rural communities across New Mexico and to encourage increased access to the latest technologies that have the potential to promote economic growth and new opportunities."

The Health Subcommittee has jurisdiction over public health and quarantine; hospital construction; mental health; biomedical research and development; health information technology, privacy, and cybersecurity; public health insurance and private health insurance; medical malpractice and medical malpractice insurance; the regulation of food, drugs, and cosmetics; drug abuse. In addition, the subcommittee oversees the Department of Health and Human Services; the National Institutes of Health; the Center for Disease Control, Indian Health Service; and relevant aspects of the Department of Homeland Security.

The Communications and Technology Subcommittee has responsibility over electronic communications, both interstate and foreign, including voice, video, audio, and data, whether transmitted by wire or wirelessly, and whether transmitted by telecommunications, commercial or private mobile service, broadcast, cable, satellite, microwave, or other mode. Its jurisdiction also includes emergency and public safety communications; cybersecurity, privacy, and data security; and overseeing the Federal Communications Commission, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, and the Office of Emergency Communications in the Department of Homeland Security.

Last Congress, **Luján** served on the Communications and Technology Subcommittee and the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: January 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

314 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

January 8, 2015 Thursday

Lujan: Republicans' Latest Attack on ACA Will Increase the Number of Uninsured and Increase the Deficit

LENGTH: 434 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District voted today against House Republicans' latest effort to undermine the Affordable Care Act (ACA) by changing the requirement that large employers offer health coverage to employees who work 30 or more hours a week or face a penalty. The Republicans' legislation raises the threshold to 40 hours a week, which will increase the number of uninsured Americans, result in a million people losing their employer-sponsored coverage, and increase the deficit by billions of dollars.

"Nobody should want to see workers' hours reduced in an effort by businesses to avoid providing health care coverage to their workers, but this change to the ACA makes it easier for large businesses to do just that. It undermines the effort to ensure that more workers receive access to affordable, quality health care," Congressman **Luján** said. "As a result of the ACA, the number of uninsured Americans has dropped to a record low, yet this bill threatens to remove one million people from their employer-sponsored coverage and move hundreds of thousands of people back to the ranks of the uninsured. And if that wasn't bad enough, this effort to dismantle a key provision of the Affordable Care Act will add $53 billion to the deficit. Clearly House Republicans' claim that they are committed to deficit reduction is nothing more than empty rhetoric."

According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, changing the 30-hour threshold - which was designed to minimize gamesmanship by employers to avoid the law's requirement - to 40 hours, will:

o Increase the federal deficit by $53 billion over the next decade;
o Result in one million people losing their employer-sponsored coverage;
o Increase the number of uninsured by up to 500,000; and

o Increase the number of people obtaining coverage through Medicaid, CHIP, and Health Insurance Marketplaces by 500,000 to one million people.

Since the Affordable Care Act was enacted part-time workers as a share of all workers has fallen from 19.7 percent to 18.2 percent. With only about 7 percent of employees working 30 to 34 hours a week and 44 percent working 40 hours a week, this legislation makes a shift toward part-time employment much more likely, making it easier for employers to cut back hours from 40 to 39 for their workers in order to avoid having to offer health coverage.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: January 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

315 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

January 8, 2015 Thursday

Lujan Statement at the Start of 114th Congress

LENGTH: 260 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after being sworn in as a member of the 114th Congress.

"As we start the new Congress it is a tremendous honor to serve the people of New Mexico and to have the opportunity to again represent our great state. In New Mexico we are a family, and to solve the challenges we face we need to work together, from every level of government to the private sector. We all have a role to play and I will be working hard in Washington and in the district to diversify and strengthen our economy to provide more opportunities to hard-working New Mexicans.

"I will continue to be a strong advocate for our national labs by supporting important scientific research and development and fighting for funding for environmental cleanup. We must continue to invest in clean energy to take advantage of New Mexico's abundant renewable resources that can power our economy and create good jobs in our communities. And I'll continue to focus on our

agricultural and traditional communities, supporting our farmers and ranchers and the products they grow that are a vital part of our economy and our culture.

"The values of family and hard work that I learned growing up in New Mexico will guide me every day as I work on behalf of the people I am honored to represent."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: January 9, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

316 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Frontrunner

January 7, 2015 Wednesday

DCCC Chief Lujan Hits GOP On Scalise, Grimm, Farenthold Woes

SECTION: HOUSE CAMPAIGN NEWS

LENGTH: 153 words

On its website, the Washington Post (1/6, O'Keefe, 4.9M) reported that new DCCC chief **Ben Ray Lujan** on Monday signaled that House Democrats intend to continue "denouncing Republicans for standing by embattled House Majority Whip Steve Scalise," who "acknowledged last week that he spoke in 2002 to a white supremacist group in Louisiana that was founded by David Duke, the former Ku Klux Klan leader." Speaking with the Post, **Lujan** said of Republicans, "If individuals are reaching out to groups associated with David Duke, who led at one of the most intolerant times and said some of the most racist things ever said, who's been rebuked by just about everyone, that's a problem." **Lujan** also hit Republicans over the resignation of NY11 Rep. Michel Grimm, who stepped down after pleading guilty to tax fraud, and TX27 Rep. Blake Farenthold who "has denied [sexual harassment] allegations made by a fired former staffer."

LOAD-DATE: January 7, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Bulletin News Network, Inc.

317 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Hotline

January 7, 2015 Wednesday

Lujan Puts Spotlight on GOP Scandals

BYLINE: Jack Fitzpatrick

LENGTH: 217 words

In an interview, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Chairman **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-NM 03) focused on Republican scandals, taking aim at former Rep. Michael Grimm (R-NY 11), House Majority Whip Steve Scalise (R-LA 01), and Rep. Blake Farenthold (R-TX 27).

"My Republican colleagues are going to have to do a lot of soul-searching and see if this is a direction they want to take," he said. "Ultimately, they're going to have to answer to their constituents. Republican reliance on these groups is going to continue to be a problem for their party. If individuals are reaching out to groups associated with David Duke, who led at one of the most intolerant times and said some of the most racist things ever said, who's been rebuked by just about everyone, that's a problem."

Lujan said Democrats will be competitive in the race for Grimm's seat, but admitted it will be "a challenging time to win a special election in New York."

"We have an amazing group of individuals who live out there and a constituency that protects our streets every day," **Lujan** said, seemingly referring to the large portion of Staten Island that either works for or is otherwise connected to the police force and largely resents New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio's (D) response to the death of Eric Garner. (**Washington Post**)

LOAD-DATE: January 7, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Magazine

Copyright 2015 The National Journal Group, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

318 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 6, 2015

LUJAN STATEMENT AT THE START OF 114TH CONGRESS; Rep. Ben R. **Lujan** (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 246 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after being sworn in as a member of the 114th Congress.

"As we start the new Congress it is a tremendous honor to serve the people of New Mexico and to have the opportunity to again represent our great state. In New Mexico we are a family, and to solve the challenges we face we need to work together, from every level of government to the private sector. We all have a role to play and I will be working hard in Washington and in the district to diversify and strengthen our economy to provide more opportunities to hard-working New Mexicans.

"I will continue to be a strong advocate for our national labs by supporting important scientific research and development and fighting for funding for environmental cleanup. We must continue to invest in clean energy to take advantage of New Mexico's abundant renewable resources that can power our economy and create good jobs in our communities. And I'll continue to focus on our agricultural and traditional communities, supporting our farmers and ranchers and the products they grow that are a vital part of our economy and our culture.

"The values of family and hard work that I learned growing up in New Mexico will guide me every day as I work on behalf of the people I am honored to represent."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan.**house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-at-the-start-of-114th-congress/

LOAD-DATE: January 7, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2015 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

January 6, 2015 Tuesday 8:59 PM EST

Lujan Statement at the Start of 114th Congress

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 247 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after being sworn in as a member of the 114th Congress.

"As we start the new Congress it is a tremendous honor to serve the people of New Mexico and to have the opportunity to again represent our great state. In New Mexico we are a family, and to solve the challenges we face we need to work together, from every level of government to the private sector. We all have a role to play and I will be working hard in Washington and in the district to diversify and strengthen our economy to provide more opportunities to hard-working New Mexicans.

"I will continue to be a strong advocate for our national labs by supporting important scientific research and development and fighting for funding for environmental cleanup. We must continue to invest in clean energy to take advantage of New Mexico's abundant renewable resources that can power our economy and create good jobs in our communities. And I'll continue to focus on our agricultural and traditional communities, supporting our farmers and ranchers and the products they grow that are a vital part of our economy and our culture.

"The values of family and hard work that I learned growing up in New Mexico will guide me every day as I work on behalf of the people I am honored to represent."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-150107-4982357 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: January 6, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2015 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

320 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Washington Post Blogs

January 6, 2015 Tuesday 1:51 PM EST

Lujan, new DCCC chair, keeps up pressure on GOP on Scalise, Grimm

BYLINE: Ed O'Keefe

LENGTH: 561 words

House Democrats may face diminished ranks, but they plan to come out swinging in the early days of the new Congress by once again denouncing Republicans for standing by embattled House Majority Whip Steve Scalise (R-La.).

Scalise, the third-ranking Republican and top vote-counter, acknowledged last week that he spoke in 2002 to a white supremacist group in Louisiana that was founded by David Duke, the former Ku Klux Klan leader. Scalise called the appearance a mistake, and top GOP leaders, including Speaker John A. Boehner (R-Ohio), are standing by him. Several Republicans defended him on the Sunday morning political talk shows.

Democrats see an opening to continue drawing contrasts with Republicans, especially on racial issues. Witness comments made Monday by Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-N.M.), the new chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, who spoke with The Washington Post in his first interview since the Scalise incident.

"My Republican colleagues are going to have to do a lot of soul-searching and see if this is a direction they want to take," he said. "Ultimately, they're going to have to answer to their constituents. Republican reliance on these groups is going to continue to be a problem for their party. If individuals are reaching out to groups associated with David Duke, who led at one of the most intolerant times and said some of the most racist things ever said, who's been rebuked by just about everyone, that's a problem."

"With all that's happened with what's been reported with Mr. Scalise, with Michael Grimm, with Blake Farenthold -- with what's been reported with his own staff filing sexual harassment cases -- our Republicans colleagues are going to have a tough week as they start sweeping things under a rug," **Lujan** added.

Grimm (R-N.Y.) resigned on Monday after pleading guilty to federal tax evasion charges before Christmas. Farenthold (R-Tex.) has denied allegations made by a fired former staffer.

Lujan said that Democrats will compete in the election to succeed Grimm, but admitted: "It's going to be a challenging time to win a special election in New York."

"We're going to work and make sure that people will have a candidate from our side that's going to be honest and not be dishonest with them and that will represent the hard-working people of Staten Island," he added. "We have an amazing group of individuals who live out there and a constituency that protects our streets every day."

That comment appeared to be a subtle reference to the composition of New York's 11th Congressional District, which includes Staten Island and part of Brooklyn and is home to a large number of New York City police officers. The force has been embroiled in a fight with New York Mayor Bill DeBlasio in recent weeks over pay and benefits and his response to the death of Eric Garner, an unarmed black man who died after a police officer appeared to place him in a chokehold.

Asked if Democrats planned to recruit someone with a law enforcement background to run in the special election, **Lujan** would only say that the party will go after "every constituent and every voter. ... We're always stronger when more people vote."

Lujan, 42, was tapped by Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) in November for the campaign role. He's the first Latino to hold the position and is beginning his fourth term in office this week.

LOAD-DATE: January 6, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2015 Washingtonpost.Newsweek Interactive Company, LLC d/b/a Washington Post Digital
All Rights Reserved

The Baltimore Sun

December 31, 2014 Wednesday
FINAL EDITION

New Congress offers key roles for several members

BYLINE: By Michael A. Memoli, Tribune Washington Bureau

SECTION: TELEGRAPH; Pg. 8A

LENGTH: 780 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON --

WASHINGTON -- When it convenes Jan. 6, the Republican-controlled 114th Congress will bring a wave of reinforcements to enhance the clout of President Barack Obama's antagonists. But it remains to be seen whether that will set the stage for two years of continuing conflict or open a door to compromise as both parties seek to lay groundwork for the 2016 presidential race. Below is a look at eight lawmakers who will likely play key roles in the 2015 congressional battles.

The hard-liners

Ted Cruz usually grabs most of the attention, but look for Utah Republican Mike Lee to step out of that shadow as a prominent leader of the GOP's tea party wing. Lee was Cruz's chief ally in past showdowns, such as the effort to defund Obama's signature health care law and the president's executive actions on immigration this winter. Both issues are certain to be on the agenda next year.

Lee has quietly worked to develop a conservative policy platform on a range of issues. But the 114th Congress will pose a test for Lee and his conservative convictions as members of the GOP's establishment wing consider mounting a 2016 primary campaign against him in the solidly Republican state.

For Democrats, the next two years may be judged by how Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., wields her influence with the party's progressive base. Until recently, she'd followed the traditional low-profile route for new senators. But last month's fight over a major spending bill that included 11th-hour changes to relax banking regulations prompted Warren to take a leading role against the deal.

The insiders

Ohio Sen. Rob Portman has been a behind-the-scenes player in Washington for years, including six terms in the House and two years in George W. Bush's administration as trade representative and then budget director. He was on Mitt Romney's short list for vice president in 2012 and mulled a 2016 presidential bid of his own before announcing last month he'd focus instead on running for re-election to the Senate.

Incoming Majority Leader Mitch McConnell was among the happiest at Portman's decision. Not only does it leave McConnell with one less Senate re-election seat to worry about in 2016, it also frees Portman to focus on helping the Kentuckian advance GOP priorities.

With departing Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid likely focused on his own 2016 re-election fight, Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., will take on more responsibility in managing how Democrats adjust to their

new status in the minority. Schumer has worked to build bridges with the GOP even as he's been one of the party's primary political strategists.

The leaders

Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., begins his first full term as the House majority leader in January, after Eric Cantor's shocking primary election loss in June led to a promotion for the five-term congressman. His more low-key and back-slapping style has been received warmly among the rank and file, but that doesn't mean he's been able to avoid the same internal GOP divisions that vexed his predecessor. The real test for McCarthy will be demonstrating as much heft in policy as he has in politics.

Democrat **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico is one of the only new faces in the House Democratic leadership next year, assuming the role of chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., tapped the 42-year-old amid angst within the party over its direction as Democrats start 2015 with the fewest House seats since 1949. **Lujan's** primary job will be helping put Democrats within striking distance to regain the House majority heading into 2016, but he'll also provide a voice for newer members at the leadership table.

The incumbents

The election gave the GOP a slightly bigger cushion in the upper chamber than many expected. That could be key, considering the 2016 election map favors Democrats because of the number of Republican incumbents facing re-election in states that Democrats have carried in recent presidential election years.

Illinois' Mark Kirk, who won the seat Obama vacated to become president, could be the most vulnerable. The Republican has forged a reputation as a moderate during multiple terms in the House and during his first term in the Senate. Whether that continues to suit state voters -- and whether he can mount a vigorous campaign as he continues to recover from a stroke -- will be keys to whether Republicans can hold their majority into the next administration.

Aside from Reid, Michael Bennet of Colorado is one of the few Democratic incumbents who will be running in a competitive state in 2016. Bennet was first appointed to the Senate and then won a tough election fight in 2010.

mmemoli@tribune.com

LOAD-DATE: December 31, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: Photo(s)
Photo: Lee Photo: Warren Photo: Portman Photo: Schumer Photo: McCarthy Photo: **Lujan** Photo: Kirk Photo: Bennet

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The Baltimore Sun Company
All Rights Reserved

December 30, 2014 Tuesday

Kevin McCarthy, Ben Ray Luján Among Capitol Hill's Big Winners in 2014

BYLINE: By Emma Dumain

LENGTH: 1353 words

Not every member of Congress had an A+ year.

Rep. Eric Cantor, R-Va., became the first majority leader in decades to go down in a primary; Rep. Chaka Fattah, D-Pa., only barely avoided being explicitly implicated for campaign finance fraud.

New York Republican Rep. Michael G. Grimm almost had a good year: He won re-election despite a 20-count federal indictment. But then a month later he pleaded guilty to tax evasion - and just two days before the end of 2014, he announced his resignation.

Rep. Steve Scalise, R-La., freshly elected the House Majority Whip, was on track to ring in 2015 with an unblemished record from the previous 12 months, but an embarrassing revelation that he might have addressed a white supremacist group in 2002 marred an otherwise stellar score.

The list of House lawmakers who failed to hit their strides in 2014 is long and winding, made up of casualties of congressional dysfunction, those who got hit with pure bad luck and members who simply had no one to blame but themselves.

But in the holiday spirit of compassion, charity and generosity, the 218 team presents a list of 10 members - five from each side of the aisle - who were able to rise above the fray and take some "wins" while their colleagues were suffering losses.

Disclaimers apply that this list isn't exhaustive, but rather just a sampling. Here they are, Republicans first, then Democrats:

1. Rep. Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif. Fairly or not, McCarthy historically has had to stave off criticism that he's "too nice" to be in leadership. But after Cantor's primary defeat over the summer, the majority whip handily won his bid to be the next majority leader. McCarthy's elevation to that role was a clear sign that his colleagues trust him to articulate a vision for the House Republican Conference going into a presidential election year, and to find the elusive sweet spot between building consensus and keeping members in line. McCarthy gets to prove himself in the 114th Congress, helping guide the legislative agenda alongside a GOP-controlled Senate.

2. Rep. Paul D. Ryan, R-Wis.Some Republicans wanted the 2012 vice presidential nominee to run for leadership when Cantor lost his primary; others hoped he would use his influence to push for House consideration of comprehensive immigration overhaul legislation. But Ryan kept his powder dry and steered clear of any controversy and feather-ruffling in 2014. Aside from releasing his memoir-cum-policy manifesto, the lawmaker focused on one goal: Scoring his dream job in the 114th Congress of being the Ways and Means chairman. He got it.

3. Rep. Greg Walden, R-Ore. After the National Republican Campaign Committee, chaired by Walden, was out-earned and out-spent by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, there were rumblings that the Oregon Republican might face competition for a second term from some Republicans who thought they could do the job better. Walden quieted the grumblers, though, when he helped the House GOP win a larger majority in the midterms than the party had enjoyed in nearly a century. He'll have the gig now through the next cycle.

4. Rep. Jason Chaffetz, R-Utah. House GOP term limits for committee chairmen meant it was time this fall to choose a new leader for the Oversight and Government Reform Committee. It also offered a chance to choose a successor to Rep. Darrell Issa, R-Calif., whose hyper-partisan tactics had become a distraction for the party, many members agreed. Enter Chaffetz, who campaigned for the post on a promise to hold truth to power but do so on a more cooperative, bipartisan basis. He even courted Issa's longtime foe, ranking member Elijah E. Cummings, D-Md. In the most competitive Republican committee chairman race of the year, Chaffetz ultimately prevailed against three challengers.

5. Rep. Steve King, R-Iowa. King continues to be vilified by Democrats, mocked by immigrant rights activists and isolated by the House GOP establishment. In 2014, however, he was also successful in staving off any meaningful congressional overhaul of the nation's immigration system. Though Republicans reiterated again and again that King did not speak for the party's position on immigration, they also were prone to giving King exactly what he wanted when they couldn't find the votes to advance certain priorities. It was King, after all, who said in August that revised legislation to stem the child migrant crisis at the U.S.-Mexico border was "like I ordered it off the menu."

6. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M. The 42-year-old lawmaker of Latino heritage was not one of the obvious contenders for chairman of the DCCC, and his selection by Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., sent a powerful signal: One needn't be the loudest and most outwardly ambitious to secure a plum leadership assignment. For **Luján**, all the years of playing the happy warrior in the rank-and-file, of helping his colleagues and playing with the team, of being amiable and congenial, paid off big-time.

7. Rep. Linda T. Sánchez, D-Calif. She was already starting to take a higher profile in 2014, serving as the leadership-appointed top Democrat on the House Ethics Committee and getting a coveted seat on the special Benghazi investigative panel. Sanchez had actually thought 2016 would be the year when it all came together and it would be her turn, in the seniority system, to run for chairwoman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. That moment came much earlier, when **Lujan**, next in line to lead the CHC, was unexpectedly tapped to run the DCCC. Sanchez threw her hat in the ring this fall and won the job unopposed.

8. Rep. Frank Pallone Jr., D-N.J. Rep. Henry A. Waxman's retirement announcement in late-January set off a bitter, 10-month race between Pallone and Rep. Anna G. Eshoo, D-Calif., to be the ranking member on the powerful Energy and Commerce Committee. The competition was fierce, with each candidate trying to top the other with the most campaign contributions, the highest-powered endorsements and some stinging personal attacks. Pallone ultimately came out on top, but it was a nail-biter: He was only elected by his colleagues in the House Democratic Caucus by 10 votes.

9. Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, D-Md. Being the ranking member of a committee is ordinarily a thankless job when one's party has little influence over the legislative agenda, but Cummings emerged from 2014 as one of the most relevant of that league. As the top Democrat on the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, Cummings drew plaudits for his measured response to getting his microphone silenced by Issa, during a hearing; his criticism of Secret Service Director Julia Pierson - a member of the Obama administration that counts the Maryland Democrat as one of its fiercest defenders - led to bipartisan calls for her resignation. Republicans, and not only Chaffetz, learned this year that Cummings was someone worth working with and listening to.

10. Rep. George Miller, D-Calif. One of the last "Watergate babies" retired at the close of the 113th Congress, but not before securing one last legislative accomplishment: a bipartisan deal to address troubled multi-employer pension plans by allowing cuts to some benefits, via an amendment folded into the "cromnibus." It was not a popular solution among the staunch liberal's core constituency of unions and employees advocates. It also forced Miller to vote in favor of a spending bill he might not have wanted to support otherwise, given the myriad "poison pill" amendments for progressives. But, as Miller said of retirees with pension plans in peril, passage of his provision was "their last best chance."

Related:

Luján Pledges to Bring Farmer's Work Ethic to DCCC

Chaffetz Wins Four-Way Showdown for Oversight Gavel

Eshoo Wins Backing of Steering and Policy Committee Over Pallone

New RSC Chair Flores: 'I'm No Shill for Leadership'

Democrats Re-Elect Pelosi, Leadership Team for 114th Congress

The 114th: CQ Roll Call's Guide to the New Congress

Get breaking news alerts and more from Roll Call in your inbox or on your iPhone.

Source: CQ News
©2014 Congressional Quarterly Inc. All Rights Reserved.

LOAD-DATE: January 1, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: NEWSLETTERS

Copyright 2014 CQ-Roll Call, Inc. All Rights Reserved

323 of 500 DOCUMENTS

New York Observer

December 30, 2014 Tuesday

DCCC: Michael Grimm Lied to His District

BYLINE: wbredderman

LENGTH: 380 words

Ben Ray Luján of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee accused Michael Grimm and the GOP of dishonesty during the campaign.

Congressman Michael Grimm votes in November. (Photo: Andrew Burton/Getty Images)

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee-the official electoral arm of the House Democrats-slammed outgoing GOP Congressman Michael Grimm and his party for what it claimed were lies during his successful race against Democrat Domenic Recchia Jr. this year.

Mr. Grimm, who announced his impending resignation last night, pleaded guilty last week to a single felony tax evasion charge-despite having maintained his innocence throughout the campaign. The DCCC pounced on the reversal and alleged that that the Republican Party was just as guilty as Mr. Grimm.

"The people of Staten Island and Brooklyn were lied to throughout the last election by Michael Grimm and, sadly, Republicans let it happen despite his legal troubles," DCCC Chair **Ben Ray Luján**, a New

Mexico congressman, said in a statement. "Before the new Congress is even sworn in, we're seeing the promises their members made to get elected being broken."

Mr. **Luján** argued that the special election for the vacant seat, which state law calls upon Gov. Andrew Cuomo to declare, will be an opportunity for the Democrats to pick up a seat. He acknowledged that the Staten Island and Brooklyn-based district has historically trended Republican, with Michael McMahon-whom Mr. Grimm defeated in 2010 after just two years in Washington-being the only Democrat to hold the seat in the past three decades.

Mr. **Luján** also alluded to the political collapse of Republican Congressman Vito Fossella, Mr. McMahon's predecessor, after a 2008 drunk driving arrest in the D.C. suburbs revealed the married representative had a secret second family.

"Now voters will finally get the choice to get out from under the shadow of the scandals that have plagued Republicans holding this seat in recent years," Mr. **Luján** wrote. "While this a challenging district for a Democrat in a special election, we will have a candidate who will fight to grow the middle class and ensure the deck isn't stacked in favor of the special interests and the wealthiest few."

Mr. Grimm's office did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

LOAD-DATE: December 31, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The New York Observer, L.P.
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

December 19, 2014 Friday

New Mexico: Lujan Applauds Passage of Bill to Help Prevent Veteran Suicides

LENGTH: 413 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District applauded the unanimous passage of legislation in the House today to help prevent suicide among our nation's veterans. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act expands access to mental health services and increases the capacity and efficiency of VA care to address the needs of veterans returning home from war.

"With an estimated 22 veterans committing suicide every day - more than 8,000 each year, we are facing an epidemic that we cannot ignore," Congressman **Luján** said. "The brave men and women who have sacrificed so much to protect and defend our nation, our values, and our way of life must receive the support they need and have earned. An estimated 600,000 men and women who have served in combat have traumatic brain injury, PTSD, or depression, and we must have the capacity to ensure access to the vital mental health services that can help them heal from the wounds of war. This legislation is an important step forward, and must be part of our continuing effort to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans."

The legislation, which is named in honor of Marine Corporal Clay Hunt, an Iraq and Afghanistan War veteran who was awarded the Purple Heart and dedicated suicide prevention advocate who tragically took his own life, includes a number of provisions to increase access to care. The bill:

o Establishes a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning servicemembers with accessing VA mental health care services;
o Requires the VA to create a one-stop shot, interactive website to serve as a centralized information source regarding all mental health services to veterans;
o Takes steps to address the shortage of mental health care professionals by authorizing the VA to conduct a student loan repayment pilot program aimed at recruiting and retaining psychiatrists;
o Requires yearly evaluations, conducted by a third party, of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the DOD and VA to determine what is working and what is not working and to make recommendations to improve care; and
o Authorizes a GAO report on the transition of care for PTSD and traumatic brain injury between the DOD and VA.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: December 20, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

December 19, 2014 Friday

New Mexico: Lujan Statement on Spending Bill

LENGTH: 335 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement tonight after voting against an omnibus appropriations bill.

"It is deeply disappointing that Congressional Republicans have used this process to pass damaging provisions that roll back critical Wall Street reforms and further undermine campaign finance rules. In addition, the measure shortchanges investments in key areas that are critical to our nation's economic competitiveness and New Mexico's future - cutting Pell Grants and providing inadequate investment to clean energy. It also plays games with funding the Department of Homeland Security, which provides critical resources to New Mexico.

"After immigration executive action was taken to increase accountability and keep families together, House Republicans have now offered their response - funding the Department of Homeland Security only through February. Rather than taking action on bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform that passed the Senate more than 500 days ago, House Republicans have charted a path that provides uncertainty for the agency tasked with protecting our homeland and securing our borders. As a result, grants to border states such as New Mexico will be in question.

"I wholeheartedly support our local governments and our labs and all those who work so hard to support our communities and our state. While there are aspects of this legislation that are good for New Mexico, middle-class families deserve better. I will always strongly advocate for the important scientific research at our labs and environmental cleanup at LANL, but New Mexicans and the American people deserve better than legislation that undermines key reforms that protect working people and the middle class and that further dismantles campaign finance rules."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: December 20, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

326 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

December 18, 2014 Thursday

'Cromnibus' not perfect, but what compromise is?

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. A6

LENGTH: 596 words

At midnight Sept. 30, 2013, the first government shutdown in 17 years kicked in. And it kicked off 16 days of unpaid work for 1.3 million federal workers, furloughs for hundreds of thousands of others, locked doors and gates for government-run facilities, and $2 billion in additional costs for U.S. taxpayers.

So everyone - especially in a state like New Mexico that is financially dependent on the feds - should breathe a big sigh of relief that we didn't go there again in 2014.

Thank you Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and Rep. Steve Pearce for supporting the ginormous $1.1 trillion spending bill, aka "Cromnibus" from "continuing resolution" and "omnibus," and sparing the state and the nation the expensive uncertainty of another shutdown.

And to Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, New Mexicans get that it's larded up with stuff that shouldn't be there. For those like **Lujan** Grisham who constantly decry "gridlock" in Washington, that's called "compromise." Super conservative Ted Cruz, R-Texas, didn't like it either.

New Mexicans have seen the alternative they would face again if **Luján** and **Lujan** Grisham had prevailed. In fact they're still recovering from it. USA Today listed New Mexico as the seventh-most affected state by the 2013 shutdown - ranking "sixth in states with the most federal employees per capita and fourth in states with the most federal contractors."

Lujan Grisham said she voted to "not support legislation that puts the interests of big banks and billionaires ahead of college students who are drowning in debt, homeowners that are still facing foreclosures and retirees and working Americans who lost everything because of the reckless activities of the 'too big to fail' banks." Or, perhaps she was concerned about a potential primary election challenge from progressives and this was a safe piece of preventive political maintenance since the legislation was expected to pass and had President Obama's support.

Fortunately, others took a more statesmanlike approach because this bill, for all its flaws, has some important things for New Mexico. Specifically:

$37 million compensation for untaxable federal land

$320 million for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant

$643 million for Sandia and Los Alamos national laboratories

$185 million for LANL cleanup

$14.8 million for technology transfer (a key to the state's economic independence)

$23.3 million for Cannon Air Force Base

$34 million for Kirtland Air Force Base

A portion of $159.1 billion for the Department of Veterans Affairs, including $209 million for rural health programs and $5 million for additional oversight

$88 million for three water settlements and

A portion of $526 million for wildfire suppression and prevention.

Pearce explains that while there was plenty in the bill not to like, "it will provide certainty and stability for New Mexico businesses through the next fiscal year." Udall emphasizes the "critical funding for New Mexico, to sustain our national labs and military bases, continue recovery at WIPP, and ensure New Mexicans can count on basic government services like schools, public safety, roads and so many other needs."

That's what compromise is. It's not perfect, but it gets the job done.

As Washington Post columnist Ruth Marcus points out, "real-world legislating requires a horrific amount of nose-holding." By its sheer size there are undoubtedly pretty smelly things in the Cromnibus, and those can and should be revisited in future cycles.

But none stink as badly as paying a government $2 billion to do nothing while workers sit home without paychecks.

LOAD-DATE: December 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

December 18, 2014 Thursday

Local Cuban community welcomes change; NM delegation has varied reactions

BYLINE: MIKE BUSH AND OLIVIER UYTTEBROUCK JOURNAL STAFF WRITERS

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. A8

LENGTH: 797 words

The news came as a surprise Wednesday, then quickly spread throughout Bernalillo County's Cuban community: President Barack Obama was on TV talking about normalizing relations with Cuba.

Obama's message, and that of Cuban President Raul Castro, were generally well-received but not without reservations among the county's 3,200-person Cuban community.

"I can hardly wait to talk with my brothers in Miami," said Tony Lipiz. "Right now I'm just trying to digest everything."

One of the motivations behind the day's developments was the freeing of Alan Gross, an American contractor held in a Cuban prison for five years. Three Cubans who had been convicted of spying in this country will also be released in exchange for a U.S. spy held in Cuba for nearly 20 years. Cuba will also release 53 political prisoners.

"The biggest winners in this deal are Alan Gross and the 53 political prisoners," said Ivan Avila, another Cuban emigre who came to this country 12 years ago and now operates a plumbing business in Albuquerque. "President Obama has the duty to protect American citizens, and he probably saved Alan Gross' life."

As for the Cuban spies, he said they deserve to be incarcerated, but noted that they have served 20 years behind bars.

Lipiz, who conducts surveys on mental health issues for an international company, said his main concern is the economic embargo the United States imposed on Cuba shortly after the 1959 revolution.

"My people are suffering because of it, not the Cuban government," he said.

Initially, Lipiz - who left Cuba in 1961 when he was 14 - favored the embargo as a way to get the Cuban regime to become more democratic. But after a visit to the island in 2000, he realized that it was an abject failure.

The latest developments likely will put more money into the Cuban economy, because more U.S. tourists will visit the island and Cuban-Americans will be able to send more money to relatives in Cuba, said Nelson Valdés, a Cuban scholar and professor emeritus at the University of New Mexico.

The changes increase the amount of money Americans can send to Cubans from $500 to $2,000 every three months.

New Mexico's congressional delegation took a varied view of Obama's announcement, with Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., hailing the president's announcement, Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., condemning it and other delegation members somewhere in between.

Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., also cheered Obama's action, while Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., took a wait-and-see approach. Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., voiced mixed feelings about it, and Pearce said it set "an extremely dangerous precedent."

"This is a sea change as our nation is finally embarking on a 21st-century approach with Cuba, one that will open opportunities for New Mexicans and other American interests in Cuba," said Udall, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. "American citizens are the best diplomats of our values and I hope their future interactions shine through with the Cuban people."

Pearce said he "welcomed" Gross's release but not the president's policy shift on Cuba.

"The new policy toward Cuba gives the Castro regime an influx of American dollars and eases travel restrictions but does nothing to ensure real democratic reforms or stymie human rights abuses by the Castro brothers," Pearce said.

Heinrich called the news "a welcome change of course in our nation's relationship with Cuba."

"I support the administration's decision to abandon an outdated Cold War policy of isolation that failed to advance America's goal of an open and free society for the Cuban people," Heinrich said.

Luján said he hopes Cuba lives up to the expectation the U.S. will have in the new relationship.

"It is important that we examine our relationship with Cuba and ensure that we are charting a path that encourages political freedom and respect for human rights," **Luján** said. "The changes President Obama outlined today must be met with concrete steps from the Cuban government that achieve these goals. I look forward to reviewing the President's plan in greater detail to assess the full impact it will have on the United States and Cuba."

Lujan Grisham said the president's announcement gave her reason for optimism, but also concern.

"I am optimistic about the shift toward restoring diplomatic relations with Cuba and moving away from a policy that has failed on so many levels," **Lujan** Grisham said.

"However, I am concerned about the release of Cubans, who were convicted in American courts, as a condition or precursor to improving relations between the U.S. and Cuba," she said. "I worry about the message that may send to other state actors around the world that are looking for leverage against the U.S."

Journal Washinton Bureau reporter Michael Coleman contributed to

this report.

LOAD-DATE: December 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: MARLA BROSE/JOURNAL Tony Lipiz of Albuquerque, who left Cuba in 1961, welcomed President Barack Obama's comments Wednesday on normalizing relations with that country, but he still hopes for the lifting of the economic embargo the U.S. imposed on Cuba shortly after the 1959 revolution. "My people are suffering because of it, not the Cuban government," he said.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

328 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

December 18, 2014 Thursday

Lujan to meet with locals Friday

BYLINE: Independent staff

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 132 words

DATELINE: GALLUP

GALLUP -- U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N. M., will visit Gallup Friday for a number of meetings throughout the day.

In the morning, **Luján** will attend a Veterans Helping Veterans breakfast to meet with local veterans only and discuss important issues facing Gallup's veteran community. The meeting will be at Don Diego's Restaurant, 801 Historic Highway 66, at 9:30 a.m.

Luján will also visit a Toys for Tots holiday toy drive at Clear Channel Radio Station, 1632 S. Second St., at 11 a.m.

Then he will hold "Conversations with Ben Ray" at noon at the Neighborhood Senior Center, 607 N. Fourth St. The congressman will be available to meet with constituents to assist them with casework and discuss issues of concern so he can continue to be a powerful voice on their behalf.

Information: 505-863-0582

LOAD-DATE: December 23, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

December 16, 2014 Tuesday

NM getting billions from spending bill; 'Critical funding' includes labs, bases, water projects

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 915 words

WASHINGTON - A massive spending bill sent to President Barack Obama over the weekend contains billions of dollars for New Mexico.

The legislation contains money for Los Alamos and Sandia national laboratories, an ongoing repair effort at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, military bases, technology transfer, water projects, counties with large tracts of untaxable federal lands and other programs.

Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, both New Mexico Democrats, said they voted for the legislation passed by the Senate late Saturday because it contained money critical for New Mexico, even though they objected to provisions that altered rules for campaign finance and Wall Street banks.

"This bill includes critical funding for New Mexico, to sustain our national labs and military bases, continue recovery at WIPP, and ensure New Mexicans can count on basic government services like schools, public safety, roads and so many other needs," Udall said. "I'm extremely disappointed that this bill also contains measures that weaken campaign finance laws and roll back Wall Street reforms. Our duty is to the American people - not Wall Street billionaires and bankers. But at the end of the day, I could not risk a government shutdown."

Heinrich said the good in the bill outweighs the bad.

Democratic Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham both voted against the spending bill, while Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., voted for it.

Lujan Grisham said the bill was fatally flawed.

"While I hoped to vote for a clean spending bill that invests in New Mexico priorities like Sandia National Laboratories and Kirtland Air Force Base, I could not support legislation that puts the interests of big banks and billionaires ahead of college students who are drowning in debt, homeowners that are still facing foreclosures and retirees and working Americans who lost everything because of the reckless activities of the 'too big to fail' banks," **Lujan** Grisham said.

Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., said the bill was a mixed bag but that its positive provisions were worthy of support, including language to slash the IRS budget and prevent new fees for farmers and ranchers whose stock grazes on federal land.

"Passing the spending bill as our last order of business this year was critical, as it will provide certainty and stability for New Mexico businesses through the next fiscal year," Pearce said.

Some of the money contained in the bill, according to Udall's office:

Payment in lieu of taxes program for counties: The PILT program is funded at $442 million. The total will be divided according to a formula determined by the U.S. Department of the Interior. Last year, New Mexico counties received $37 million.

WIPP, Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories: The bill provides $320 million for WIPP, including the administration's original funding request of $220 million. The additional $100 million is designated for cleanup from a radiological accident and equals the estimate DOE has provided for FY15 recovery activities at WIPP.

B61 Life Extension Project at Sandia and Los Alamos: At $643 million, the bill fully funds the B61 LEP for fiscal year 2015 and supports recent job increases at Sandia.

LANL cleanup: $185 million

Technology Transfer: $4.8 million for technology transfer efforts at the Department of Defense, $2.1 million above the president's request, plus an additional $10 million for a regionally focused technology transfer innovation pilot program, requested by Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M.

Military/Defense Cannon Air Force Base:

$23.3 million for a Squadron Operations Facility; Kirtland Air Force Base High Energy Laser: $14 million for high energy laser research initiatives, $1.0 million more than the president's request; Kirtland Air Force Base Operationally Responsive Space Office: $20 million. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA):

The legislation includes a total of $159.1 billion, $1.8 billion above the enacted fiscal year 2014 level.

Rural Health: $209 million to help address new costs related to the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014, including hiring medical staff, expanding facility capacity and allowing rural veterans to seek care outside the VA system.

Oversight: To help address problems related to the "wait list" scandal at the VA in New Mexico and elsewhere, Udall pushed for additional funding for the VA Office of Inspector General. The agreement increases funding by $5 million over the fiscal year 2014 level to provide the resources necessary to continue the office's audits of hospital appointment scheduling and lapses in patient care.

Water Projects: Navajo-Gallup Project: The bill provides $81 million for the construction of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project and the historic 2010 Navajo Nation Water Rights Settlement Agreement. The project will supply water to the eastern portion of the Navajo Nation, the southwestern portion of the Jicarilla Apache Nation and the city of Gallup, serving the future water needs of approximately 250,000 people.

Other Water Settlements: Aamodt: $3 million; Taos Pueblo: $4 million; Middle Rio Grande: The bill includes a provision encouraging development and implementation of the Water Acquisition Program along the Middle Rio Grande and San Juan Chama Projects and the Physical Habitat Restoration and Management efforts along the San Acacia Reach consistent with fiscal year 2014 activities.

Wildfire suppression and prevention: Hazardous fuels reduction activities, $526 million total nationwide.

LOAD-DATE: December 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: Workers in protective gear enter an underground area at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in April after a leak of radioactive material. The federal spending bill includes WIPP cleanup funds. COURTESY OF U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Albuquerque Journal: Blogs (New Mexico)

December 14, 2014 Sunday

NM Senators support massive spending bill, NM House Dems oppose

BYLINE: Michael Coleman, JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: INSIDE THE BELTWAY

LENGTH: 3157 words

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. -- A massive spending bill that cleared the Senate late Saturday passed with reluctant support from New Mexico's two Democratic senators who objected to provisions that altered rules for campaign finance and Wall Street banks.

Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, both New Mexico Democrats, voted for the spending bill that funds New Mexico's national laboratories, the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, military bases, technology transfer, water projects and other programs. On Thursday, Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., voted for the bill while Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham both voted against it. The bill is now on its way to President Obama's desk.

"This bill includes critical funding for New Mexico, to sustain our national labs and military bases, continue recovery at WIPP, and ensure New Mexicans can count on basic government services like schools, public safety, roads and so many other needs," Udall said. "I'm extremely disappointed that this bill also contains measures that weaken campaign finance laws and roll back Wall Street reforms. Our duty is to the American people--not Wall Street billionaires and bankers. But at the end of the day, I could not risk a government shutdown. I will continue to do everything I can as a member of the Appropriations Committee to get Congress back to working for New Mexico and the American people. The American people deserve better than this broken process. They deserve a Congress that works--that is open and deliberate--not last-minute deals and gimmicks for special interests. We cannot keep getting in just under the wire."

Heinrich said the good in the bill outweighs the bad.

"New Mexico relies heavily on these federal investments," Heinrich said. "Home to military bases, national laboratories, and WIPP, our state serves the nation in many ways. Federal dollars help fund critical education initiatives, infrastructure projects, and other vitally important economic drivers. This appropriations bill also includes funding for our nation's response to the Ebola epidemic and to combat the threat presented by the terrorist organization ISIL.

"It is very unfortunate that the bill includes policy riders that I don't support and which don't belong there - including ones that would open the floodgates to special interest money influencing our elections and undo reforms to protect hardworking taxpayers from having to again bailout Wall Street bankers," Heinrich added. "I'm also opposed to an amendment that could compromise the retirement security of hardworking families. While I'm pleased that PILT funding was included in the final package, I will continue to push for full and dedicated funding for Secure Rural Schools to give our counties the budget certainty they need. Our economy desperately needs long-term stability. It doesn't need another government shutdown. We must continue to work together and be willing to compromise in order to get things done for the American people and New Mexico."

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., said the bill was fatally flawed in her mind.

"While I hoped to vote for a clean spending bill that invests in New Mexico priorities like Sandia National Laboratories and Kirtland Air Force Base, I could not support legislation that puts the interests of big banks and billionaires ahead of college students who are drowning in debt, homeowners that are still facing foreclosures and retirees and working Americans who lost everything because of the reckless activities of the too big to fail banks," **Lujan** Grisham said. "As America continues to recover, everyone needs a shot at recovery - not just big business. New Mexico families are still struggling to recover from the last taxpayer-funded bailout of Wall Street - they should not have to shoulder that burden ever again. The bill jeopardizes national security, cuts earned retiree pension benefits, and rolls back campaign finance rules that opens the door to even more special-interest spending during political campaigns. These provisions put special interests above working-class Americans and have no business in appropriations legislation."

Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., said the bill was a mixed bag but that its positive provisions were worthy of support.

"Passing the spending bill as our last order of business this year was critical, as it will provide certainty and stability for New Mexico businesses through the next fiscal year," said Congressman Steve Pearce. "Compelling points and arguments existed on both sides of the issues, and I found there were reasons to vote for and against the bill. The bill provides several provisions to protect jobs and restrict crippling federal regulation and overreach, including protecting farmers and ranchers from new grazing fees on BLM and Forest Service lands. The legislation also reduces federal bureaucracy. It decreases funding for the IRS by $346 million. The bill restricts overreach of the federal government, including a provision to prevent the EPA from passing a rule to regulate lead content in ammunition, and it prohibits the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from requiring Clean Water Act permits for agricultural ponds and ditches."

"We have increased funding for the National Institutes of Health and provided $45.2 billion for VA medical services, including $7 billion for mental health care, $133 million for suicide prevention and $7 billion for homeless veterans' assistance."

"I commend Chairman Calvert and Chairman Rogers for putting forth legislation that includes vital provisions that will help Western communities grow and prosper," said Pearce. "The bill increases funding for hazardous fuels reduction to help Western communities prevent catastrophic wildfires. It also prevents the administration from implementing new fees on oil and gas producers who create jobs and ensure stable energy prices for middle-class families. The bill cuts full-time employees at the EPA to the lowest level in 25 years, and rejects $66 million requested by the President to implement even more economically devastating regulations. The bill will give statewide conservation efforts a chance to succeed by preventing a listing of the sage grouse, which would have severe economic consequences for many Western communities."

"Last, but not least, the bill fully funds the Payments in Lieu of Taxes Program (PILT) that so many Western communities rely on for their everyday needs. The provisions in this bill are essential in providing certainty and the potential for economic growth in the West."

Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, both Democrats, voted against the bill.

"It is deeply disappointing that Congressional Republicans have used this process to pass damaging provisions that roll back critical Wall Street reforms and further undermine campaign finance rules," **Lujan** said. "In addition, the measure shortchanges investments in key areas that are critical to our nation's economic competitiveness and New Mexico's future - cutting Pell Grants and providing inadequate investment to clean energy. It also plays games with funding the Department of Homeland Security, which provides critical resources to New Mexico.

"After immigration executive action was taken to increase accountability and keep families together, House Republicans have now offered their response - funding the Department of Homeland Security only through February. Rather than taking action on bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform that passed the Senate more than 500 days ago, House Republicans have charted a path that provides uncertainty for the agency tasked with protecting our homeland and securing our borders. As a result, grants to border states such as New Mexico will be in question.

"While I hoped to vote for a clean spending bill that invests in New Mexico priorities like Sandia National Laboratories and Kirtland Air Force Base, I could not support legislation that puts the interests of big banks and billionaires ahead of college students who are drowning in debt, homeowners that are still facing foreclosures and retirees and working Americans who lost everything because of the reckless activities of the too big to fail banks," **Lujan** Grisham said. "As America continues to recover, everyone needs a shot at recovery - not just big business. New Mexico families are still struggling to recover from the last taxpayer-funded bailout of Wall Street - they should not have to shoulder that burden ever again. The bill jeopardizes national security, cuts earned retiree pension benefits, and rolls back campaign finance rules that opens the door to even more special-interest spending during political campaigns. These provisions put special interests above working-class Americans and have no business in appropriations legislation."

New Mexico funding in the bill includes (this information is from the office of Udall, who sits on the Senate Appropriations Committee:

Some of the money included for New Mexico, according to Udall's office:

Payment in-lieu of taxes program (PILT):

With $70 million included in a defense bill, which is also before Congress this week, and $372 million in the omnibus, the PILT program is funded at $442 million. The total will be divided according to a formula determined by the U.S. Department of the Interior. Last year, New Mexico counties received $37 million.

WIPP, Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories:

The bill provides $320 million for WIPP, including the administration's original funding request of $220 million. The additional $100 million is designated for cleanup from the radiological accident and equals the estimate DOE has provided for FY15 recovery activities at WIPP.

B61 Life Extension Project:

$643 million. Both Los Alamos and Sandia national labs are instrumental in carrying out this program, which maintains our nation's nuclear weapons stockpile while allowing for the eventual elimination of the nation's largest warhead, the B83. The bill fully funds the B61 LEP for FY15 and supports recent job increases at Sandia.

LANL Cleanup: $185 million

LANL Recapitalization: $22.7 million for 10 projects plus $23 million for TA-55 Reinvestment Project Phase II and III LANL

Sandia National Laboratory Recapitalization:

$30.8 million for seven projects.

Technology Transfer:

$4.8 million for technology transfer at the Department of Defense, $2.1 million above the president's request, plus an additional $10 million for a regionally focused technology transfer innovation pilot program, requested by Senator Udall. The pilot will facilitate public-private ventures between the Department of Defense research and development centers and regionally focused technology incubators.

MILITARY/DOD

-Cannon Air Force Base:

$23.3 million for a Squadron Operations Facility

-Kirtland Air Force Base High Energy Laser:

$14 million for high energy laser research initiatives, $1.0 million more than the president's request for work that will partially be done at KAFB.

-Kirtland Air Force Base Operationally Responsive Space (ORS) Office:

$20 million. The ORS Office is responsible for responsive space capabilities that enable rapid deployment of military resources all around the world. Senator Udall secured this funding, not included in the president's request, to complete the development, launch, and operations of the ORS mission and to support the integration of ORS approaches across the space capabilities in the Air Force.

DOD Starbase Funding:

$25 million increase in funding for STARBASE, a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education program for fifth graders. Senator Udall succeeded in pushing for this civilian program that provides 25 hours of engaging STEM instruction. The technology-rich military environment allows students to experience first-hand "real-world" application of STEM skills. The DoD STARBASE Program creates an unequaled bridge between the U.S. Military and STEM education with local school students that is achieved through strong civilian/military leadership involvement, state of the art curriculum and technology, nation-wide program standardization, a complete understanding of military culture, and assured access to military installations.

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA):

The legislation includes a total of $159.1 billion, $1.8 billion above the enacted fiscal year 2014 level.

VA Medical Services:

$45.2 billion - providing care and treatment for approximately 6.7 million veterans. This includes: $7.2 billion in mental health care services; $133 million in suicide prevention activities; $229 million for traumatic brain injury treatment; $7.4 billion in homeless veterans treatment, services, housing, and job training; and $250 million in rural health initiatives.

Rural Health:

$209 million to help address new costs related to the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 including hiring medical staff, expanding facility capacity, and allowing rural veterans to seek care outside the VA system.

Oversight:

To help address issues related to the "wait list" scandal at the VA in New Mexico and elsewhere, Udall pushed for additional funding for the VA Office of Inspector General. The agreement increases funding by $5 million over the fiscal year 2014 level to provide the resources necessary to continue the Office's audits of hospital appointment scheduling and lapses in patient care. The legislation also includes language directing the VA Office of the Medical Inspector to report on problems or deficiencies in the implementation of its recommendations, and on any violations of law by VA employees.

Advance Funding for Veterans Medical Programs:

$58.7 billion in advance fiscal year 2016 funding for the VA. This funding will provide for medical services, medical support and compliance, and medical facilities, and ensure that our veterans have continued, full access to their medical care.

Water Projects:

-Navajo-Gallup Project: The bill provides $81 million for the construction of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project and the historic 2010 Navajo Nation Water Rights Settlement Agreement. The project will supply water to the eastern portion of the Navajo Nation, the southwestern portion of the Jicarilla Apache Nation and the city of Gallup, serving the future water needs of approximately 250,000 people.

Other Water Settlements

-Aamodt: $3 million

-Taos Pueblo: $4 million

-Middle Rio Grande: The bill includes a provision encouraging development and implementation of the Water Acquisition Program along the Middle Rio Grande and San Juan Chama Projects and the Physical Habitat Restoration and Management efforts along the San Acacia Reach consistent with fiscal year 2014 activities.

Bureau of Reclamation:

-Westwide Drought Response: $50 million for drought response in Western states.

-Reauthorization of Reclamation States Emergency Drought Relief Act of 1991 (a provision from Udall's drought bill, the New Mexico Drought Relief Act of 2014)

-Secure Water Act: The bill increases the authorization from $200 million to $300 million (also a provision from Udall's New Mexico Drought Relief Act of 2014).

-Rural Water Projects: $31 million in discretionary funds for rural water projects, which may be used to fund projects like the Eastern New Mexico-Ute Pipeline.

The bill also includes specific funding for the following Bureau of Reclamation projects in New Mexico:

-Carlsbad Project: $4,139,000

-Middle Rio Grande Project: $22,735,000

-Rio Grande Project: $5,406,000

-Rio Grande Pueblos Project: $650,000

-Tucumcari Project: $34,000

-Navajo Indian Irrigation Project: $3.4 million

ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

-Tribal Partnership Program: $2.5M

-Espanola Valley, Rio Grande & Tributaries: $300,000

-Rio Grande Basin, NM, CO, and TX (Sec. 729): $300,000

-Middle Rio Grande Flood Protection, Bernalillo to Belen: $276,000

-Abiquiu Dam: $2,794,000

-Cochiti Lake: $3,587,000

-Conchas Lake: $2,794,000

-Galisteo Dam: $1,150,000

-Inspection of Completed Environmental Projects: $30,000

-Inspection of Completed Works: $654,000

-Jemez Canyon Dam: $1,392,000

-Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program: $2,492,000

-Santa Rosa Dam and Lake: $1,594,000

-Scheduling Reservoir Operations: $330,000

-Two Rivers Dam: $797,000

-Upper Rio Grande Water Operations Model Study: $1,289,000

WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION AND PREVENTION

-Hazardous fuels reduction activities: $526 million total nationwide

-Wildfire suppression: $1.394 billion total for the Forest Service and DOI to respond to forest fires.

-Aircraft acquisition to enhance firefighting capacity, effectiveness: $65 million

-Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Fund: $40 million for ecological restoration treatments of forests. This helps prevent fires and make healthy watersheds. Two projects in New Mexico are ongoing (Zuni Mountain and Jemez Mountains)

Financial Services and General Govermment:

-Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board (PCLOB): $7.5 million for the PCLOB to help ensure that federal laws and policies related to terrorism appropriately consider privacy and civil liberties. These resources, $4.4 million more than the fiscal year 2014 enacted level, will enable the PCLOB to pursue its mission without delay.

-10 temporary federal judgeships extended for one year, including one in New Mexico.

-Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP): $375 million, $8 million above the fiscal year 2014 enacted level. This includes $245 million for the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) Program and $93.5 million for the Drug-Free Communities program.

-State, Local, and Tribal Law Enforcement: $2.3 billion to support state and local law enforcement with the tools they need to fight violent crime and gangs. This amount is $55 million more than the fiscal year 2014 level and includes funding for key grant programs, such as $376 million for Byrne Justice Assistance Grants, $180 million for Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) hiring grants, $430 million for Violence Against Women Act programs and $252 million for juvenile justice and mentoring grants.

-Heroin Crisis: $7 million to fund a new program within the COPS Office for anti-heroin task forces. Competitive grants will be awarded for drug enforcement, including investigations and activities related to the distribution of heroin or unlawful diversion and distribution of prescription opioids. The agreement calls on the DOJ to take the lead in convening experts in the law enforcement, medical, public health and educational fields to develop a comprehensive government-wide solution for this crisis. The bill also provides funding for OJP grant programs available to state and local governments for residential drug treatment ($10 million), prescription drug monitoring ($11 million), and drug courts ($41 million).

-Funding for 35 new Immigration Judge Teams allowing Executive Office for Immigration Review to adjudicate up to 39,000 more cases annually.

LOAD-DATE: December 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

331 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

December 14, 2014 Sunday 11:25 PM EST

Congressional Votes for New Mexico the Week of 12/05 - 12/11/2014

BYLINE: by TARGETED NEWS SERVICE, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 2300 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Dec. 14 -- There were nine key votes in the House this week; the House held a total of 13 roll call votes in the week ending Thursday. There were four key votes in the Senate, which held a total of seven roll call votes. The most important House vote was to pass a bill to fund discretionary government programs in fiscal 2015; the most important Senate vote was to approve an end to debate on the fiscal 2015 military spending bill.

In addition to roll call votes, the House and Senate also took action on several measures by voice vote. The Senate also passed the Intelligence Authorization Act (H.R. 4681), sponsored by Rep. Mike J. Rogers, R-Mich., to authorize appropriations for intelligence and intelligence-related activities in fiscal 2014 and fiscal 2015; passed a resolution (H.J. Res. 130), sponsored by Rep. Harold Rogers, R-Ky., to make continuing appropriations for discretionary government spending until Dec. 13; passed the FOIA Improvement Act (S. 2520), sponsored by Sen. Patrick J. Leahy, D-Vt., to improve the Freedom of Information Act; and passed the Federal Information Security Modernization Act (S. 2521), sponsored by Sen. Thomas R. Carper, D-Del., to provide for reforms of federal information security.

The House passed the Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act (H.R. 2901), sponsored by Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., to improve the U.S. government's ability to improve access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene to the world's poorest individuals; passed the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act (H.R. 5059), sponsored by Rep. Timothy J. Walz, D-Minn., to require annual evaluations of the military's mental health care and suicide prevention programs; passed the Feed the Future Global Food Security Act (H.R. 5656), sponsored by Rep. Christopher H. Smith, R-N.J., to authorize the Feed the Future Initiative to sustainably reduce global poverty and hunger in developing countries; and passed the Coast Guard Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 2015 and 2016 (S. 2444), sponsored by Sen. Mark Begich, D-Alaska, to authorize Coast Guard appropriations.

Here's a look at how area members of Congress voted over the previous week.

HOUSE VOTES:

House Vote 1:

CALIFORNIA WATER SUPPLIES: The House has passed the California Emergency Drought Relief Act (H.R. 5781), sponsored by Rep. David G. Valadao, R-Calif. The bill would direct the Commerce Secretary and Interior Secretary to allow California's Central Valley Project and State Water Project to provide maximum possible levels of water to businesses and municipalities in the state's Central Valley, without threatening the region's endangered species. Valadao said the measure was necessary because, given the state's historic drought, people in the Central Valley are facing a severe water shortage, and increasing water supplies would relieve some of those shortage. A bill opponent, Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., called it an effort by a small number of Central Valley farmers to override the open process of allocating water supplies, with resulting risks for California's fisheries and cities that also rely on the water supplies. The vote, on Dec. 9, was 230 yeas to 182 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 2:

CHESAPEAKE BAY RESTORATION EFFORTS: The House has passed the Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act (S. 1000), sponsored by Sen. Mark R. Warner. The bill would require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to prepare a crosscut budget for restoration activities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed by various federal government agencies. A supporter, Rep. Robert J. Wittman, R-Va., said the budget would "ensure federal dollars currently spent on bay restoration activities produce results and ensure that we are coordinating how restoration dollars are being spent." The vote, on Dec. 10, was unanimous with 416 yeas.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 3:

INSURANCE AGAINST TERRORIST ATTACKS: The House has passed the Terrorism Risk Insurance Program Reauthorization Act (S. 2244), sponsored by Sen. Charles E. Schumer, D-N.Y. The bill would extend the government's Terrorism Insurance Program through 2021 and decrease the government's share of compensation that would be paid out for losses incurred by an insurer due to a terrorist attack, in stages, to 80 percent of the portion of the amount of losses that exceeds the insurer's deductible. It would also exempt end-users of commodities from a provision of the Dodd-Frank financial reform law that imposes margin requirements for swap transactions involving the future price of commodities. A supporter, Rep. Jeb Hensarling, R-Texas, said the terrorism risk program added stability and certainty to the insurance and construction markets, while the end-user exemption would help businesses and family farmers manage price risks for commodities they use. The vote, on Dec. 10, was 417 yeas to 7 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 4:

FUNDING INTELLIGENCE PROGRAMS: The House has concurred in the Senate amendment to the Intelligence Authorization Act (H.R. 4681), sponsored by Rep. Mike J. Rogers, R-Mich., to authorize appropriations for intelligence and intelligence-related activities in fiscal 2014 and fiscal 2015, with most details of the appropriations classified. Rogers said the range of growing threats to the U.S., including the Islamic State group and countries such as Russia and China that seek to change the international order at the expense of the U.S., led to the bill's small increase in spending to more effectively counter those threats and preserve national security. The vote, on Dec. 10, was 325 yeas to 100 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 5:

TSA TECHNOLOGY, INVENTORY MANAGEMENT: The House has concurred in the Senate amendment to the Transportation Security Acquisition Reform Act (H.R. 2719), sponsored by Rep. Richard Hudson, R-N.C. The bill would require the Transportation Security Administration to develop a long-term plan for managing its inventory, deploying technology systems, and increasing the transparency of the agency's spending. Hudson said the bill "will save significant tax dollars by forcing TSA to make thoughtful, informed decisions about what kinds of technology to deploy in our nation's airports. We simply cannot afford to see TSA repeat the mistakes of the past which have resulted in technologies such as 'puffer machines' and body scanners being pulled out of airports prematurely and others sitting idle in warehouses, never to see the light of day." The vote, on Dec. 10, was unanimous with 425 yeas.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 6:

AIR TRAVEL SECURITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE: The House has concurred in the Senate amendment to the Aviation Security Stakeholder Participation Act (H.R. 1204), sponsored by Rep. Bennie G. Thompson, D-Miss. The bill would order the establishment of an Aviation Security Advisory Committee, made up of various representatives from the aviation industry, to give input to the Transportation Security Administration on the design of air travel security programs. Thompson said the amendment improved upon the bill's effort to give industry stakeholders a venue for working with the TSA to adopt appropriate security strategies, ensuring that the TSA considers stakeholders it proposes security changes for the aviation industry. The vote, on Dec. 10, was 416 yeas to 5 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 7:

TAX DEDUCTIONS FOR CHARITABLE GIVING: The House has rejected the Supporting America's Charities Act (H.R. 5806), sponsored by Rep. Dave Camp, R-Mich. The bill would make permanent the tax deduction for property given to conservation groups by individuals and corporations and increase the allowed tax deduction for food donations to 15 percent of a taxpayer's annual income. Camp said the measure sought to increase charitable giving an help charities better serve those in need, including the hungry and disabled. An opponent, Rep. Sander M. Levin, D-Mich., said expanding the tax deductions without paying for them would add $11 billion to the government's debt. The vote, on Dec. 11, was 275 yeas to 149 nays, with a two-thirds majority required for approval.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 8:

OMNIBUS SPENDING BILL: The House has concurred in the Senate amendment to the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act (H.R. 83), sponsored by Del. Donna M. Christensen, D-Virgin Islands. The bill would provide $1.013 trillion of appropriations for the military and other discretionary government programs in fiscal 2015, while funding the Homeland Security Department until Feb. 27, 2015. A supporter, Rep. Mike Rogers, R-Mich., said it "prevents a costly and damaging government shutdown while making good government funding and policy decisions and reining in regulatory overreach." An opponent, Rep. David E. Price, D-N.C., criticized the bill for allowing the wealthy to contribute more to political campaigns, encouraging dangerous activity in the financial sector by erasing reforms adopted in the Dodd-Frank law, and failing to adequately fund immigration enforcement agencies and also creating the risk of a funding lapse at Homeland Security in February. The vote, on Dec. 11, was 219 yeas to 206 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 9:

EXPANDING JOHN MUIR HISTORIC SITE: The House has passed the John Muir National Historic Site Expansion Act (H.R. 5699), sponsored by Rep. George Miller, D-Calif. The bill would authorize the Interior Secretary's purchase of 44 acres of land in Martinez, Calif., in order to expand the John Muir Historic Site. Miller said the acquisition would improve the site by creating new recreational opportunities for visitors, without any cost to the government, because the funds to buy the 44 acres have been raised from local donors. The vote, on Dec. 11, was 361 yeas to 39 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

SENATE VOTES:

Senate Vote 1:

REGULATING NUCLEAR POWER: The Senate has confirmed the renomination of Jeffery Martin Baran to serve as a commissioner on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for a term ending in mid-2018. Baran, who joined the NRC in October, had served as a senior Democratic staffer on the House Energy and Commerce Committee. A supporter, Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., called Baran a "very qualified individual" who had shown his ability to successfully work with Democrats and Republicans in his time on the House committee. The vote, on Dec. 8, was 52 yeas to 40 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 2:

LABOR RELATIONS BOARD MEMBER: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Lauren McGarity McFerran to serve as a member of the National Labor Relations Board for a five-year term. A supporter, Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, cited McFerran's experience as a senior staffer on the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions. Harkin praised McFerran for her "deep knowledge of labor law. She is an incredibly talented lawyer. She is a person of sterling integrity and strong character. She will be a great asset to the Board." The vote, on Dec. 8, was 54 yeas to 40 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 3:

TVA BOARD MEMBER: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Virginia Tyler Lodge to serve as a member of the Tennessee Valley Authority's board of directors for a term ending in May, 2019. Lodge, a business consultant, previously served as a commissioner on the Tennessee Department of Human Service. A supporter, Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., noted that Lodge has promised to recuse herself from any decisions at TVA that involve a potential conflict of interest with the proposal by a Democratic real estate developer to complete TVA's partly-built Bellefonte nuclear power plant in Alabama. The vote, on Dec. 9, was 86 yeas to 12 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 4:

DEBATING MILITARY SPENDING BILL: The Senate has approved a cloture motion to end debate on the House amendment to the Carl Levin and Howard P. 'Buck' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 3979), sponsored by Rep. Lou Barletta, R-Pa. The bill would authorize $577.1 billion of funding for the Defense Department in fiscal 2015, including $63.7 billion for combat efforts in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria. It would also fund programs to prevent sexual assault in the military and introduce a prescription drugs copayment in health insurance plans for military members. A supporter, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., said along with providing necessary funding for the military, a package of land legislation included in the bill would protect wild, scenic, and historic places while opening up other federal lands for beneficial development. The vote, on Dec. 11, was 85 yeas to 14 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

For more information about Targeted News Service products and services, please contact: Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service LLC, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://targetednews.com.

-1184430

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

December 12, 2014 Friday

Senate approves National Park status for Manhattan Project, Valles Caldera;
President's signature will finalize new parks' status.

BYLINE: Arin McKenna

SECTION: AROUND THE AREA

LENGTH: 483 words

The senate has just voted 89-11 to approve the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which includes public lands legislation creating the Manhattan Project National Historical Park (MPNHP) and granting National Park Preserve status to the Valles Caldera National Preserve (VCNP).

Both pieces of legislation have been years in the making. Senators Tom Udall, Martin Heinrich, and former Sen. Jeff Bingaman were sponsors of both pieces of legislation. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** helped sponsor the MPNHP legislation in the House.

On Dec. 11. Heinrich delivered statements supporting the inclusion of several public lands bills in the NDAA. He stated,

"None of this would be possible were it not for years of effort and support from the local communities that helped craft these bills. Thanks to their work, New Mexico's critical public land based economic engine will continue to grow in the energy, tourism, sporting and recreation sectors."

Lujan also issued a statement after the House passage of the bill last week, stating that establish the MPNHP

"...helps preserve this story so that future generations can understand both the positive and negative impacts of the project. In addition, it will recognize all those who played a key role in the national security of our nation and see that they will not be forgotten."

Lujan also stated that obtaining National Park Preserve status for the Valles "will have a positive impact on New Mexico's economy while protecting our majestic lands and encouraging public access to our great outdoors.

The MPNHP legislation creates a national park with units in Los Alamos, Oak Ridge, Tenn. and Hanford, Wash. It is likely to take two years or more for the Department of Energy and the National Park Service to work out the logistics of the park and for a management plan to be drawn up.

Udall and Bingaman first proposed national park status for the Valles in 2010, believing that national park status provided the best means of protecting the preserve. The legislation they sponsored maintains a model very similar to that currently in place at the preserve, allowing for recreational activities, hunting, fishing and grazing.

The enabling legislation that created the VCNP in 2000 mandated that the preserve be self-sufficient by 2015, with a possible extension until 2020. Failing that, the trust managing the preserve would be dissolved and the management of the 89,000-acres preserve would be transferred to the U.S. Forest Service.

The board voted in September to request the five-year extension of the trust, since the trust has failed to achieve financial sustainability. The newly passed legislation makes that unnecessary.

The Columbine-Hondo area was also designated as wilderness as part of the public lands package in the NDAA.

Pres. Barak Obama has 10 days to either sign or veto the bill.

Look for more on this story in Sunday's Los Alamos Monitor.

LOAD-DATE: December 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: Valles Caldera National Preserve

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

States News Service

December 12, 2014 Friday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON SPENDING BILL

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 316 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement tonight after voting against an omnibus appropriations bill.

"It is deeply disappointing that Congressional Republicans have used this process to pass damaging provisions that roll back critical Wall Street reforms and further undermine campaign finance rules. In addition, the measure shortchanges investments in key areas that are critical to our nation's economic competitiveness and New Mexico's future - cutting Pell Grants and providing inadequate investment to clean energy. It also plays games with funding the Department of Homeland Security, which provides critical resources to New Mexico.

"After immigration executive action was taken to increase accountability and keep families together, House Republicans have now offered their response - funding the Department of Homeland Security only through February. Rather than taking action on bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform that passed the Senate more than 500 days ago, House Republicans have charted a path that provides uncertainty for the agency tasked with protecting our homeland and securing our borders. As a result, grants to border states such as New Mexico will be in question.

"I wholeheartedly support our local governments and our labs and all those who work so hard to support our communities and our state. While there are aspects of this legislation that are good for New Mexico, middle-class families deserve better. I will always strongly advocate for the important scientific research at our labs and environmental cleanup at LANL, but New Mexicans and the American people deserve better than legislation that undermines key reforms that protect working people and the middle class and that further dismantles campaign finance rules."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: December 14, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

US Official News

December 12, 2014 Friday

New Mexico: Congressman Ben Ray Luján Applauds Passage of Bill to Help Prevent Veteran Suicides

LENGTH: 436 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Democratic Party has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District applauded the unanimous passage of legislation in the House today to help prevent suicide among our nation's veterans. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act expands access to mental health services and increases the capacity and efficiency of VA care to address the needs of veterans returning home from war.

"With an estimated 22 veterans committing suicide every day - more than 8,000 each year, we are facing an epidemic that we cannot ignore," Congressman **Luján** said. "The brave men and women who have sacrificed so much to protect and defend our nation, our values, and our way of life must receive the support they need and have earned. An estimated 600,000 men and women who have served in combat have traumatic brain injury, PTSD, or depression, and we must have the capacity to ensure access to the vital mental health services that can help them heal from the wounds of war. This legislation is an important step forward, and must be part of our continuing effort to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans."

The legislation, which is named in honor of Marine Corporal Clay Hunt, an Iraq and Afghanistan War veteran who was awarded the Purple Heart and dedicated suicide prevention advocate who tragically took his own life, includes a number of provisions to increase access to care. The bill:

Establishes a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning service members with accessing VA mental health care services;
Requires the VA to create a one-stop shot, interactive website to serve as a centralized information source regarding all mental health services to veterans;
Takes steps to address the shortage of mental health care professionals by authorizing the VA to conduct a student loan repayment pilot program aimed at recruiting and retaining psychiatrists;
Requires yearly evaluations, conducted by a third party, of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the DOD and VA to determine what is working and what is not working and to make recommendations to improve care; and
Authorizes a GAO report on the transition of care for PTSD and traumatic brain injury between the DOD and VA.

Veterans Service Organizations, including the Military Officers Association of American and Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America have voiced support for the legislation.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutioLondon:

LOAD-DATE: December 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

335 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

December 12, 2014 Friday

New Mexico : Congressman Ben Ray Luján and Congresswoman Michelle Lujan Grisham Respond to Senate Report on CIA Interrogation Program

LENGTH: 222 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Democratic Party has issued the following news release:

Today, Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** (NM-03) and Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01) released statements in response to the Senate Intelligence Committee report on the C.I.A. Interrogation Program.

Following the release of the report Congressman **Lujan** issued the following statement:

"Torture is an affront to our American values. The CIA's efforts to mislead and conceal the full nature of their actions were deplorable. The Senate Intelligence Committee report is an important step toward understanding and rectifying the mistakes that were made during this period in our nation's history. We must ensure that this is never allowed to happen again."

Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham issued the following statement following in response to the Senate Intelligence Committee report:

"I am repulsed by the details of the torture that the C.I.A. used against detainees. These actions go against our moral fabric as a nation that values human rights. Perhaps just as disturbing is the lengths to which the C.I.A. is going to discredit the reports of torture, rather than committing to changing the culture that led to these egregious acts of violence."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutioLondon:

LOAD-DATE: December 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal: Blogs (New Mexico)

December 11, 2014 Thursday

Congress considers massive spending bill, NM delegation wary of some provisions

BYLINE: Michael Coleman, JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: INSIDE THE BELTWAY

LENGTH: 2216 words

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. -- The U.S. House is preparing to vote on a massive $1.1 trillion dollar spending bill that includes money to pay for government programs ranging from the Department of Veterans Affairs to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant near Carlsbad to New Mexico water projects, but the legislation is running into opposition.

Congressional Democrats, including at least some of those from New Mexico, object to provisions included in the bill that would change campaign finance rules, reduce pensions for some Americans and alter the Dodd-Frank banking regulations that were designed to curtail Wall Street abuses.

Because a temporary spending measure to fund the government expires today, the omnibus bill must either be approved by Congress this week or funding must be temporarily extended - or the government will shut down.

Sen. Tom Udall, a New Mexico Democrat who sits on the Senate Appropriations Committee, said he is leaning toward a vote for the 1,600-page bill, which includes provisions he helped negotiate for WIPP, Sandia and Los Alamos National Laboratories, rural counties whose tax bases are adversely affected by untaxable federal lands, and other spending measures.

Udall denounced the so-called "riders" on the bill dealing with campaign finance, Dodd-Frank and other provisisons, as well as threats by lawmakers to shut down the government over disagreements with the president's executive action on immigration.

"This bill includes funding for programs that I fought for - to sustain jobs at New Mexico's labs and bases, to continue cleanup from the radiation release at WIPP, and ensure New Mexico counties have funding they count on for schools, public safety, roads and so many other daily services," Udall said. "I'm extremely disappointed that Congress has become so broken that it would hold vital regular funding hostage in order to pass gimmicks that unleash special interest spending to influence political campaigns and that weaken laws protecting our financial system."

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., is similarly dismayed by the additions, her spokesman said today. However, the congresswoman is gratified that the bill continues to ban horse slaughter funding for human consumption, an initiative she worked on during this Congress. **Lujan** Grisham is unsure how she will vote on the bill.

Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., has been posting highlights of the bill on his Facebook page, touting reductions in federal spending and in staffing at the Environmental Protection Agency, as well as big new money for veterans. A Pearce spokesman said the congressman is leaning "favorably" toward the bill, but is still examining the details.

Sen. Martin Heinrich, a Democrat, has some concerns about the bill but plans to vote for it when it comes from the House, his spokeswoman said this morning.

It remains unclear where Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., stands on the spending bill today. I'll update this when I hear back from his office.

The omnibus spending bill finances the day-to-day operations of every Cabinet department except Homeland Security through Sept. 30, 2015. House Republicans are using Homeland Security funding as way to force a debate on President Obama's recent decision to suspend deportation for as many as 5 million illegal immigrants.

Some of the money included for New Mexico, according to Udall's office:

Payment in-lieu of taxes program (PILT):

With $70 million included in a defense bill, which is also before Congress this week, and $372 million in the omnibus, the PILT program is funded at $442 million. The total will be divided according to a formula determined by the U.S. Department of the Interior. Last year, New Mexico counties received $37 million.

WIPP, Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories:

The bill provides $320 million for WIPP, including the administration's original funding request of $220 million. The additional $100 million is designated for cleanup from the radiological accident and equals the estimate DOE has provided for FY15 recovery activities at WIPP.

B61 Life Extension Project:

$643 million. Both Los Alamos and Sandia national labs are instrumental in carrying out this program, which maintains our nation's nuclear weapons stockpile while allowing for the eventual elimination of the nation's largest warhead, the B83. The bill fully funds the B61 LEP for FY15 and supports recent job increases at Sandia.

LANL Cleanup: $185 million

LANL Recapitalization: $22.7 million for 10 projects plus $23 million for TA-55 Reinvestment Project Phase II and III LANL

Sandia National Laboratory Recapitalization:

$30.8 million for seven projects.

Technology Transfer:

$4.8 million for technology transfer at the Department of Defense, $2.1 million above the president's request, plus an additional $10 million for a regionally focused technology transfer innovation pilot program, requested by Senator Udall. The pilot will facilitate public-private ventures between the Department of Defense research and development centers and regionally focused technology incubators.

MILITARY/DOD

-Cannon Air Force Base:

$23.3 million for a Squadron Operations Facility

-Kirtland Air Force Base High Energy Laser:

$14 million for high energy laser research initiatives, $1.0 million more than the president's request for work that will partially be done at KAFB.

-Kirtland Air Force Base Operationally Responsive Space (ORS) Office:

$20 million. The ORS Office is responsible for responsive space capabilities that enable rapid deployment of military resources all around the world. Senator Udall secured this funding, not included in the president's request, to complete the development, launch, and operations of the ORS mission and to support the integration of ORS approaches across the space capabilities in the Air Force.

DOD Starbase Funding:

$25 million increase in funding for STARBASE, a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education program for fifth graders. Senator Udall succeeded in pushing for this civilian program that provides 25 hours of engaging STEM instruction. The technology-rich military environment allows students to experience first-hand "real-world" application of STEM skills. The DoD STARBASE Program creates an unequaled bridge between the U.S. Military and STEM education with local school students that is achieved through strong civilian/military leadership involvement, state of the art curriculum and technology, nation-wide program standardization, a complete understanding of military culture, and assured access to military installations.

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA):

The legislation includes a total of $159.1 billion, $1.8 billion above the enacted fiscal year 2014 level.

VA Medical Services:

$45.2 billion - providing care and treatment for approximately 6.7 million veterans. This includes: $7.2 billion in mental health care services; $133 million in suicide prevention activities; $229 million for traumatic brain injury treatment; $7.4 billion in homeless veterans treatment, services, housing, and job training; and $250 million in rural health initiatives.

Rural Health:

$209 million to help address new costs related to the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 including hiring medical staff, expanding facility capacity, and allowing rural veterans to seek care outside the VA system.

Oversight:

To help address issues related to the "wait list" scandal at the VA in New Mexico and elsewhere, Udall pushed for additional funding for the VA Office of Inspector General. The agreement increases funding by $5 million over the fiscal year 2014 level to provide the resources necessary to continue the Office's audits of hospital appointment scheduling and lapses in patient care. The legislation also includes language directing the VA Office of the Medical Inspector to report on problems or deficiencies in the implementation of its recommendations, and on any violations of law by VA employees.

Advance Funding for Veterans Medical Programs:

$58.7 billion in advance fiscal year 2016 funding for the VA. This funding will provide for medical services, medical support and compliance, and medical facilities, and ensure that our veterans have continued, full access to their medical care.

Water Projects:

-Navajo-Gallup Project: The bill provides $81 million for the construction of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project and the historic 2010 Navajo Nation Water Rights Settlement Agreement. The project will supply water to the eastern portion of the Navajo Nation, the southwestern portion of the Jicarilla Apache Nation and the city of Gallup, serving the future water needs of approximately 250,000 people.

Other Water Settlements

-Aamodt: $3 million

-Taos Pueblo: $4 million

-Middle Rio Grande: The bill includes a provision encouraging development and implementation of the Water Acquisition Program along the Middle Rio Grande and San Juan Chama Projects and the Physical Habitat Restoration and Management efforts along the San Acacia Reach consistent with fiscal year 2014 activities.

Bureau of Reclamation:

-Westwide Drought Response: $50 million for drought response in Western states.

-Reauthorization of Reclamation States Emergency Drought Relief Act of 1991 (a provision from Udall's drought bill, the New Mexico Drought Relief Act of 2014)

-Secure Water Act: The bill increases the authorization from $200 million to $300 million (also a provision from Udall's New Mexico Drought Relief Act of 2014).

-Rural Water Projects: $31 million in discretionary funds for rural water projects, which may be used to fund projects like the Eastern New Mexico-Ute Pipeline.

The bill also includes specific funding for the following Bureau of Reclamation projects in New Mexico:

-Carlsbad Project: $4,139,000

-Middle Rio Grande Project: $22,735,000

-Rio Grande Project: $5,406,000

-Rio Grande Pueblos Project: $650,000

-Tucumcari Project: $34,000

-Navajo Indian Irrigation Project: $3.4 million

ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

-Tribal Partnership Program: $2.5M

-Espanola Valley, Rio Grande & Tributaries: $300,000

-Rio Grande Basin, NM, CO, and TX (Sec. 729): $300,000

-Middle Rio Grande Flood Protection, Bernalillo to Belen: $276,000

-Abiquiu Dam: $2,794,000

-Cochiti Lake: $3,587,000

-Conchas Lake: $2,794,000

-Galisteo Dam: $1,150,000

-Inspection of Completed Environmental Projects: $30,000

-Inspection of Completed Works: $654,000

-Jemez Canyon Dam: $1,392,000

-Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program: $2,492,000

-Santa Rosa Dam and Lake: $1,594,000

-Scheduling Reservoir Operations: $330,000

-Two Rivers Dam: $797,000

-Upper Rio Grande Water Operations Model Study: $1,289,000

WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION AND PREVENTION

-Hazardous fuels reduction activities: $526 million total nationwide

-Wildfire suppression: $1.394 billion total for the Forest Service and DOI to respond to forest fires.

-Aircraft acquisition to enhance firefighting capacity, effectiveness: $65 million

-Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Fund: $40 million for ecological restoration treatments of forests. This helps prevent fires and make healthy watersheds. Two projects in New Mexico are ongoing (Zuni Mountain and Jemez Mountains)

Financial Services and General Govermment:

-Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board (PCLOB): $7.5 million for the PCLOB to help ensure that federal laws and policies related to terrorism appropriately consider privacy and civil liberties. These resources, $4.4 million more than the fiscal year 2014 enacted level, will enable the PCLOB to pursue its mission without delay.

-10 temporary federal judgeships extended for one year, including one in New Mexico.

-Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP): $375 million, $8 million above the fiscal year 2014 enacted level. This includes $245 million for the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) Program and $93.5 million for the Drug-Free Communities program.

-State, Local, and Tribal Law Enforcement: $2.3 billion to support state and local law enforcement with the tools they need to fight violent crime and gangs. This amount is $55 million more than the fiscal year 2014 level and includes funding for key grant programs, such as $376 million for Byrne Justice Assistance Grants, $180 million for Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) hiring grants, $430 million for Violence Against Women Act programs and $252 million for juvenile justice and mentoring grants.

-Heroin Crisis: $7 million to fund a new program within the COPS Office for anti-heroin task forces. Competitive grants will be awarded for drug enforcement, including investigations and activities related to the distribution of heroin or unlawful diversion and distribution of prescription opioids. The agreement calls on the DOJ to take the lead in convening experts in the law enforcement, medical, public health and educational fields to develop a comprehensive government-wide solution for this crisis. The bill also provides funding for OJP grant programs available to state and local governments for residential drug treatment ($10 million), prescription drug monitoring ($11 million), and drug courts ($41 million).

-Funding for 35 new Immigration Judge Teams allowing Executive Office for Immigration Review to adjudicate up to 39,000 more cases annually.

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

December 11, 2014

LUJAN STATEMENT ON SPENDING BILL; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 322 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement tonight after voting against an omnibus appropriations bill.

"It is deeply disappointing that Congressional Republicans have used this process to pass damaging provisions that roll back critical Wall Street reforms and further undermine campaign finance rules. In addition, the measure shortchanges investments in key areas that are critical to our nation's economic competitiveness and New Mexico's future - cutting Pell Grants and providing inadequate investment to clean energy. It also plays games with funding the Department of Homeland Security, which provides critical resources to New Mexico.

"After immigration executive action was taken to increase accountability and keep families together, House Republicans have now offered their response - funding the Department of Homeland Security only through February. Rather than taking action on bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform that passed the Senate more than 500 days ago, House Republicans have charted a path that provides uncertainty for the agency tasked with protecting our homeland and securing our borders. As a result, grants to border states such as New Mexico will be in question.

"I wholeheartedly support our local governments and our labs and all those who work so hard to support our communities and our state. While there are aspects of this legislation that are good for New Mexico, middle-class families deserve better. I will always strongly advocate for the important scientific research at our labs and environmental cleanup at LANL, but New Mexicans and the American people deserve better than legislation that undermines key reforms that protect working people and the middle class and that further dismantles campaign finance rules."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-spending-bill/

LOAD-DATE: December 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMC

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

December 11, 2014 Thursday 8:09 PM EST

Lujan Statement on Spending Bill

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 326 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement tonight after voting against an omnibus appropriations bill.

"It is deeply disappointing that Congressional Republicans have used this process to pass damaging provisions that roll back critical Wall Street reforms and further undermine campaign finance rules. In addition, the measure shortchanges investments in key areas that are critical to our nation's economic competitiveness and New Mexico's future - cutting Pell Grants and providing inadequate investment to clean energy. It also plays games with funding the Department of Homeland Security, which provides critical resources to New Mexico.

"After immigration executive action was taken to increase accountability and keep families together, House Republicans have now offered their response - funding the Department of Homeland Security only through February. Rather than taking action on bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform that passed the Senate more than 500 days ago, House Republicans have charted a path that provides uncertainty for the agency tasked with protecting our homeland and securing our borders. As a result, grants to border states such as New Mexico will be in question.

"I wholeheartedly support our local governments and our labs and all those who work so hard to support our communities and our state. While there are aspects of this legislation that are good for New Mexico, middle-class families deserve better. I will always strongly advocate for the important scientific research at our labs and environmental cleanup at LANL, but New Mexicans and the American people deserve better than legislation that undermines key reforms that protect working people and the middle class and that further dismantles campaign finance rules."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TagarumaMar-141213-4966450 30TagarumaMar

LOAD-DATE: December 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

339 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

December 11, 2014 Thursday

Lujan Statement on Senate Intelligence Committee Report on CIA Interrogation Program

LENGTH: 129 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** released the following statement today on the recently released report from the Senate Intelligence Committee on the CIA's detention and interrogation program.

"Torture is an affront to our American values. The CIA's efforts to mislead and conceal the full nature of their actions were deplorable. The Senate Intelligence Committee report is an important step toward understanding and rectifying the mistakes that were made during this period in our nation's history. We must ensure that this is never allowed to happen again."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: December 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

340 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

December 10, 2014 Wednesday

NM Dems condemn CIA torture; Delegation's lone Republican says report may endanger U.S. troops

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 804 words

WASHINGTON - Sen. Martin Heinrich, a New Mexico Democrat who sits on the Senate Intelligence Committee, said a newly released report on CIA torture is disturbing but he hopes the 528-page document will help prevent similar actions from ever happening again.

Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., called the CIA interrogation techniques brutal. Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., said she was repulsed by them. Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M, condemned the release of the report and said it may put U.S. troops in greater danger overseas.

"I don't think any normal person can read some of the descriptions (of torture) and not be disturbed, but the main question is, how do we learn from this and make sure this doesn't happen in the future?" Heinrich said told the Journal on Tuesday.

The report, released after a five-year investigation by the Senate Intelligence Committee and over the objections of CIA officials,details techniques that agency operatives sometimes employed during interrogations of suspected terrorists after 9/11 as well the agency's dishonesty in trying to downplay or cover up the activity. In some cases, detainees were deprived of sleep for as long as a week, and were sometimes threatened with death. CIA medical staff approved "rectal feeding" or "rectal hydration" - a technique that the CIA's chief of interrogations described as a way to exert "total control over the detainee."

CIA Director John Brennan issued a statement arguing that the techniques produced "intelligence that helped thwart attack plans, capture terrorists, and save lives."

"The intelligence gained from the program was critical to our understanding of al-Qaida and continues to inform our counterterrorism efforts to this day," Brennan said.

Pearce, the New Mexico congressional delegation's only Republican, said the report's release could bring harm to U.S. troops abroad.

"I am concerned that the release of this report will jeopardize the lives of our troops that are in harm's way and engaged directly in conflict overseas," Pearce said. "The decision by Senate Democrats, supported by the White House, to release the report today has possibly endangered the lives of thousands of troops and federal employees abroad."

Heinrich, who along with other Democrats on the committee had pushed for the report's public release for months, said the torture itself jeopardized American troops.

"What put Americans at risk was that it became known we had tortured people and the CIA had engaged in conduct that clearly was inflammatory and it was used as a recruiting tool - not the fact that we are owning up to it," he said. "That's a very important distinction. If we're going to be the world's leading voice against extremism and terror, then we have to own up to our own mistakes along the way."

Heinrich said the report's release will give the U.S. moral authority in its counterterrorism fight.

"At its roots, it's a battle between extremism - and some people would say evil - and the forces of democracy and good," Heinrich said. "We're better than (what is contained in) this report. We're better than torture. Torture is not who we are, and it was very destructive to our ability to lead effectively on the global stage. I think this report is the beginning of putting that behind us so that we can be the world's leading voice against terrorism." Other Democrats in New Mexico's congressional delegation echoed Heinrich's views. "The Senate investigators' report documents the use of brutal interrogation techniques that I believe constitute torture and violate U.S. and international law," Udall said. "In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, we compromised the values that make our nation great." "There was huge resistance by the Central Intelligence Agency and others in government from this coming out, but I think it's an important thing to get out what has happened and make sure it doesn't happen again," Udall added in a conference call with New Mexico reporters Tuesday. **Lujan** Grisham also condemned the actions outlined in the report. "I am repulsed by the details of the torture that the CIA used against detainees," **Lujan** Grisham said. "These actions go against our moral fabric as a nation that values human rights. Perhaps just as disturbing is the lengths to which the CIA is going to discredit the reports of torture, rather than committing to changing the culture that led to these egregious acts of violence." Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., said, "The CIA's efforts to mislead and conceal the full nature of their actions were deplorable. The report is an important step toward understanding and rectifying the mistakes that were made during this period in our nation's history," he said. Details

Senate report exposes CIA torture of suspects A 5 Torture report interactive graphic at Online ABQjournal. com/extras

Online

ABQjournal. com/extras

LOAD-DATE: December 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

341 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

December 10, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN APPLAUDS PASSAGE OF BILL TO HELP PREVENT VETERAN SUICIDES

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 420 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District applauded the unanimous passage of legislation in the House today to help prevent suicide among our nation's veterans. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act expands access to mental health services and increases the capacity and efficiency of VA care to address the needs of veterans returning home from war.

"With an estimated 22 veterans committing suicide every day - more than 8,000 each year, we are facing an epidemic that we cannot ignore," Congressman **Lujan** said. "The brave men and women who have sacrificed so much to protect and defend our nation, our values, and our way of life must receive the support they need and have earned. An estimated 600,000 men and women who have served in combat have traumatic brain injury, PTSD, or depression, and we must have the capacity to ensure access to the vital mental health services that can help them heal from the wounds of war. This legislation is an important step forward, and must be part of our continuing effort to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans."

The legislation, which is named in honor of Marine Corporal Clay Hunt, an Iraq and Afghanistan War veteran who was awarded the Purple Heart and dedicated suicide prevention advocate who tragically took his own life, includes a number of provisions to increase access to care. The bill:

" Establishes a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning servicemembers with accessing VA mental health care services;

" Requires the VA to create a one-stop shot, interactive website to serve as a centralized information source regarding all mental health services to veterans;

" Takes steps to address the shortage of mental health care professionals by authorizing the VA to conduct a student loan repayment pilot program aimed at recruiting and retaining psychiatrists;

" Requires yearly evaluations, conducted by a third party, of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the DOD and VA to determine what is working and what is not working and to make recommendations to improve care; and

" Authorizes a GAO report on the transition of care for PTSD and traumatic brain injury between the DOD and VA.

Veterans Service Organizations, including the Military Officers Association of American and Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America have voiced support for the legislation.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: December 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Congressional Documents and Publications

December 9, 2014

LUJAN APPLAUDS PASSAGE OF BILL TO HELP PREVENT VETERAN SUICIDES;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 431 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District applauded the unanimous passage of legislation in the House today to help prevent suicide among our nation's veterans. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act expands access to mental health services and increases the capacity and efficiency of VA care to address the needs of veterans returning home from war.

"With an estimated 22 veterans committing suicide every day - more than 8,000 each year, we are facing an epidemic that we cannot ignore," Congressman **Lujan** said. "The brave men and women who have sacrificed so much to protect and defend our nation, our values, and our way of life must receive the support they need and have earned. An estimated 600,000 men and women who have served in combat have traumatic brain injury, PTSD, or depression, and we must have the capacity to ensure access to the vital mental health services that can help them heal from the wounds of war. This legislation is an important step forward, and must be part of our continuing effort to honor the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans."

The legislation, which is named in honor of Marine Corporal Clay Hunt, an Iraq and Afghanistan War veteran who was awarded the Purple Heart and dedicated suicide prevention advocate who tragically took his own life, includes a number of provisions to increase access to care. The bill:

* Establishes a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning servicemembers with accessing VA mental health care services;

* Requires the VA to create a one-stop shot, interactive website to serve as a centralized information source regarding all mental health services to veterans;

* Takes steps to address the shortage of mental health care professionals by authorizing the VA to conduct a student loan repayment pilot program aimed at recruiting and retaining psychiatrists;

* Requires yearly evaluations, conducted by a third party, of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the DOD and VA to determine what is working and what is not working and to make recommendations to improve care; and

* Authorizes a GAO report on the transition of care for PTSD and traumatic brain injury between the DOD and VA.

Veterans Service Organizations, including the Military Officers Association of American and Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America have voiced support for the legislation.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-applauds-passage-of-bill-to-help-prevent-veteran-suicides/

LOAD-DATE: December 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMC

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

December 9, 2014

LUJAN STATEMENT ON SENATE INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON CIA INTERROGATION PROGRAM; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 121 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** released the following statement today on the recently released report from the Senate Intelligence Committee on the CIA's detention and interrogation program.

"Torture is an affront to our American values. The CIA's efforts to mislead and conceal the full nature of their actions were deplorable. The Senate Intelligence Committee report is an important step toward understanding and rectifying the mistakes that were made during this period in our nation's history. We must ensure that this is never allowed to happen again."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan.**house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-senate-intelligence-committee-report-on-cia-interrogation-program/

LOAD-DATE: December 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMC

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

344 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Hotline

December 9, 2014 Tuesday

Meet the Chairman

BYLINE: Scott Bland

LENGTH: 343 words

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** 's (D-NM) quick ascent to the DCCC chairmanship after three terms in Congress comes at a low point for the Democratic caucus. They need another 30 seats to get back to the majority. But **Lujan** says the House can be in play and outlined, in an interview, some of the facets he brings to the job.

-- **Lujan** may be a relatively new name, but he's well acquainted with the business of his new role. His father was a longtime Democratic legislative leader in New Mexico, and **Lujan** has broken fundraising records at the PAC affiliated with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. In an interview, **Lujan** also cited a work ethic that comes naturally with growing up on a farm. "We still shovel what the sheep make," **Lujan** said.

-- That's both an original and apt metaphor for modern politics. **Lujan** has signed up to spend the next two years incessantly cajoling donors, members, and candidates -- but the ultimate effect of all that work pales in comparison to environmental factors that **Lujan** and his committee cannot control. That's one of the reasons**Lujan** doesn't sound like he's preparing to make rapid changes at the DCCC. (Nor, for that matter , does Democratic leader **Nancy Pelosi**.) **Lujan** did, however, repeatedly talk about the DCCC job as being part of a team. Asked what he would change about the

committee, **Lujan** responded, "Win more seats," before going on to say he wanted to make sure he "gets members engaged." "We're in this together," **Lujan** continued.

-- Besides that, the new chairman cited four areas where he wants to carry on with things the DCCC is doing well: Fundraising, digital (which is now deeply intertwined with the committee's financial health), field programs, and recruiting. The fundraising is particularly notable. Stretching the Dems' record of outraising the House GOP despite being in the minority will be one of **Lujan's** main tasks.

House Democratic leadership hasn't added too many new faces lately. This year, **Lujan** is the fresh face, and he's jumping right into the deep end with a new, tricky job.**-- Scott Bland**

LOAD-DATE: December 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Magazine

Copyright 2014 The National Journal Group, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

345 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

December 9, 2014 Tuesday 11:49 PM EST

Lujan Statement on Senate Intelligence Committee Report on CIA Interrogation Program

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 116 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** released the following statement today on the recently released report from the Senate Intelligence Committee on the CIA's detention and interrogation program.

"Torture is an affront to our American values. The CIA's efforts to mislead and conceal the full nature of their actions were deplorable. The Senate Intelligence Committee report is an important step toward understanding and rectifying the mistakes that were made during this period in our nation's history. We must ensure that this is never allowed to happen again."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TagarumaMar-141210-4962050 30TagarumaMar

LOAD-DATE: December 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

346 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

December 9, 2014 Tuesday

New Mexico: Lujan Statement on Senate Intelligence Committee Report on CIA Interrogation Program

LENGTH: 139 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Luján Statement on Senate Intelligence Committee Report on CIA Interrogation Program

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** released the following statement today on the recently released report from the Senate Intelligence Committee on the CIA's detention and interrogation program.

"Torture is an affront to our American values. The CIA's efforts to mislead and conceal the full nature of their actions were deplorable. The Senate Intelligence Committee report is an important step toward understanding and rectifying the mistakes that were made during this period in our nation's history. We must ensure that this is never allowed to happen again."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: December 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

347 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Hotline

December 8, 2014 Monday

Lujan: 'We Could Have Lost 20 or More Seats'

BYLINE: Jack Fitzpatrick

LENGTH: 116 words

Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Chairman **Ben Ray Lujan** (D) downplayed in an interview the amount of changes Democrats have to make after losing 13 House seats this cycle. "You'll see where some of those shifts are going to take place," **Lujan** said. "But I think we really have to take into consideration that based on some of the modeling and the national mood last cycle ... we could have lost 20 or more seats. The team we had in place ... kept that to 13. As we're moving into all of this, that's something to build off of."

While the political environment was not under the DCCC's control, **Lujan** said the committee succeeded in at least mitigating Democrats' losses. (**Hotline** reporting)

LOAD-DATE: December 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Magazine

Copyright 2014 The National Journal Group, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

348 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

December 8, 2014 Monday

New Mexico: **Lujan** Statement on National Defense Authorization Act

LENGTH: 318 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting in support of the Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which includes a number of priorities for New Mexico.

"While I do not support everything in this bill, it does include important provisions that are key priorities for communities across New Mexico, including critical funding for environmental cleanup at Los Alamos National Laboratory. As we work to restore operations at WIPP, we must ensure that our national laboratories have the resources to meet their legal obligations for environmental remediation. We also have a moral obligation to the communities that have contributed to our national security to ensure that this waste is cleaned up in a safe and timely manner.

"NDAA also includes a number of lands bills - designating the Columbine-Hondo area as wilderness and transferring management of the Valles Caldera National Preserve - that will have a positive impact on New Mexico's economy while protecting our majestic lands and encouraging public access to our great outdoors. In addition, this bill includes legislation establishing a Manhattan Project National Historical Park that includes a site in Los Alamos and helps preserve this story so that future generations can understand both the positive and negative impacts of the project. In addition, it will recognize all those who played a key role in the national security of our nation and see that they will not be forgotten.

"Finally, I continue to have serious concerns with the current plan to equip and train Syrian rebels, and believe that an issue of this importance deserved a separate debate and vote."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: December 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

349 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Quarterly News

December 7, 2014 Sunday

Nancy Pelosi Interview Transcript

BYLINE: By Christina Bellantoni

LENGTH: 3872 words

CQ Roll Call's Emma Dumain interviewed Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., on Dec. 5. A lightly edited transcript follows.

Q: So it seems like you know you don't know what's going to come out of this appropriations package but it seems like between saving the tax extenders package deal that would not have been good for your party before the break and then looking ahead to next week where your party could be swooping in to save the government from shutting down, you know, you must be feeling kind of good right now in terms of the relevance of your party and the role that you play in sort of making things happen.

Pelosi: Well we have a higher standard than that. I mean ...

(Loud burst of laughter)

Pelosi: ... seen a tax package that was more job creating than the rest, but had to go to a place that we rejected what they were doing that I thought would be harmful. It would be harmful in the following ways: It made permanent tax breaks in the hundreds of billions of dollars for business, and ignored the needs of working families in our country. And, making it permanent tied our hands for what we could do in tax simplification and reform later as well as investments we wanted to make by reducing the revenue force.

So anyway, that had to end. The minute we got wind of what that could be and that it had a path, before it gained any respectability, I called our members and said, 'This is what I think is happening' - of course it's all behind closed doors - 'but I have to know that I can say to the president that this will, we will sustain a veto.'

The president was very aggressive on this, he knew the downside of what they were putting forth. So that put an end to that and I give my members credit - because some of the things sound very appealing, if you take one piece here and one piece there. They're appealing to their districts, but overall they understood that it was going backward in terms of what we need to do to reduce the deficit, create jobs, lower taxes for the great middle class in our country.

Q: You know, our understanding is that this was a deal brokered between Harry Reid and House Republicans ... going forward, you know, Harry Reid is your guy in the Senate right now and you know this for the next couple of weeks they have the majority and they were the ones you were looking to to make sure that they were gonna table certain pieces legislation. You know, next year, for the next two years, you guys are kind of on the same ... are you concerned about, did you see Harry Reid's role in brokering this deal as any sort of harbinger for how you're going to work together?

Pelosi: I don't really know enough because by the time we weighed in the deal was gone. I don't know how, about Harry - Senator Reid, Senator Reid was in it but I know that the ... many members in the Senate, of the House Demo - excuse me - of the Senate Democratic caucus didn't support the arrangement, but I don't know whose doorstep to put it at, except that it was a work in progress and before it progressed any further we wanted to put an end to it so I have great confidence in Harry Reid, I don't know what the arrangement will be over there if they still have a 60 vote rule requirement and that'll make a difference ...

Q: You know, people like to say, or you know, it's easy for people say, 'Oh the House Democrats are a minority, they're irrelevant.' What do you say to that?

Pelosi: Well, I don't think anyone is irrelevant. I just think the Republicans were irrelevant when they were in the minority. And especially not in the minority when your President in the White House is a Democrat, so there is leverage, and we have the ability to sustain vetoes, but we also have a relationships with the American people, and we can make ... the contrast as initiatives come forward.

I think we'll have an impact on the nature of this appropriations bill. I don't think, unless your side can always produce the votes, you're empowering the other side to make changes in the legislation. And so if they have 218 votes for whatever they're doing, no matter how bad it is, that's one thing. But I don't know if some of their people will vote - I don't know, we will see.But I don't ... I've never thought anyone was irrelevant here, as I say, especially if ... your party has the president in the White House.

The value that we have is that we have a united caucus, and we do because we build consensus. I don't determine what the approach is we will take. As I said to you, when we saw what was happening with the bill, I immediately called the members to see what authority I might, in fact, would have to say to the president, 'We will sustain the veto.'

Q: Well, you know and that's, you know, a credit to your caucus, you know, I think that people would say that John Boehner doesn't have as many members perhaps willing to work together as Democrats have willing to work together. But I think that many would argue that is also a credit to you and how you run your caucus and how you work with your people. So you know I guess the question is how, you know you say you know you're here as long as your people want you to be here and as long as you feel like -

Pelosi: Maybe not that long. (laughter) Maybe not that long.

Q: Yeah. But for the time, for the time being.

Pelosi: The Affordable Care Act was my mission.

Q: Yeah.

Pelosi: And we got it done, we're going to protect it.

Q: Yeah.

Pelosi: But I want to, when, whenever the day comes, I want to leave with a - it will be up to the caucus how they proceed after that.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

Pelosi: But I want to give them good options.

Q: Yeah. But what, what do you think, for the time being, inspires that kind of loyalty towards you and the, the desire to want you as the leader and to want to work with you?

Pelosi: Well I, I guess you'd have to speak with the members but I do, as I said, people hear me say, I consider myself a weaver at a loom just ... pulling together all the threads of different opinion in our caucus, whether it's ethnic, regional, generational, gender-wise, we have a lot of different views. Our caucus is the most diverse caucus that probably existed in the history of the world.

If you look at our caucus versus the Republican caucus, or even the entire Senate, you see a beautiful diversity that goes with it. You see personal experience that is different.

Q: Yeah.

Pelosi: And so our, our, my job, is to make sure that we have the strongest possible fabric woven from all those different threads, and that consensus that we build is what produces the unity because it's not from on up high. So if I have to say to people, 'This is a path that we have to go to vote with the Republicans to get something done, you don't have to vote for it, but I have to give it some support.'

Q: Sure.

Pelosi: Then they understand that. If you're saying to people, 'This is terrible but you have to vote for it,' that's a harder sell than if you're saying, 'We just need to be helpful and you can you know make their own judgment.' And they always make their own judgment.

Q: Yeah. Do you - there's you know a lot of talk about you know the, the influence you have in the caucus and the, you know, your description of building consensus and working with members and the incredible fundraising ability that you have.

Pelosi: I do.

Q: (Laughs) Could anybody else do this job at this moment in time but you?

Pelosi: I certainly hope so.

Q: Yeah?

(Laughter)

Pelosi: I certainly hope so. I, I, - tooting my own horn - my, the support I have in the country, originating in the great state of California, is substantial and enables me to amass resources because they believe in what I believe in and also want to see a Democratic majority. California, we've led the way to winning the House. We've led the way starting in 2000 by winning five seats. We were 26-26 going into the election, we were at 21-31. We had 10 points. And that now we're 39-14, Democrats to Republicans, when you know a dozen years ago we were 26-26.

So from a political standpoint, from numbers of members who have come, from a financial standpoint of idealistic progressives, donors there, California really was the golden - not only the Golden State - but the golden goose in terms of ideas, talent and financial resources. So that took us to a path to victory and I think there's an appreciation that we hadn't won in '94, '96, '98, 2000, 2002, and I took over in 2004. We didn't win that year but we built to win in 2006. So I think that, that's why I became speaker. And a lot of the people that we have brought in over time share values that we all share, so.

I feel very proud of the relationship that I have with the caucus but I also trust in them to do whatever they need to do once we go forward.

Q: So you know part of you know the thing about your job is, you are and have been in a position to elevate, help elevate, help facilitate the growth of members of your caucus - people like Xavier Becerra and Chris Van Hollen and Steve Israel and now [**Ben Ray**] **Luján** and Donna Edwards sort of have a seat at the table. Are you sort of cognizant of how, you know, in elevating these members, you're sort of helping to grow the next generation of leadership? Is that something that you're focused on?

Pelosi: Well, that's always a responsibility that we have. But there are other places I've probably appointed more women to be, where I had the discretion, to be chairs of committees or place them in a position where they would become chairs. I mean, when I became speaker, I appointed - God rest their souls, they passed away - but Stephanie Tubbs Jones to be chair of the Ethics Committee; Juanita Millender-McDonald, the chair of the House Administration Committee; Louise Slaughter to be chair of the Rules Committee. Now I have Linda Sánchez to be [ranking member] of the Ethics Committee now. How I've lined up people on some of the committees - both women and minorities - Bennie Thompson, there were people much senior to him who wanted to be in that position. That was a new committee so I had the ability to put that lineup in place. And so, it's not just about leadership, it's about committees as well. And, um, this place is competitive in some ways but there's so much opportunity. And beyond having a role, it's what your standing is on an issue. I'm trying to enable women to have standing on certain issues by showcasing them on those issues. So it's a ... sometimes people say, 'You're not out there enough,' and I say, 'No, but my whole point was to put other people out there on these issues.'

Q: So, it's a cool thing that you've got to do though, to put these people in the spotlight, help them grow and develop and sort of hone their portfolios. But you also feel like that's the responsibility of you as a leader, to help get these people ready for whenever there's another opportunity for them or the day, not when you step down but, you know, Mr. Clyburn, Mr. Hoyer, any one of the people occupying that position.

Pelosi: It's a generational change that will have to take place. But also it's just the electoral politics. Debbie Wasserman Schultz was running. She was in, thought she might be, in the primary. I took the unusual step as the Democratic Leader to go down pre-primary to her district and speak on her behalf, to just say that she's the person that we wanted here. So that, and in many other cases, to encourage women to - well, not only encourage but to help them to win. So it's, politically, it's um, from the standpoint of leadership but also committee assignments. And we've, I've always made sure that, women had a very strong role in whatever arena that they were playing in.

Q: And again, you see that as the responsibility of the leader to help?

Pelosi: Yes. And minorities too. Not just women but women and minorities and persons, women of color. That would be even more exciting.

Q: Have you seen over your years here any younger members who remind you of you when you were younger and coming up in the House and in politics?

Pelosi: Oh, I'm in awe of the women that I see, the younger women that I see. They do things that I could never do. I mean, I did my life sequentially - I had my five children, raised them, came to Congress. These women - as my own daughters do, work in professions and they have children that they're raising. I, I, I just, that's so remarkable to me. So I learned a lot from the younger women here and what they're accomplishing. Of course, I have five children; most people don't have five children now. But some do. And I see great things in the young women in Congress, and who aspire to Congress, are accomplishing. How they juggle home and family is beautiful to behold.

And remarkable.

And I'm not sure I would've been able to do that.

Q: Why do you think people were so excited with the **Ben Ray Luján** pick? It inspired such goodwill towards you, people were just so thrilled

Pelosi: Ya, they were thrilled.

Q: And surprised, pleasantly surprised.

Pelosi: I think he was surprised.

(Laughter)

Q: So what ... Yeah, I think so too. I think we were all surprised. So what kind of, what kind of, you know, what does that say that everyone was excited about that? What kind of statement was that making?

Pelosi: Well, he is remarkable. He is a remarkable young man. We had many good people who were put up for the job, and any one of them would have done a very good job. I chose **Ben Ray** [**Luján**] because I've known him for a long time, I know his family, I've visited them in New Mexico on many occasions. I have seen how he is received by his constituents at the grassroots level. How he has been respected by the tribal people - in Indian Country in his district, how effective he is at political action. And everything that he was tasked to do here or volunteered to do here, he did excellent. He went beyond the gold standard that was expected of him.

And so he is a beautifully, a lovely person, his father a speaker of the assembly or whatever they call in New Mexico.

Q: Yep, yep

Pelosi: Assembly. They call it different things in places. In Baltimore where I grew up it's House of Delegates, in California it's Assembly, other places its different things. But anyway, so I knew that

those family values that he had and how committed he was to working for families in his country, so from a standpoint of policy and values - very strong. As they all are. In terms of effective political action he just knows how to get it done. I've seen him in action. He knows how to get it done. And I could make the same statement for many of the people who were in the running. The respect he commands among the members is just remarkable. They were stunned, I think, and also so happy when he was, uh, when he was chosen. And we had a wealth of good candidates. He has a package that was very appealing to the members. And they trust him and that is the most important thing. Chris Van Hollen, Steve Israel, they were members that people had confidence in. And that's really an important part of it.

And so, I just took my own council on this, I didn't talk about it to many people, so people were kind of surprised. I would kind of gently ask about how he was viewed for one thing or another and it was all very positive. I am very happy about it because it also sends an important message to the Hispanic community about a young leader. I don't know how old he is.

Q: 42.

Pelosi: 42.

Q: I also think that, my impression from speaking to your members, is that they were excited that it wasn't, you know, a quote-un-quote obvious pick. Somebody whose name they had heard. It wasn't people who were jockeying for it. It seemed to them that when there is criticism of 'Oh there's no place to go,' 'Oh I'm impatient,' 'Oh I want to get up in the ranks,' that someone who could be low key and not outwardly ambitious would get elevated to this role. And they were happy that you had done it.

Pelosi: They were pleased, but we had a tremendous response from all over the country on him.

Q: It wasn't ... You were thinking more broadly of sort of the response from the community. Certainly you were also thinking about the response from the caucus though?

Pelosi: First and foremost, because he's an officer of the caucus who post his name in nomination. They had to vote for him. But also he has a beautiful reputation. I could make a case for any one of the people I would have announced. Everybody who put his or her name forward was excellent, and we want to find a role for everybody who was willing to take on that responsibility. It's a very challenging job.

Q: So you are interested in sort of seeing where people like Jim Himes and Jared Polis ... they're people that you're watching too?

Pelosi: Yeah. And they'll be part of how we go forward as well.

Q: What's your relationship like with Barack Obama at this point?

Pelosi: Excellent, I think. You'd have to ask him.

Q: Did you think it's warranted or understandable at all, the criticism that some of your members put upon him?

Pelosi: I haven't heard that much from my members - I think mostly the Senate, I think. Let me say this: A long time ago, when I came to Congress, I was so excited about the prospect of Bill Clinton becoming president after a couple terms, and some of the members here said to me, 'When you have your own party in the White House, they're never going to do everything you want them to do, so don't get your hopes up high that it's going to be like you're now in the White House. No, they're in the White House.'

So there's always, should we say, a high standard that we place there, and he's been an excellent president. But he is the president, and none of us is. [LAUGHS] He was elected by the people in a

very strong way. He was re-elected by the people. For members of the president's own party to have some comment is a very natural thing. It's been happening in the whole history of our country.

Q: Speaking of Clinton, what do you think of Hillary Clinton? Have you spoken to her recently about her 2016 aspirations?

Pelosi: Never about that, but I'm going to see her tonight.

Q: Oh you are?

Pelosi: I'm going to an event that she's going to speak at.

Q: Oh, OK.

Pelosi: But I don't think we'll be talking about that because she has said - January, right, is when she? Sometime in January is when - she never said she would announce in January. She just said, I think, something to the effect of, 'If a person were considering...'

(Laughter)

Pelosi: Right, 'not, theoretically before January.'

Q: Last time you didn't put yourself into the fray.

Pelosi: No.

I did Jerry Brown in '76 and I was very young and that's sort of what catapulted me to where I am now. Then the next time, all the sudden it was Dukakis and I mean, I haven't endorsed anybody until I did endorse Richard Gephart in 2004. He is such a spectacular leader. And long, leader repeated over and over again at being the leader. And, as a matter of fact, we made a joke the other day and said even though he kept losing as Leader nobody asked him when he was leaving. And they asked me when I took us to victory and then we didn't win. [INAUDIBLE] So maybe when you don't win and you just stay and lose you will run for president.

But in any event, I thought he would make a fabulous president. And I guess that now even more so as one who has been through the idea of knowing all the issues and knowing the legislation from the standpoint of the leadership position. I thought he would make a great president.

But I haven't, then the next time I was chair of the convention in '08 and then of course through '12 we had a President. So, um, no, I think would be very exciting if Hillary Clinton runs. For people in my district and in my state, I don't know what they are gonna do if she doesn't run.

(Laughter)

They are so counting on a woman president. It would be a very exciting thing.

Q: So you can see yourself getting into the fray in this case ...

Pelosi: Well, I don't know about the fray, I've got fray of my own.

(Laughter)

Pelosi: I've got my own fray.

Q: But in terms in coming out, you can see yourself maybe endorsing ...

Pelosi: Let me say this about Hillary Clinton: When she runs, she will win. And when she wins she'll go to the White House as one of the most prepared people in modern history to go there. She has the

experience from the standpoint of her own experience in this administration as Secretary of State, as a United States Senator, front row seats as a First Lady - an active First Lady, First Lady of Arkansas establishing organizations to help children, which has been her passion. So I think from a state level, federal level, legislative level and administrative level she understands the territory and the American people.

Q: Can I ask one more question?

Off mic: A quick one.

Q: Going back to what we talked about in the beginning, the tax-package or looking forward next week to the 'cromnibus' or whatever we're going to see, it's never fun to see the government, you know, on the brink of collapse or whatever, but is it gratifying for you in every case where the Democrats can come together and rise to an occasion where Republicans cannot? Is it gratifying?

Pelosi: No, I would be more gratified if we could come to bipartisan agreement, find our common ground, which people send us here to do. When you can't find it you stand your ground. But we are responsible. We are responsible people, we are a responsible party. We would never consider shutting down government. And that to me was something so remarkable that the Republicans allowed the government to be shut down for 17 days. When their proposal was one that we accepted, but they didn't. They didn't accept their own proposal.

Q: Yeah.

Pelosi: And because they wanted to shut down government, cheered when they did, and only, what, 60 some members voted to open up government when the vote came down. ... Only 87 of them voted to open [up government.]

144 of them voted against opening up government. 144 of them, Republicans, that's remarkable. And it was their proposal. Their 800, 900 - that was their proposal. We didn't even like the proposal. But we liked shutting down government less.

Q: But you might - you must like gloat a little - like sit back at the end of the day with a glass of wine and say, 'Ah.'

Pelosi: Well I don't drink alcohol.

(Laughter)

Q: When you sit back with your chocolate and go, 'Mmm, it's good to be Nancy Pelosi.'

(Laughter)

Pelosi: No, I would rather they did the responsible thing so we wouldn't have to bail them out every time. And I'm still optimistic that in the negotiations over this omnibus that we can reach a place - Again, not the bill we would write, but we don't have the majority - but a place that we can support and we can remove all doubt in the public's mind that this is, that we don't take this responsibility seriously.

We have leverage if they don't have the votes. They have leverage because they know we will be responsible.

Q: Oh, I see.

Pelosi: And that allows them to be irresponsible to a certain extent.

Related:

Democrats Irrelevant? Don't Be So Sure, Pelosi Promises

The 114th: CQ Roll Call's Guide to the New Congress

Get breaking news alerts and more from Roll Call in your inbox or on your iPhone.

Source: CQ News
©2014 Congressional Quarterly Inc. All Rights Reserved.

LOAD-DATE: December 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: NEWSLETTERS

Copyright 2014 CQ-Roll Call, Inc. All Rights Reserved

350 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Quarterly News

December 7, 2014 Sunday

Democrats Irrelevant? Don't Be So Sure, Pelosi Promises

BYLINE: By Emma Dumain

LENGTH: 1133 words

Nancy Pelosi insists she doesn't gloat when House Republicans can't shore up the votes among their own members to pass any number of critical bills, and it's Democrats who get to swoop in and call themselves the heroes.

"I would rather they did the responsible thing so we wouldn't have to bail them out every time," the California Democrat quipped of her GOP counterparts.

But the minority leader, who sat for an interview in her Capitol Hill office with CQ Roll Call, must be feeling gratified.

The government is on the precipice of a shutdown, and if Republicans can't get to 218 votes on their side of the aisle, Pelosi will get to call in the cavalry once again.

It would be the second time in a matter of weeks that she's gotten to flex her muscle: She successfully squelched a pre-Thanksgiving deal on a tax extenders package negotiated exclusively by Senate Democrats and House Republicans - a deal that would have been a nonstarter for her caucus and President Barack Obama.

"The minute we got wind of what [it] would be and that it had a path, before it gained any respectability, I called our members and said, 'This is what I think is happening ... but I have to know that I can say to the president that this will sustain a veto,'" Pelosi recalled.

With Obama still in the White House, Pelosi remains a player, as her impact on the tax extenders package showed. But how much leverage she retains in the 114th could come down to how she fits into the Republican-controlled Congress over the next two years.

"I don't think anyone is irrelevant. We have leverage if they don't have the votes," she said. "They have leverage because they know we will be responsible. And that allows them to be irresponsible to a certain extent."

And 2016? Well, that's a whole new ballgame. By then, the country could see its first female president, said the nation's first female speaker.

"Let me say this about Hillary [Rodham] Clinton: When she runs, she will win. And when she wins, she'll go to the White House as one of the most prepared people in modern history to go there," Pelosi said, stopping just short of an endorsement that would be significant for Clinton, the former first lady and ex-secretary of State.

A favorite parlor game of political observers and operatives, members and aides is wondering when Pelosi might retire.

For the past 12 years, she's been her caucus's most senior leader, and during that time she's cemented her legacy as a master vote-counter, consensus-builder and fundraiser.

She's said she's continuing to serve because she does so at the pleasure of her members, and because she wants to protect the landmark, and perpetually embattled, health care legislation she helped draft and pass in 21010.

Could 2016 be the year she steps aside, especially if Clinton runs and wins?

Pelosi, 74, offers no hints, but she doesn't pretend she'll be around forever.

Reminded that she said she'd stay on as leader as long as the caucus wants her, Pelosi joked, "Well, maybe not that long."

Asked whether anybody else could now do what she does, she drew in a breath and laughed: "I certainly hope so."

"Tooting my own horn, ... the support I have in the country, originating in the great state of California, is substantial, and enables me to amass resources because they believe in what I believe in and also want to see a Democratic majority," said Pelosi, who has raised more than $400 million since she entered leadership in 2002.

Despite some grumblings that she has an inner circle and doesn't like to expand it, Pelosi insisted she is and has always been laying the groundwork for a next generation of leadership to ascend when the time comes for her - and Minority Whip Steny H. Hoyer and Assistant Leader James E. Clyburn, also in their mid-70s - to step aside.

"That's always a responsibility that we have," Pelosi said. "I've probably appointed more women to be, where I had the discretion, to be chairs of committees, or place them in positions where they would become chairs."

The same is true, she said, for members of color, such as Rep. Bennie Thompson of Mississippi, whom she tapped to be top Democrat on the Homeland Security Committee. "There were people more senior who wanted that position, but it was a new committee so I had the ability to put that lineup in place," she said.

"It's not just about leadership," she added. "This place is competitive in some ways, but there's so much opportunity, and beyond having a role, it's what your standing is on the issue."

Pelosi tried recently to help elevate a woman to serve as ranking member of Energy and Commerce - a fellow Californian and her close friend, Rep. Anna G. Eshoo. Her endorsement ended up not being enough for Eshoo to defeat the more senior Frank Pallone Jr. of New Jersey, and it was one of a series of personal obstacles Pelosi faced in the immediate aftermath of an Election Day drubbing, when members were looking for someone to blame and targeted the minority leader for not taking ownership of the losses.

She regained some goodwill, however, when she surprised nearly everybody and selected New Mexico Democrat **Ben Ray Luján** to be the next chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

With members expecting Pelosi to promote someone already firmly installed in her circle, the gesture was met with enthusiasm. Even her critics saw it as a sign their leader was open to singling out lawmakers who were outside the box, had put their heads down and worked hard and who didn't necessarily have household names.

"He has a beautiful reputation," Pelosi said of **Luján**.

Pelosi said members would have to answer the question of what has earned her the loyalty she enjoys, but she described herself as "a weaver of a loom just ... pulling together all the threads of different opinion in our caucus.

"My job is to make sure that we have the strongest possible fabric woven from all those different threads," she continued. "If I have to say to people, 'This is a path that we have to go, to vote with the Republicans to get something done, you don't have to vote for it, but I have to give it some support,' then they understand that. If you're saying to people, 'This is terrible, but you have to vote for it,' that's a harder sell than if you're saying, 'We just need to be helpful and you can ... make your own judgment.'

"And they always do make their own judgment," she said.

Related:

Full Transcript

Incoming CHC Chairman Wants Role for 'Fresher' Faces

Luján Pledges to Bring Farmer's Work Ethic to DCCC

Walz Gets VA Committee Spot After Messy Process

CBC Rallies to Defend Brown, Democrats' Seniority System

The 114th: CQ Roll Call's Guide to the New Congress

Get breaking news alerts and more from Roll Call in your inbox or on your iPhone.

Source: CQ News
©2014 Congressional Quarterly Inc. All Rights Reserved.

LOAD-DATE: December 11, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: NEWSLETTERS

Copyright 2014 CQ-Roll Call, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Human Events Online

December 7, 2014 Sunday

After 9 years, Senate set to approve 'Copper Keystone' mine

BYLINE: Neil W. McCabe

SECTION: GOVERNMENT & CONSTITUTION,GUNS & PATRIOTS,TODAY'S TOP NEWS,GUNS AND PATRIOTS NL,GUNS AND PATRIOTS TOP STORIES

LENGTH: 639 words

HIGHLIGHT: Resolution Mine poised to create 4,000 jobs and 25 percent of U.S. copper consumption, despite hypocrisy of environmental lobbyists.

As the lame duck session on Capitol Hill winds down, the Senate has the chance to approve the chronic copper version of the Keystone XL pipeline, the Resolution Mine in southeast Arizona.The mine, which is projected to produce $60 billion in economic activity in its 60-year lifetime and create 4,000 local jobs, depends on a land swap. The mine's developer, Rio Tinto, proposes to give the federal government 5,300 square acres of Arizona land for 2,400 square acres of copper-rich land from the Tonto National Forest,Â a reserve of protected land that covers three million square acres in the state.For the last nine years, Republicans and Democrats in Arizona have struggled with powerful environmentalists over what would be the continent's largest copper mineâ "with an output equal to 25 percent of current U.S. copper consumption.One year ago, the land swap was about to come to the House floor, but it was pulled after Republicans were spookedinto supporting a poison pill amendment brought by Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** (D.-N.M.).The **Lujan** Amendment would have expanded the administrative authority of the Secretary of the Interior beyond protection of sacred sites to include culturally significant sitesâ "as determined by the secretary.The **Lujan** Amendmentnot only was a silver bullet to kill the Resolution Mine land swap, but it would have ended the extension of the Keystone XL pipeline with a memo.In the latest attempt to resolve Resolution, Rep. Paul Gosar (R-Ariz.) attached his Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act to the National Defense Authorization Act. The NDAA with the Gosar bill passed 300-119.In the Senate the bill has the support of

Sen. John S. McCain III (R.-Ariz.),the Copper State's senior senator and the ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee.You might think it is a coincidence that this measure, supported by Democrats and Republicans from Arizona, would end up on the defense budget bill, but you would be wrong.Remember, this is an area of the country, where they mine copper. It is a legacy profession, passed down through generations. The people living in southeast Arizona are not looking to work in a used book store or man the phones at a healthcare.gov call center.The nearest town to Resolution Mine is Superior, and when you drive through look out for the tumbleweeds. A classic copper boomtown, Superior hit a wall after labor turmoil and low commodity prices killed off Magma Mine, an eight-shaft underground complex with 36 levels that took miners almost 5,000 feet below the surface.Magma closed in 1982.Leading the campaign against the land swap is the Mapetsi Policy Group, a boutique lobbying firm stocked with staffers from the Obama administration and Capitol Hill Democrats. Mapetsi is interrelated with the National Indian Gaming Association, and the two are infamous for teaming up to push for a new casino built on an Indian burial ground in Alabama.This time, Mapetsi is playing the opposite angle, claiming the proposed land swap will violate sacred

landsâ "except this time there is no sacred land. In fact, the nearest Native American settlement is 20 miles away. The only thing of note at Oak Flat is a 16-site campground with two outhouses and a dirt road.In the Gosar language, the campground remains open until the last possible minute. Gosar also carved out the Apache Leap cliffs from the swap because of its scenic value to thousands of visitors per year.The bottom line is that if the Resolution Mine land swap goes through, 4,000 breadwinners win bread again and there will be more land under federal protection than before without coming within 20 miles of a sacred Native American site.When the NDAA bill comes to the Senate floor, senators will have a choice to help Americans get back to work or not. Maybe this time, jobs will win.

LOAD-DATE: December 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Publication

Copyright 2014 Salem Web Network LLC
All Rights Reserved

352 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Human Events Online

December 7, 2014 Sunday

After 9 years, Senate set to approve 'Copper Keystone' mine

BYLINE: Neil W. McCabe

SECTION: GOVERNMENT & CONSTITUTION,TODAY'S TOP NEWS,DAILY EVENTS UNDER FEATURE,GUNS AND PATRIOTS TOP STORIES

LENGTH: 639 words

HIGHLIGHT: Resolution Mine poised to create 4,000 jobs and 25 percent of U.S. copper consumption, despite hypocrisy of environmental lobbyists.

As the lame duck session on Capitol Hill winds down, the Senate has the chance to approve the chronic copper version of the Keystone XL pipeline, the Resolution Mine in southeast Arizona.The mine, which is projected to produce $60 billion in economic activity in its 60-year lifetime and create 4,000 local jobs, depends on a land swap. The mine's developer, Rio Tinto, proposes to give the federal government 5,300 square acres of Arizona land for 2,400 square acres of copper-rich land from the Tonto National Forest,Â a reserve of protected land that covers three million square acres in the state.For the last nine years, Republicans and Democrats in Arizona have struggled with powerful environmentalists over what would be the continent's largest copper mineâ "with an output equal to 25 percent of current U.S. copper consumption.One year ago, the land swap was about to come to the House floor, but it was pulled after Republicans were spookedinto supporting a poison pill amendment brought by Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** (D.-N.M.).The **Lujan** Amendment would have expanded the administrative authority of the Secretary of the Interior beyond protection of sacred sites to include culturally significant sitesâ "as determined by the secretary.The **Lujan** Amendmentnot only was a silver bullet to kill the Resolution Mine land swap, but it would have ended the extension of the

Keystone XL pipeline with a memo.In the latest attempt to resolve Resolution, Rep. Paul Gosar (R-Ariz.) attached his Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act to the National Defense Authorization Act. The NDAA with the Gosar bill passed 300-119.In the Senate the bill has the support of

Sen. John S. McCain III (R.-Ariz.),the Copper State's senior senator and the ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee.You might think it is a coincidence that this measure, supported by Democrats and Republicans from Arizona, would end up on the defense budget bill, but you would be wrong.Remember, this is an area of the country, where they mine copper. It is a legacy profession, passed down through generations. The people living in southeast Arizona are not looking to work in a used book store or man the phones at a healthcare.gov call center.The nearest town to Resolution Mine is Superior, and when you drive through look out for the tumbleweeds. A classic copper boomtown, Superior hit a wall after labor turmoil and low commodity prices killed off Magma Mine, an eight-shaft underground complex with 36 levels that took miners almost 5,000 feet below the surface.Magma closed in 1982.Leading the campaign against the land swap is the Mapetsi Policy Group, a boutique lobbying firm stocked with staffers from the Obama administration and Capitol Hill Democrats. Mapetsi is interrelated with the National Indian Gaming Association, and the two are infamous for teaming up to push for a new casino built on an Indian burial ground in Alabama.This time, Mapetsi is playing the opposite angle, claiming the proposed land swap will violate sacred landsâ "except this time there is no sacred land. In fact, the nearest Native American settlement is 20 miles away. The only thing of note at Oak Flat is a 16-site campground with two outhouses and a dirt road.In the Gosar language, the campground remains open until the last possible minute. Gosar also carved out the Apache Leap cliffs from the swap because of its scenic value to thousands of visitors per year.The bottom line is that if the Resolution Mine land swap goes through, 4,000 breadwinners win bread again and there will be more land under federal protection than before without coming within 20 miles of a sacred Native American site.When the NDAA bill comes to the Senate floor, senators will have a choice to help Americans get back to work or not. Maybe this time, jobs will win.

LOAD-DATE: December 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Publication

Copyright 2014 Salem Web Network LLC
All Rights Reserved

353 of 500 DOCUMENTS

National Journal Daily Extra AM

December 7, 2014 Sunday

Time for a Democratic Reboot? The Party's House Campaign Chair Doesn't Think So

BYLINE: Scott Bland

LENGTH: 1204 words

After another disappointing election for House Democrats, one that gave Republicans their largest majority in almost a century, the new chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee has a seemingly incongruous message: Keep calm and carry on.

DCCC Chairman **Ben Ray Lujan** is adamant, despite a 13-seat loss in November, that the committee has more to build on than to fix. After all, you don't have to make mistakes to lose an election, especially in the kind of horrible environment Democrats faced this year.

Yet even some fellow Democrats who acknowledge that truth are chafing at the notion after being relegated to a 188-seat minority in the House of Representatives.

"You'll see where some of those shifts are going to take place," **Lujan** said in an interview in his new DCCC office. "But I think we really have to take into consideration that based on some of the modeling and the national mood last cycle ... we could have lost 20 or more seats."

"The team we had in place ... kept that to 13," **Lujan** said. "As we're moving into all of this, that's something to build off of."

The committee has numerous building blocksits field program, digital program, aggressive recruiting, and especially its strong fundraisingfor 2016 that helped mitigate November's losses and will position the party to take advantage when there is a better political environment in the future, **Lujan** said. Unlike the political environment or overall party messaging, those factors are under the DCCC's complete control.

But some Democrats on and off Capitol Hill have grown concerned since the election about whether the DCCC is reacting with enough urgency to another disappointing election result. **Lujan's** first move as chairman was to retain Executive Director Kelly Ward, who echoed the new chairman's could've-been-worse attitude in a statement when she was rehired. The Democratic National Committee has convened a "Victory Task Force" to pinpoint areas where the party "can strengthen and improve operations," but **Lujan** didn't offer specifics on areas where the DCCC could improve.

Asked to name one thing he would change at the committee after having some time to review things, **Lujan** said, "We want to win more seats." And, he said, he wants to keep fellow members engaged with the committee.

That's hardly a reboot.

"After three cycles of underperforming expectations, that would seem to highlight the need for new thinking," said one Democratic consultant who asked for anonymity to speak freely. (The consultant compared the DCCC's line to Kevin Bacon's character in **Animal House**, who shouts, "Remain calm! All is well!" during the movie's climactic stampede.) "I would think that at some point they're going to have a problem convincing donors to give money without results."

That complaint is not universal, though. "I'm frankly amazed at the money they raised and that they didn't lose more seats," said Steve Elmendorf, a Democratic lobbyist and donor. "People are always frustrated when you don't win, but what do you want to do? ... I have not heard any undercurrent or overcurrent of it being the DCCC's fault or anything."

The DCCC outraised its Republican counterpart in both of outgoing Chairman Steve Israel's cycles at the helm, a virtually unprecedented accomplishment for the party out of power and one that likely saved seats.

Much of that funding came through the committee's digital department, which doubled in size under Israel and drove the DCCC's fundraising, including over 4 million individual donations. Also on the digital front, the committee spent over $3 million messaging persuadable voters online in 2014 along with over $67 million on TV ads.

On the campaign side, **Lujan** is reprising Israel's early recruiting efforts from years past. One of Democrats' losing 2014 candidates, Emily Cain of Maine, came to the DCCC Wednesday morning for meetings with **Lujan** and other party leaders about running for the Democratic-leaning district again in 2016. **Lujan** cited districts Democrats lost in Nevada and Iowa, plus a GOP-held open seat in the Philadelphia suburbs, as top targets on which he's already focused.

President Obama carried 26 GOP-held districts when he won reelection in 2012, including the Maine seat that **Lujan** wants Cain to run for again.

And **Lujan** also cited a committee field programguided this year by an internal targeting departmentthat attempted about 42 million voter contacts in 2014 and registered 80,000 new voters. In some districts, like Rep.-elect Gwen Graham's, the number of new DCCC-registered voters was bigger than the Democratic candidates' winning margins.

"People don't dismiss field, but it's not something everybody knows how to do well," said MaryAnne Pintar, who managed Democratic Rep. Scott Peters's reelection campaign in San Diego. Peters won by about 6,000 votes. "If you're a campaign manager, you are paying attention to budget and mail and TV and earned media messaging and more, and having their assistance and early support on the field end was tremendous."

In a postelection conference call for House Democrats and a subsequent caucus meeting, both reelected and defeated members lined up to voice their support for the DCCC. One of them was Peters, who touted the field program (as did Reps. Ron Barber, Ami Bera, Julia Brownley, Elizabeth Esty, and Rick Nolan), according to a source in the room at the Nov. 13 caucus meeting. Outgoing Rep. Carol Shea-Porter said Israel and the committee he led didn't deserve "any of the criticism he's getting," according to the source. "I lost my district by 4 points and Jeanne Shaheen lost it too," Shea-Porter reportedly said. "It wasn't about a move here or a move there."

But the post-election call "struck a number of members as problematic," said one House Democratic aide. "I think that for a lot of them there was a feeling there wasn't going to be any opportunity to have an honest discussion of what happened in the cycle. The idea that the day after a tough election was just going to be a litany of thank yous, it just didn't connect."

Still, House Democrats didn't suffer the kind of shocking losseslike losing the Maryland gubernatorial racethat plagued other arms of their party. A Democratic source noted that nearly half of the DCCC's independent expenditures went into races that the party won, including a number of very tight contests, despite national polling showing a worse political environment than 2010, by some measures. **Lujan** pledged that the DCCC is "going to be on offense" in two years and said "the House is definitely going to be in play in 2016."

Democrats would need to gain 30 seats to retake the House, a tall order that has some in the party wondering if they might need a new round of redistricting or a GOP president as a foil in order to take the majority once more. **Lujan** said he's optimistic that higher turnout in 2016 will solve some of the party's problems.

"We need more people voting," **Lujan** said. "We saw turnout across the country at the lowest it's been in a long, long time, so the more we can get people excited about getting to the polls, which happens in presidential election years, is something I'm looking forward to and why I think we'll be on offense instead of defense."

LOAD-DATE: December 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Magazine

Copyright 2014 The National Journal Group, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

December 6, 2014 Saturday

Delegation Praises Retiring BLM Director for N.M., Urges 'Careful Consideration' of State's Diverse Public Lands Issues in Selecting Successor

LENGTH: 729 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Tom Udall, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Luján**, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and Steve Pearce announced that they have sent a letter to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), thanking retiring BLM New Mexico State Director Jesse Juen for his thoughtful and balanced leadership, and urging the BLM to proceed carefully to hire Juen's successor.

BLM State Director is a critical position in New Mexico, responsible for 850 employees and the management of more than 13.4 million acres of public lands and 26 million acres of federal oil, natural gas, and minerals.

"We have been fortunate to have a dedicated leader like Jesse, who has shown a focus and attention to the balanced management of BLM lands within New Mexico, and to the unique issues that our state's public lands face," the lawmakers wrote. "New Mexico's unique landscape, history, and culture is reflected in the state's public lands. We would encourage you to select an individual to fill the New Mexico State Director position who is familiar with the state and the unique issues that BLM land managers and BLM land users face."

Those unique issues include the importance of balancing public lands management to support oil, gas and mineral leasing, grazing, recreation and conservation; as well as the needs of diverse communities, including Native Americans, and Spanish Land Grant Communities. Public lands also are critical to New Mexico's economy. In fiscal year 2012, they supported more than 85,000 jobs and boosted the economy by more than $7.8 billion.

"We again applaud Jesse for his tireless work in balancing the complex issues that face New Mexico's public lands," the letter concludes. "He will be a tough act for anyone to follow, but we respectfully request your careful consideration in selecting a new State Director who will be equally capable of managing New Mexico's public lands."

A copy of the letter is available HERE and below:

The Honorable Neil Kornze
Director
U.S. Bureau of Land Management

1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

Dear Director Kornze:

Since February of 2012, Jesse Juen has led the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in our state as the BLM New Mexico State Director. We have been fortunate to have a dedicated leader like Jesse, who has shown a focus and attention to the balanced management of BLM lands within New Mexico, and to the unique issues that our state's public lands face. We express our sincere appreciation for his public service and the work of his capable staff, and we wish him the best in his upcoming retirement.

As we look forward to the coming year, we would request your careful consideration of the BLM New Mexico State Director position. As you know, New Mexico's unique landscape, history, and culture is reflected in the state's public lands. We would encourage you to select an individual to fill the New Mexico State Director position who is familiar with the state and the unique issues that BLM land managers and BLM land users face.

The New Mexico State Director is responsible for the management of more than 13.4 million acres of public lands and 26 million acres of federal oil, natural gas, and minerals. The director also manages and sets the priorities for a team of more than 850 employees. According to your agency's own statistics, in fiscal year 2012, the BLM's management of the public lands in New Mexico has supported more than 85,000 jobs and boosted the economy by more than $7.8 billion. Last year, New Mexico's share of oil and gas revenue on public lands was over $470 million. The BLM State Director position is extremely important position for New Mexico, a position that demands a strong leader who is knowledgeable of oil and gas leasing, endangered species, recreation, ranching, and the traditional use issues that the many Native American and Spanish Land Grant communities face.

We again applaud Jesse for his tireless work in balancing the complex issues that face New Mexico's public lands. He will be a tough act for anyone to follow, but we respectfully request your careful consideration in selecting a new State Director who will be equally capable of managing New Mexico's public lands.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: December 7, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal: Blogs (New Mexico)

December 5, 2014 Friday

Defense nominee wins NM delegation praise

BYLINE: Michael Coleman, JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: INSIDE THE BELTWAY

LENGTH: 667 words

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. -- New Mexico's congressional delegation, representing a state with a heavy military presence, is generally supportive of President Obama's decision to tap Ashton Carter as the next defense secretary.

Obama made the announcement official today at a White House ceremony. Carter, a former deputy secretary of defense, will succeed Chuck Hagel, whose tenure was marred by a shaky confirmation hearing and sometimes sour relations with Capitol Hill.

Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., said Carter will face a slew of complex issues and did not say how he planned to vote on the nomination. Udall also praised the work of Hagel, who was viewed favorably by some on the left for his reticence to engage the U.S. in more overseas conflicts.

"The United States and the broader international community are confronting multiple quickly evolving threats in the Middle East, including the emergence of the brutal terrorist organization ISIS," Udall said. "Ashton Carter has the respect of senior military leaders having served under multiple secretaries of defense, managed large budgets and handled many demands under scrutiny. I have appreciated Secretary Hagel's strong understanding of the strategic importance of our national laboratories to our national defense, and I look forward to meeting with Mr. Carter during the confirmation process to discuss his views on New Mexico's national security mission."

Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., said he was impressed by Carter's resume but also didn't take a definitive position prior to the looming Senate confirmation process.

"Having served under 11 Secretaries of Defense, Dr. Carter is no stranger to the institution and the issues our Department of Defense must address--at home and abroad," Heinrich said. "There are a number of evolving national security challenges that the United States and our allies must confront around the world, particularly the Middle East, Europe and the Asia Pacific, and we need strong leadership to do so. As a physicist, Dr. Carter also understands the importance of nuclear deterrence and nonproliferation, both of which are critical to global security and the state of New Mexico.

"I look forward to Dr. Carter's confirmation process in the U.S. Senate to better understand his thoughts on how he will address these challenges and how New Mexico's military installations and national labs will contribute to our collective national security mission."

U.S. House members don't have a vote on Carter's nomination - only senators do - but I asked them to weigh in anyway. Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., suggested she supported the nominee.

"I am encouraged by the bipartisan support for Ashton Carter, based on his effective leadership experience at the Pentagon," she said. "That kind of experience is necessary for anyone nominated to serve as Defense Secretary, but particularly during difficult times when American soldiers are risking their lives to defend our nation. I look forward to working with Mr. Carter to ensure he continues to make the many defense assets in New Mexico a top priority for our national security."

Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., also praised Carter's appointment.

"Ash Carter is a veteran of the Department of Defense, serving in many different capacities for a number of Presidents. He knows the Department of Defense, how it runs and where it can become more efficient. I believe he has the knowledge and expertise required to be a capable Secretary of Defense. However, he must prove this. If nominated and confirmed, he must hit the ground running in targeting and destroying ISIS and long-term strategy for our national security."

Meanwhile, Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., withheld judgment.

"While as a member of the House I will not have a vote on Senate confirmation, I will watch the process closely and look forward to hearing where Mr. Carter stands on a number of important issues to New Mexico and our nation," he said.

Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., could not be reached for comment.

LOAD-DATE: December 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Associated Press State & Local

December 5, 2014 Friday 5:36 PM GMT

House OKs defense bill with New Mexico provisions

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL

LENGTH: 335 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) - Management of the Valles Caldera National Preserve would be transferred to the National Park Service and thousands of acres in northern New Mexico would be set aside as wilderness under a defense policy bill approved by the U.S. House on Thursday.

The must-pass legislation is expected to be considered by the Senate before the end of the year.

The measure would create an historical park preserving sites at Los Alamos and elsewhere where the atomic bomb was built, and it would designate 45,000-acre Columbine Hondo Wilderness Area north of Taos.

The House's vote of 300-199 sends the measure to the Senate where some Republican senators don't like the addition of various provisions to expand wilderness areas.

But the state's two U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, both Democrats, praised the measure and said the provisions have overwhelming support. "This is an exciting step - we're extremely close to the finish line and being able to protect these beautiful New Mexico landscapes for generations to come," Udall said.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-Santa Fe, said although he had serious concerns with the current plan to equip and train Syrian rebels, he was happy the New Mexico provisions were added.

"While I do not support everything in this bill, it does include important provisions that are key priorities for communities across New Mexico, including critical funding for environmental cleanup at Los Alamos National Laboratory," **Lujan** said in a statement.

Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., however, was among 32 Republicans and 87 Democrats who voted against passage of the defense bill.

Pearce, an advocate for veterans and for less federal land, said in a statement that "creating nearly 250,000 new acres of wilderness that will greatly restrict multiple use on the lands, is simply unacceptable. Already extremely disadvantaged by massive amounts of public lands, the West continues to be under attack by environmental and special interest groups that degrade the Western way of life."

LOAD-DATE: December 6, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

Legal Monitor Worldwide

December 5, 2014 Friday

House passes bill condemning orders on immigration

LENGTH: 567 words

Emboldened House Republicans issued a stern but symbolic rebuke to President Barack Obama over immigration Thursday, passing a bill declaring his executive actions to curb deportations "null and void and without legal effect."
Outraged Democrats, immigrant advocates and the White House said the GOP was voting to tear families apart and eject parents.

"Rather than deport students and separate families and make it harder for law enforcement to do its job, I just want the Congress to work with us to pass a common-sense law to fix that broken immigration system," Obama said before the vote.
Even supporters acknowledged that the bill by Rep. Ted Yoho, R-Fla., which says Obama was acting "without any constitutional or statutory basis," was mostly meant to send a message. It stands no chance in the Senate, which remains under Democratic control until January.
The real fight may lie ahead as conservatives push to use must-pass spending legislation to block Obama.
For now, Republicans insisted they must go on record denouncing what they described on the House floor as an outrageous power grab by Obama.
"The president's decision to defy the Constitution by using executive actions to change immigration law cannot go unopposed," said Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., who voted for the bill. "The legislation passed today is a proactive response to this gross abuse of power It clarifies that the president's use

of executive authority does not extend to exempting millions from legal action at once. This is a needed step in any legal challenge to the president's abuse of power."
New Mexico's other two representatives, Democrats **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, voted against the bill.
"The president thinks he can just sit in the Oval Office and make up his own laws. That's not the way our system of government works," said Rep. Steve Scalise, R-La. "This legislation says you can't do that, Mr. President. There is a rule of law."
The vote was 219-197, with three Democratic "yes" votes and seven Republican "no" votes. Three Republicans voted "present."
Obama's executive actions last month will extend deportation relief and work permits to an estimated 4 million immigrants who are in the U.S. illegally, mostly those who have been in the country more than five years and have children who are U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents. He also reordered law enforcement priorities and expanded an existing deportation deferral program for immigrants brought illegally as kids. Compounding the GOP's anger, Obama's executive action came barely two weeks after Republicans trounced Democrats in the midterm elections, winning control of the Senate and increasing their majorities in the House.
Even as emotions ran high in debate on the bill, many involved acknowledged it was mostly a sideshow as Republicans struggled to find some way to undo what Obama has done - not just register their disapproval. Party leaders acknowledged their options were limited.
The Yoho bill was part of a two-part strategy by House GOP leadership to appease conservative immigration hard-liners without risking a government shutdown. Their hope was that after approving it, Republicans would move on next week to vote on legislation to keep most of the government running for a year, with a shorter time frame for the Homeland Security Department, which oversees immigration. 2014 Legal Monitor Worldwide.

LOAD-DATE: December 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: 1258

Copyright 2014 Legal Monitor Worldwide
Provided by Syndigate Media Inc. *(Syndigate.info)*
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

December 4, 2014 Thursday

NM bills moving ahead in Congress; Lame-duck session taking up legislation

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C1

LENGTH: 497 words

WASHINGTON - Congress' lame-duck session is proving productive for members of the New Mexico congressional delegation who suddenly see movement on long-stalled legislation they wrote or co-sponsored.

On Tuesday, the House approved a bill sponsored by Republican Rep. Steve Pearce that would reauthorize the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996. The congressman has worked on the bill for almost two years.

Later Tuesday, a deal emerged that incorporated several public lands bills sponsored by Democratic Sens. Martin Heinrich and Tom Udall into a defense spending bill. That legislation, expected to win approval by both chambers of Congress, now includes:

A bill designating the Columbine-Hondo area in Taos County as wilderness. The bill would expand the Wheeler Peak Wilderness by 650 acres and shift a boundary to create a loop trail along the Lost Lake Trail from Taos Ski Valley to the East Fork Trail to Red River.

A bill to move the Valles Caldera National Preserve in northern New Mexico into a new management structure designed to increase public access. The legislation would transfer management of the preserve from the current board of trustees to the National Park Service.

A bill to establish the Manhattan Project National Historical Park in Los Alamos. The park would conserve sites and artifacts that played a key role in the dawn of the nuclear era. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., co-sponsored the legislation.

A measure to extend a pilot program that has helped the Bureau of Land Management streamline the oil and gas drilling permit process while strengthening a review system that helps meet environmental and safety standards.

"Thanks to years of effort and support from the local communities, our state will have new destinations for families and visitors to enjoy," Heinrich said.

Pearce's Native American housing bill would reauthorize a program that disburses federal block grants to tribes and Alaska Native villages, which use the money to sustain affordable housing for low-income tribal households. The Pearce bill would create a loan guarantee program to help tribes obtain private financing for housing and authorize money,which would still need to be appropriated, for training and technical assistance.

Pearce said he is optimistic the Senate will pass the bill before the end of the current session of Congress.

"We got a lot of bipartisan support," Pearce said. "I think we'll see this thing passed and signed into law."

Earlier this month, Congress also cleared a bill sponsored by Udall and Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, also a New Mexico Democrat, that would allow the Amy Biehl charter school in Albuquerque to purchase the old post office it currently leases for classroom space. President Barack Obama signed the legislation into law last week. **Lujan** Grisham said the move would "provide a permanent home to a high school located in the heart of Downtown Albuquerque that provides quality education to at-risk students."

LOAD-DATE: December 4, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Congressional Documents and Publications

December 4, 2014

LUJAN STATEMENT ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 309 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting in support of the Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which includes a number of priorities for New Mexico.

"While I do not support everything in this bill, it does include important provisions that are key priorities for communities across New Mexico, including critical funding for environmental cleanup at Los Alamos National Laboratory. As we work to restore operations at WIPP, we must ensure that our national laboratories have the resources to meet their legal obligations for environmental remediation. We also have a moral obligation to the communities that have contributed to our national security to ensure that this waste is cleaned up in a safe and timely manner.

"NDAA also includes a number of lands bills - designating the Columbine-Hondo area as wilderness and transferring management of the Valles Caldera National Preserve - that will have a positive impact on New Mexico's economy while protecting our majestic lands and encouraging public access to our great outdoors. In addition, this bill includes legislation establishing a Manhattan Project National Historical Park that includes a site in Los Alamos and helps preserve this story so that future generations can understand both the positive and negative impacts of the project. In addition, it will recognize all those who played a key role in the national security of our nation and see that they will not be forgotten.

"Finally, I continue to have serious concerns with the current plan to equip and train Syrian rebels, and believe that an issue of this importance deserved a separate debate and vote."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-national-defense-authorization-act/

LOAD-DATE: December 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMC

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Farmington Daily Times (New Mexico)

December 4, 2014 Thursday

Column: The Son Rises

BYLINE: Farmington Daily Times

SECTION: OPINION

LENGTH: 605 words

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi caught a good many political know-it-alls back on Capitol Hill by surprise last week, when she announced that New Mexico's 3rd District Democratic Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** will be the next chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

It will be quite a jump in the congressional pecking order for **Lujan**, who was first elected to the 3rd District seat in 2008 as the successor to Democrat Tom Udall who ran (successfully) that year for a berth in the United States Senate.

Both men were handily reelected this year, with Udall returning to a Senate under GOP control and **Lujan** returning to a House even more firmly dominated by an unruly cadre of Republicans hitherto prone to government shutdowns.

So, over and above his obligations to District 3 constituents, when the new Congress convenes in January, Congressman **Lujan** will be spending a good deal of his time gearing up for the elections of 2016, when Democrats hope to elect sufficient of their own to tame those unruly GOPers.

To put it mildly, **Ben Ray Lujan** has accepted a big challenge here. Clearly his political profile, both here at home and nationally, will be substantially elevated with this assignment.

Yet the stubborn fact is that U. S. House districts around the country have been so effectively jerry-rigged (if not gerrymandered) by Republican state legislatures as to make it all but impossible to elect Democrats to many of those seats.

Not since a gentleman named Herbert Hoover was president have there been as many Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives as there will be in just a few weeks.

It is a reality that bedeviled the outgoing DCCC chairman, New York Congressman Steve Israel, who spent four years in that job only to preside over a net loss of more than 65 erstwhile Democratic seats to Republicans during his tenure.

Ben Ray Lujan's personal political resume doesn't run deep. Aside from his six years in Congress, where he is vice-chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, it includes a stint on the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission.

But politics is in his blood, as it were. His father, the late Ben **Lujan**, Sr., was a powerhouse in the Legislature for years and served as House Speaker for a number of years before illness forced him into retirement.

Nor does it end there. His Democratic colleague in New Mexico's three-member congressional delegation, District 1 Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, is his cousin. (Grisham is reportedly slated to become vice-chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

It has been almost a quarter of a century since California's Congressman Tony Coelho became the first Hispanic to chair the DCCC.

Lujan will be only the second and there are some back in Washington who believe that beyond "political astuteness," one of the things Nancy Pelosi sought in choosing a new chair for the Democratic Campaign Committee was someone who might prove helpful in energizing that big bloc of Hispanics with a tendency to vote Democratic.

The website Politico.com recently noted that one San Francisco Democratic "mega-donor," Steve Phillips, applauds **Lujan's** appointment and thinks it will help Democrats with young Latino voters through the Southwest.

"That's the future of the party," Phillips is quoted as saying.

All of which augers well for the congressman and his state.

Far too often of late, New Mexico has flirted with the bottom of the barrel but it has traditionally benefited when its members of Congress accrue influence.

Hal Rhodes is the founder of New Mexico News Services and a longtime TV journalist on the public television station KNME in Albuquerque.

LOAD-DATE: December 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Farmington Daily Times, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

States News Service

December 4, 2014 Thursday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 299 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting in support of the Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which includes a number of priorities for New Mexico.

"While I do not support everything in this bill, it does include important provisions that are key priorities for communities across New Mexico, including critical funding for environmental cleanup at Los Alamos National Laboratory. As we work to restore operations at WIPP, we must ensure that our national laboratories have the resources to meet their legal obligations for environmental remediation. We also have a moral obligation to the communities that have contributed to our national security to ensure that this waste is cleaned up in a safe and timely manner.

"NDAA also includes a number of lands bills - designating the Columbine-Hondo area as wilderness and transferring management of the Valles Caldera National Preserve - that will have a positive impact on New Mexico's economy while protecting our majestic lands and encouraging public access to our great outdoors. In addition, this bill includes legislation establishing a Manhattan Project National Historical Park that includes a site in Los Alamos and helps preserve this story so that future generations can understand both the positive and negative impacts of the project. In addition, it will recognize all those who played a key role in the national security of our nation and see that they will not be forgotten.

"Finally, I continue to have serious concerns with the current plan to equip and train Syrian rebels, and believe that an issue of this importance deserved a separate debate and vote."

LOAD-DATE: December 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

December 4, 2014 Thursday 12:42 AM EST

Lujan Statement on National Defense Authorization Act

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 310 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting in support of the Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which includes a number of priorities for New Mexico.

"While I do not support everything in this bill, it does include important provisions that are key priorities for communities across New Mexico, including critical funding for environmental cleanup at Los Alamos National Laboratory. As we work to restore operations at WIPP, we must ensure that our national laboratories have the resources to meet their legal obligations for environmental remediation. We also have a moral obligation to the communities that have contributed to our national security to ensure that this waste is cleaned up in a safe and timely manner.

"NDAA also includes a number of lands bills - designating the Columbine-Hondo area as wilderness and transferring management of the Valles Caldera National Preserve - that will have a positive impact on New Mexico's economy while protecting our majestic lands and encouraging public access to our great outdoors. In addition, this bill includes legislation establishing a Manhattan Project National Historical Park that includes a site in Los Alamos and helps preserve this story so that future generations can understand both the positive and negative impacts of the project. In addition, it will recognize all those who played a key role in the national security of our nation and see that they will not be forgotten.

"Finally, I continue to have serious concerns with the current plan to equip and train Syrian rebels, and believe that an issue of this importance deserved a separate debate and vote."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TagarumaMar-141205-4957151 30TagarumaMar

LOAD-DATE: December 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Farmington Daily Times (New Mexico)

November 29, 2014 Saturday

Column: The Son Rises

BYLINE: By Hal Rhodes, New Mexico News Services

SECTION: OPINION

LENGTH: 605 words

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi caught a good many political know-it-alls back on Capitol Hill by surprise last week, when she announced that New Mexico's 3rd District Democratic Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** will be the next chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

It will be quite a jump in the congressional pecking order for **Lujan**, who was first elected to the 3rd District seat in 2008 as the successor to Democrat Tom Udall who ran (successfully) that year for a berth in the United States Senate.

Both men were handily reelected this year, with Udall returning to a Senate under GOP control and **Lujan** returning to a House even more firmly dominated by an unruly cadre of Republicans hitherto prone to government shutdowns.

So, over and above his obligations to District 3 constituents, when the new Congress convenes in January, Congressman **Lujan** will be spending a good deal of his time gearing up for the elections of 2016, when Democrats hope to elect sufficient of their own to tame those unruly GOPers.

To put it mildly, **Ben Ray Lujan** has accepted a big challenge here. Clearly his political profile, both here at home and nationally, will be substantially elevated with this assignment.

Yet the stubborn fact is that U. S. House districts around the country have been so effectively jerry-rigged (if not gerrymandered) by Republican state legislatures as to make it all but impossible to elect Democrats to many of those seats.

Not since a gentleman named Herbert Hoover was president have there been as many Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives as there will be in just a few weeks.

It is a reality that bedeviled the outgoing DCCC chairman, New York Congressman Steve Israel, who spent four years in that job only to preside over a net loss of more than 65 erstwhile Democratic seats to Republicans during his tenure.

Ben Ray Lujan's personal political resume doesn't run deep. Aside from his six years in Congress, where he is vice-chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, it includes a stint on the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission.

But politics is in his blood, as it were. His father, the late Ben **Lujan**, Sr., was a powerhouse in the Legislature for years and served as House Speaker for a number of years before illness forced him into retirement.

Nor does it end there. His Democratic colleague in New Mexico's three-member congressional delegation, District 1 Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, is his cousin. (Grisham is reportedly slated to become vice-chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

It has been almost a quarter of a century since California's Congressman Tony Coelho became the first Hispanic to chair the DCCC.

Lujan will be only the second and there are some back in Washington who believe that beyond "political astuteness," one of the things Nancy Pelosi sought in choosing a new chair for the Democratic Campaign Committee was someone who might prove helpful in energizing that big bloc of Hispanics with a tendency to vote Democratic.

The website Politico.com recently noted that one San Francisco Democratic "mega-donor," Steve Phillips, applauds **Lujan's** appointment and thinks it will help Democrats with young Latino voters through the Southwest.

"That's the future of the party," Phillips is quoted as saying.

All of which augers well for the congressman and his state.

Far too often of late, New Mexico has flirted with the bottom of the barrel but it has traditionally benefited when its members of Congress accrue influence.

Hal Rhodes is the founder of New Mexico News Services and a longtime TV journalist on the public television station KNME in Albuquerque.

LOAD-DATE: November 29, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Farmington Daily Times, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

November 25, 2014 Tuesday

Language preservation act helps tribal communities

BYLINE: Richard Reyes Staff writer city@gallupindependent.com

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 300 words

DATELINE: GALLUP

GALLUP -- U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N. M., introduced legislation to help Native American communities preserve their traditional languages, according to a news release.

The legislation is an updated reauthorization of the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act. It improves an existing program to support tribal communities and makes resources available.

"Language preservation is a vital component of broader efforts to preserve the nuances of Native American culture and traditions that are often lost in translation," **Luján** stated in the news release. "Language is an essential part of history, culture and way of life. The preservation of culture depends upon the endurance of native languages that have been an integral part of tribes in New Mexico and across the country."

He states that continuing the programs implemented by the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act will help expand fluency in native languages, helping tribal communities preserve their cultural traditions and ensuring that these languages will continue to provide meaning and value to future generations.

In 2006, the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act was signed into law to support language immersion programs, language survival schools and language restoration programs.

In addition to reauthorizing the act, **Luján**'s bill increases the sustainability and flexibility of the program by extending the duration of grant awards up to five years, giving projects a more stable funding source and increasing the impact of each project.

Additionally, more language schools and language nests in low populated and remote areas will be eligible to access grant funding. The reauthorization of the law would allow existing programs to continue through fiscal year 2019.

LOAD-DATE: November 29, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

365 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

November 25, 2014 Tuesday

The son also rises

BYLINE: Hal Rhodes

SECTION: COLUMNS

LENGTH: 583 words

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi caught a good many political know-it-alls back on Capitol Hill by surprise last week, when she announced that New Mexico's 3rd District Democratic Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** will be the next chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

It will be quite a jump in the congressional pecking order for **Luján**, who was first elected to the 3rd District seat in 2008 as the successor to Democrat Tom Udall who ran (successfully) that year for a berth in the United States Senate.

Both men were handily reelected this year, with Udall returning to a Senate under GOP control and **Luján** returning to a House even more firmly dominated by an unruly cadre of Republicans hitherto prone to government shutdowns.

So, over and above his obligations to District 3 constituents, when the new Congress convenes in January, Congressman **Luján** will be spending a good deal of his time gearing up for the elections of 2016, when Democrats hope to elect sufficient of their own to tame those unruly GOPers.

To put it mildly, **Luján** has accepted a big challenge here. Clearly his political profile, both here at home and nationally, will be substantially elevated with this assignment.

Yet the stubborn fact is that U. S. House districts around the country have been so effectively jerry-rigged (if not gerrymandered) by Republican state legislatures as to make it all but impossible to elect Democrats to many of those seats.

Not since a gentleman named Herbert Hoover was president have there been as many Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives as there will be in just a few weeks.

It is a reality that bedeviled the outgoing DCCC chairman, New York Congressman Steve Israel, who spent four years in that job only to preside over a net loss of more than 65 erstwhile Democratic seats to Republicans during his tenure.

Luján's personal political resume doesn't run deep. Aside from his six years in Congress, where he is vice-chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, it includes a stint on the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission.

But politics is in his blood, as it were. His father, the late Ben **Luján**, Sr., was a powerhouse in the Legislature for years and served as House Speaker for a number of years before illness forced him into retirement.

Nor does it end there. His Democratic colleague in New Mexico's three-member congressional delegation, District 1 Rep. Michelle **Luján** Grisham, is his cousin. (Grisham is reportedly slated to become vice chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

It has been almost a quarter of a century since California's Congressman Tony Coelho became the first Hispanic to chair the DCCC.

Luján will be only the second and there are some back in Washington who believe that beyond "political astuteness," one of the things Nancy Pelosi sought in choosing a new chair for the Democratic Campaign Committee was someone who might prove helpful in energizing that big bloc of Hispanics with a tendency to vote Democratic.

The website Politico.com recently noted that one San Francisco Democratic "mega-donor," Steve Phillips, applauds **Luján**'s appointment and thinks it will help Democrats with young Latino voters through the Southwest.

"That's the future of the party," Phillips is quoted as saying.

All of which augers well for the congressman and his state.

Far too often of late, New Mexico has flirted with the bottom of the barrel but it has traditionally benefited when its members of Congress accrue influence.

LOAD-DATE: November 26, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

LUJAN INTRODUCES LEGISLATION TO PRESERVE NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 402 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced that he recently introduced legislation to help Native American communities preserve their traditional languages. This updated reauthorization of the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act improves and reauthorizes an existing program to support tribal communities and makes resources available to achieve this vital goal.

"Language preservation is a vital component of broader efforts to preserve the nuances of Native American culture and traditions that are often lost in translation. Language is an essential part of history, culture, and way of life," Congressman **Lujan** said. "The preservation of culture depends upon the endurance of native languages that have been an integral part of tribes in New Mexico and across the country. Continuing the successful programs implemented by the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act will help expand fluency in native languages, helping tribal communities preserve their cultural traditions and ensuring that these languages will continue to provide meaning and value to future generations."

In 2006, the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act was signed into law to support language immersion programs, language survival schools, and language restoration programs. In addition to reauthorizing this important effort, **Lujan's** bill also increases the sustainability and flexibility of the program by extending the duration of grant awards to up to five years, giving projects a more stable funding source and increasing the impact of each project. Additionally, more language schools and language nests in low populated and remote areas will be eligible to access this important grant funding. The reauthorization of this legislation would allow existing programs to continue through Fiscal Year 2019.

Previously, in February of 2013, **Lujan** introduced legislation to extend the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act. This new, strengthened legislation mirrors a Senate companion bill that was recently reported favorably to the full Senate by the Committee on Indian Affairs. This effort enjoys bipartisan support and was introduced with the support of five co-sponsors.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-introduces-legislation-to-preserve-native-american-languages1/

LOAD-DATE: November 25, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMB

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

The Hotline

November 24, 2014 Monday

Luján Accompanies Obama on Air Force One

BYLINE: Jack Fitzpatrick

LENGTH: 108 words

Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Chairman **Ben Ray Luján** (D-NM 03) went on Air Force One with President Obama and others on the president's trip to Nevada a few days after **Luján** was selected as chairman. (**Roll Call**)

DCCC EYES MURPHY, McMAHON. DCCC recruitment officials have discussed former Reps. Patrick Murphy (D-PA 08) and Michael McMahon (D-NY 11) as potential candidates in 2016. In Murphy's district, Rep. Michael Fitzpatrick (R) has said he'll retire at the end of his term. And there could be a special election in McMahon's district if Rep. Michael Grimm (R) is convicted of any of the 20 federal charges he faces. (**Roll Call**)

LOAD-DATE: November 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Magazine

Copyright 2014 The National Journal Group, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

368 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

November 24, 2014 Monday

REP. LINDA SANCHEZ ELECTED TO LEAD CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 219 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of California Rep. Linda Sanchez:

Six-term Congresswoman Linda Sanchez was elected to be the new chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus on Tuesday.

Sanchez, D-Calif., will take over in the next congressional session that begins in January, while current chairman Rep. Ruben Hinojosa, D-Texas, will finish out his term for the current 113th Congress when it adjourns for the year. Five U.S. House newcomers, three who are Democrats and two Republicans, will raise the total Latino members in Congress next year to 29.

The caucus is open to members of all parties, but is all Democrats. Republicans split from the caucus years ago and formed the Congressional Hispanic Conference.

Generally the caucus chairmanship goes to the member who has been serving as first vice chair, which was Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. But caucus members elected Sanchez to the spot after **Lujan** was chosen by House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., to head the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. **Lujan** is the first Latino chosen to head the DCCC.

The caucus will be led by two Latinas next session. Caucus members also elected Rep. Michelle Grisham **Lujan**, D-N.M., to serve as first vice chair. A Democratic aide said Sanchez and Grisham were elected by unanimous consent.

LOAD-DATE: November 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

369 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

November 24, 2014 Monday 1:40 AM EST

Lujan Introduces Legislation to Preserve Native American Languages

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 401 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced that he recently introduced legislation to help Native American communities preserve their traditional languages. This updated reauthorization of the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act improves and reauthorizes an existing program to support tribal communities and makes resources available to achieve this vital goal.

"Language preservation is a vital component of broader efforts to preserve the nuances of Native American culture and traditions that are often lost in translation. Language is an essential part of history, culture, and way of life," Congressman **Lujan** said. "The preservation of culture depends upon the endurance of native languages that have been an integral part of tribes in New Mexico and

across the country. Continuing the successful programs implemented by the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act will help expand fluency in native languages, helping tribal communities preserve their cultural traditions and ensuring that these languages will continue to provide meaning and value to future generations."

In 2006, the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act was signed into law to support language immersion programs, language survival schools, and language restoration programs. In addition to reauthorizing this important effort, **Lujan's** bill also increases the sustainability and flexibility of the program by extending the duration of grant awards to up to five years, giving projects a more stable funding source and increasing the impact of each project. Additionally, more language schools and language nests in low populated and remote areas will be eligible to access this important grant funding. The reauthorization of this legislation would allow existing programs to continue through Fiscal Year 2019.

Previously, in February of 2013, **Lujan** introduced legislation to extend the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act. This new, strengthened legislation mirrors a Senate companion bill that was recently reported favorably to the full Senate by the Committee on Indian Affairs. This effort enjoys bipartisan support and was introduced with the support of five co-sponsors.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TagarumaMar-141125-4947601 30TagarumaMar

LOAD-DATE: November 25, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

November 24, 2014 Monday

Lujan Introduces Legislation to Preserve Native American Languages

LENGTH: 414 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced that he recently introduced legislation to help Native American communities preserve their traditional languages. This updated

reauthorization of the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act improves and reauthorizes an existing program to support tribal communities and makes resources available to achieve this vital goal.

"Language preservation is a vital component of broader efforts to preserve the nuances of Native American culture and traditions that are often lost in translation. Language is an essential part of history, culture, and way of life," Congressman **Luján** said. "The preservation of culture depends upon the endurance of native languages that have been an integral part of tribes in New Mexico and across the country. Continuing the successful programs implemented by the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act will help expand fluency in native languages, helping tribal communities preserve their cultural traditions and ensuring that these languages will continue to provide meaning and value to future generations."

In 2006, the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act was signed into law to support language immersion programs, language survival schools, and language restoration programs. In addition to reauthorizing this important effort, **Luján**'s bill also increases the sustainability and flexibility of the program by extending the duration of grant awards to up to five years, giving projects a more stable funding source and increasing the impact of each project. Additionally, more language schools and language nests in low populated and remote areas will be eligible to access this important grant funding. The reauthorization of this legislation would allow existing programs to continue through Fiscal Year 2019.

Previously, in February of 2013, **Luján** introduced legislation to extend the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act. This new, strengthened legislation mirrors a Senate companion bill that was recently reported favorably to the full Senate by the Committee on Indian Affairs. This effort enjoys bipartisan support and was introduced with the support of five co-sponsors.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: November 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

371 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

November 23, 2014 Sunday

High-flying Luján to stay grounded

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. B2

LENGTH: 722 words

The day after House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi surprised everyone on Capitol Hill by naming Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** as the next chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the obviously - and understandably - elated northern New Mexico congressman made the rounds at the U.S. Capitol.

As his phone blew up with congratulations from excited friends, family members and constituents, **Luján** appeared at a press conference with Pelosi and the rest of the House Democratic leadership team, then he headed to the House floor to vote. A member of the DCCC's press office shadowed him.

After the vote, I caught up with the suddenly in-demand congressman in the House Speaker's Lobby, an ornate room that glitters with bronze sculpture, rich oil paintings, Tennessee marble and antique floor tiles. **Luján**, a 42-year-old former blackjack dealer, suddenly seemed a long way from his family's homestead in the hills north of Santa Fe.

After congratulating him, I asked **Luján** how he planned to fulfill his duties as the House Democrats' top election strategist while keeping an eye on the people and issues back home in his remote congressional district. How would he avoid "going Washington?"

"If anyone is concerned about that, they can join me this weekend (at his home in New Mexico) and help me clean out the sheep barns," the congressman said with a broad smile. "If they have a free hand and want to help me shovel some of what the sheep produced, come on by!"

Obviously, **Luján** was playfully saying that he won't forget where he came from. A lot of ambitious politicians who come to Washington say that - right before they turn into insufferable, pompous blowhards. To his credit, that sort of puffery isn't **Luján's** style. He knows it wouldn't play well in Rio Arriba County, Taos or Farmington.

Say what you will about the fourth-term congressman, but he is very much a product of his humble home state, from the big bolo ties he wears on the House floor to his lilting New Mexico accent, to the cadre of New Mexicans in Washington who staff his Capitol Hill office and occasionally hang out in D.C. bars watching Lobos games with him.

Luján will no doubt return home to northern New Mexico regularly to check on his elderly mother, shovel the sheep barns and tend to his constituents.

But he'll also be in heavy national demand as DCCC chairman.

Two nights after Pelosi tapped him to head the House Democrats' election strategy, MSNBC asked him to talk about the president's immigration plan on Rachel Maddow's show. **Luján** did fine on Maddow, although his tendency to rely heavily on predictable Democratic Party talking points was on display.

Pelosi gave **Luján** the job because he is relatively young and energetic. The fact that he is Hispanic clearly factored into the decision, as well.

After the shellacking Democrats took in the mid-term elections this month, **Luján** has a lot - and I mean a lot - of work to do.

If Democrats do better in 2016, his performance as DCCC chair could vault him to an even bigger position on the national stage. If they underperform, it will tarnish his rising political star.

Lujan is one of the more liberal members of the House and he's not bashful about his positions. More than one Republican told me last week they look forward to moderate Democratic House candidates trying to downplay their affiliation with him and his voting record. We'll see if that actually becomes an issue.

Meanwhile, **Luján** said he's studying the national political terrain and ready to jump enthusiastically into the new job. But he promises he'll always keep his feet in New Mexico.

"My dad (the late New Mexico House Speaker Ben **Lujan**) taught me the importance of taking care of the farm and home," **Luján** said. "That is my home. My mom is home. I have responsibility to her and I'm never going to abandon that. New Mexico is where I was born and raised, and I will never, ever abandon New Mexico.

"I'm always grounded," he added.

The next day, the White House called. They wanted **Luján** to join Obama on Air Force One for his trip to Nevada, where he would speak about immigration.

Flying out west on the president's fabled airplane high above the clouds on Friday, it's unclear if **Luján** could see New Mexico in the distance.

E-mail: mcoleman@abqjournal.com Go to www. abqjournal.com/letters/new to submit a letter to the editor.

LOAD-DATE: November 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

372 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Las Cruces Sun-News (New Mexico)

November 22, 2014 Saturday

Walter Rubel: Lujan has just been given the toughest job in Congress

BYLINE: Las Cruces Sun-News

SECTION: OPINION

LENGTH: 641 words

As the son of the second-most powerful man in New Mexico, who shares his name, the skids were well lubricated for **Ben Ray Lujan** in 2004 when he ran for a seat on the Public Regulation Commission.

Lujan uses his middle name to distinguish himself from his once-more-famous father, who served as speaker of the House from 2001 to 2012, and wielded enormous influence over that body. A graduate of Highlands University after having earlier left UNM, the young **Lujan** was elevated to chairman soon after being elected to the PRC.

The PRC has always had its share of controversies and scandals, but none touched **Lujan**. And so, when Tom Udall gave up his House seat in 2008 to run for the Senate seat being vacated by Pete Domenici, the timing was perfect for **Lujan**, who was just completing his first term on the PRC.

Lujan defeated five other challengers in the Democratic primary, topping his nearest rival by 16 points. He then won easily in a general election that included an independent candidate who tallied 13 percent of the vote. Despite the three-way split, **Lujan** won comfortably with 57 percent.

Running in a reliably Democratic district, **Lujan** has never been seriously challenged since. He just beat opponent Jefferson L. Byrd by more than 23 points in what was a Republican wave election.

I'm sure there has been a lot of hard work and late nights along the way. But looking on from afar, it's all seemed to come incredibly easily for **Lujan**, who will soon begin his fourth term in Congress at 42 years old.

But now he has just accepted what may be the most difficult job in Washington. **Lujan** was named last week to succeed Steve Israel of New York as chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

It will now be his job to bring the Democrats back to power in the U.S. House of Representatives. So much for that impeccable timing discussed earlier.

Democrats have been out of power in the House since 2010, and are trending in the wrong direction. They just lost 12 more seats this month, giving Republicans their largest majority in the House since 1931.

The advantage Republicans now hold gives them a fairly large cushion for the inevitable over-reach to come, followed by the just-as-inevitable backlash from voters. Especially when you factor in gerrymandered districts that will remain in place at least through the next census.

Lujan has a "bold vision and determined leadership to deliver wins in difficult districts," Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi said during a news conference Monday, as reported by Politico.

The selection of **Lujan** came as a surprise. A group of wealthy liberal donors wanted Donna Edwards of Maryland. Jim Himes of Connecticut, Jared Polis of Colorado and Joaquin Castro of Texas were also in the running, Politico reported.

The National Journal has ranked **Lujan** the 62nd most liberal member of the House. His selection "has signaled an intention to continue its outreach to progressives and Hispanics, with the party eager to make up ground for the net loss of at least 66 seats since 2010," National Journal reporter Billy House wrote.

Lujan has not been a regular guest on the Sunday morning shows or nightly cable news food fights until now, but that's about to change.

He will now be called on frequently to explain Democratic positions in a way that resonates with voters. Beyond that, it will be his job to recruit candidates and develop a national strategy to win back the House.

It was a terrific story Monday night, with **Lujan** blowing kisses through the TV camera to his mother in Nambc. He is suddenly the fresh, new face of the Democratic Party. Which also makes him the newest target for Republicans and conservative media.

His life just got a whole lot more interesting.

Walter Rubel is editorial page editor of the Sun-News. He can be reached at wrubel@lcsun-news.com or follow @WalterRubel on Twitter.

LOAD-DATE: November 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Las Cruces Sun-News, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

373 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

November 21, 2014 Friday 11:50 PM EST

Congressional Votes for New Mexico the Week of 11/14 - 11/20/2014

BYLINE: by TARGETED NEWS SERVICE, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 2535 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Nov. 21 -- There were seven key votes in the House this week; the House held a total of 14 roll call votes in the week ending Thursday. There were seven key votes in the Senate, which held a total of 15 roll call votes. The most important House vote was to pass a bill to approve the Keystone XL pipeline; the most important Senate vote was to reject the Keystone XL bill.

In addition to roll call votes, the House and Senate also took action on several measures by voice vote. The House also passed the Low-Dose Radiation Research Act (H.R. 5544), sponsored by Rep. Paul C. Broun, R-Ga., to increase the understanding of the health effects of low doses of ionizing radiation; the Federal Duck Stamp Act (H.R. 5069), sponsored by Rep. John Fleming, R-La., to increase the price of duck stamps to fund the acquisition of conservation easements for migratory birds; the Girls Count Act (H.R. 3398), sponsored by Rep. Steve Chabot, R-Ohio, to authorize measures to support the rights of women and girls in developing countries; and the Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act (H.R. 3583), sponsored by Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-Fla., to expand the number of scholarships available to Pakistani women under the Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program.

The Senate also passed the Sudden Unexpected Death Data Enhancement and Awareness Act (H.R. 669), sponsored by Rep. Frank Pallone Jr., D-N.J., to improve understanding and awareness of unexpected sudden death in infants; a bill (H.R. 4067), sponsored by Rep. Lynn Jenkins, R-Kan., to extend through 2014 the enforcement instruction on supervision requirements for outpatient therapeutic services in critical access and small rural hospitals; a bill (H.R. 5441), sponsored by Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Fla., to amend the federal charter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States to reflect the service of women in the military; and the STELA Reauthorization Act (H.R. 5728), sponsored by Rep. Fred Upton, R-Mich., to extend expiring provisions relating to the retransmission of signals of television broadcast stations.

Here's a look at how area members of Congress voted over the previous week.

HOUSE VOTES:

House Vote 1:

APPROVING KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE: The House has passed a bill (H.R. 5682) sponsored by Rep. Bill Cassidy, R-La., that would authorize TransCanada to construct its proposed Keystone XL pipeline to carry oil from Alberta into the U.S. and declare that environmental reviews for the pipeline are complete. Cassidy said building the pipeline would create more than 40,000 jobs and increase energy security. Cassidy added that Keystone XL was supported by the states that would host the pipeline and by a majority of Americans. A bill opponent, Rep. Henry A. Waxman, D-Calif., said: "This bill will not lower gasoline prices by a single penny. It may even raise them in some places. It will, at most, create just a few dozen permanent jobs" while disrupting the environmental review process for Keystone XL and worsening climate change by increasing greenhouse gas emissions. The vote, on Nov. 14, was 252 yeas to 161 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 2:

CHANGING EPA SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Chris Stewart, R-Utah, to the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act (H.R. 1422). The amendment would state that EPA's Science Advisory Board "shall be fully and timely responsive to Congress" and make technical changes to the bill. Stewart said the changes were "critical to ensure that the underlying bill can be properly applied to existing statute" without interpretive conflicts. An amendment opponent, Rep. Suzanne Bonamici, D-Ore., said the "fully and timely responsive to Congress" clause would make the board vulnerable to interference from Congress, reducing its ability to independently advise the EPA. The vote, on Nov. 18, was 232 yeas to 184 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 3:

REGULATING EPA SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD: The House has passed the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act (H.R. 1422), sponsored by Rep. Chris Stewart, R-Utah. The bill would set out eligibility and disclosure requirements for members of the Environmental Protection Agency's Science Advisory Board, including education and professional experience standards, and require the EPA to solicit public nominations for board members. Stewart said the requirements would improve the impartiality of board members, many of whom are recent recipients of EPA grants, and improve the balance of points of view represented on the board. A bill opponent, Rep. Suzanne Bonamici, D-Ore., said it would place too many industry representatives on the board, had excessively stringent standards for excluding academic scientists from the board if they had dealings with the EPA, and would apply cumbersome new procedural standards on the board. The vote, on Nov. 18, was 229 yeas to 191 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 4:

STANDARDS FOR RESEARCH SUPPORTING EPA RULES: The House has rejected an amendment sponsored by Rep. Joseph P. Kennedy III, D-Mass., to the Secret Science Reform Act (H.R. 4012). The amendment would have authorized the Environmental Protection Agency to use any peer-reviewed scientific publication, including publications based on data that is prohibited from public disclosure, in considering whether to propose regulations. Kennedy said the amendment sought to replace an unworkable standard for the EPA with a standard that allows the agency to "use the best scientific

information available, so long as that data complies with the highest academic peer-review protocols." An amendment opponent, Rep. David Schweikert, R-Ariz., said a peer review standard was insufficient because peers do not have access to the data underlying the scientific research they review. The vote, on Nov. 19, was 194 yeas to 230 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

NAYS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 5:

RELEASE OF DATA JUSTIFYING EPA REGULATIONS: The House has passed the Secret Science Reform Act (H.R. 4012), sponsored by Rep. David Schweikert, R-Ariz. The bill would require regulations and other measures enacted by the Environmental Protection Agency to be backed by publicly available scientific and technical information. Schweikert said that increasing disclosure of the research used by the EPA in adopting regulations would improve environmental and health policies. A bill opponent, Rep. Henry A. Waxman, D-Calif., said confidentiality concerns justified keeping some information private. The vote, on Nov. 19, was 237 yeas to 190 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 6:

AIR QUALITY PERMITTING PROCESS: The House has rejected an amendment sponsored by Rep. Henry A. Waxman, D-Calif., to the Promoting New Manufacturing Act (H.R. 4795). The amendment would have exempted the EPA and state and local regulators from the bill's national ambient air quality standard implementation guidance requirement in the event that the regulators find that meeting the requirement would increase air pollution or delay the process of issuing air quality permits. Waxman said the exemption would serve as "a safety hatch to make sure that we aren't harming public health and making air pollution permitting more difficult." An amendment opponent, Rep. Ed Whitfield, R-Ky., said adding the amendment would defeat the purpose of the bill, which is to improve regulatory certainty for manufacturers planning to expand. The vote, on Nov. 20, was 183 yeas to 225 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

NAYS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 7:

EPA AIR QUALITY REGULATIONS: The House has passed the Promoting New Manufacturing Act (H.R. 4795), sponsored by Rep. Steve Scalise, R-La. The bill would Environmental Protection Agency to publish on its website information about preconstruction permits it has issued, since 2008, to major sources of air pollutants under the Clean Air Act's New Source Review Program, and require the EPA to publish regulations and guidance for implementing rules that establish or revise national ambient air quality (NAAQ) standards. Scalise said that by increasing transparency at the EPA, the bill would improve regulatory certainty for manufacturers as they go through the permitting process for building new facilities, with resulting benefits for the economy. A bill opponent, Rep. Gene Green, D-Texas, said that by imposing a lengthy delay in the implementation of NAAQ standards, the bill would disrupt the regulatory process, and it would fail to adequately protect public health. The vote, on Nov. 20, was 238 yeas to 172 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

SENATE VOTES:

Senate Vote 1:

CHILD CARE GRANTS: The Senate has concurred in the House amendment to the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (S. 1086), sponsored by Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski, D-Md. The bill would reauthorize through fiscal 2020 the government's program of issuing child care and development block grants to the states, require criminal background checks of child care providers, and require states to submit three-year child care and development plans to receive grants. A bill supporter, Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, said it would enable "important reforms and improvements" of care and education for pre-kindergarten children, assisting their development at a critical time for mental growth and thereby helping them reach their full potential. The vote, on Nov. 17, was 88 yeas to 1 nay.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 2:

APPROVING KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE: The Senate has rejected a bill (S. 2280), sponsored by Sen. John Hoeven, R-N.D., that would have authorized TransCanada to construct its proposed Keystone XL pipeline to carry oil from Alberta into the U.S. and declared that environmental reviews for the pipeline were complete. Hoeven said approving Keystone XL would enhance national security by improving U.S. reliance on energy imports from its close ally, Canada, rather than the Middle East or other areas hostile to the U.S., support economic growth, and generate tax revenue for the government. A bill opponent, Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., said it would "force the approval of a project that will bring millions of barrels of the dirtiest pollution you could think of into America." The vote, on Nov. 18, was 59 yeas to 41 nays, with a three-fifths majority needed for passage.

NAYS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 3:

JUDGE FOR MIDDLE DISTRICT OF GEORGIA: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Leslie Joyce Abrams to serve as a U.S. District Judge for the Middle District of Georgia. A supporter, Sen. Johnny Isakson, R-Ga., praised Abrams, currently an assistant attorney in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia, and formerly a private practice lawyer at two law firms, as an extremely competent, talented individual who will do well in her new role. The vote, on Nov. 18, was unanimous with 100 yeas.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 4:

REVIEW OF SURVEILLANCE EFFORTS: The Senate has rejected a cloture motion to end debate on the USA Freedom Act (S. 2685), sponsored by Sen. Patrick J. Leahy, D-Vt. The bill would have established new review standards for FBI surveillance requests submitted to Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) courts that seek approval from the FISA courts for surveillance of suspected terrorists, criminals, or for clandestine foreign intelligence activities. Leahy said the bill "enhances privacy protections and ends indiscriminate data collection by the NSA, but also keeps the essential tools our intelligence community needs to protect our nation." A bill opponent, Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., said it would halt the FBI's program of collecting metadata for phone records, with a resulting impairment of the FBI's ability to learn about terrorist plots and stop the plots before they are enacted. The vote, on Nov. 18, was 58 yeas to 42 nays, with a three-fifths majority required to end debate.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 5:

WISCONSIN DISTRICT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Pamela Pepper to serve as a U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Wisconsin. Pepper, who has served as a judge in the district's bankruptcy court since 2005, also served as a bankruptcy judge in the Southern District of Illinois from 2005 to 2009, and previously worked as a private practice criminal defense attorney and assistant U.S. attorney. Although there was no floor debate on Pepper's nomination, Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Wis., said in a statement that Pepper's "intellectual curiosity, compassion and faithful adherence to the rule of law will serve the nation and the people of Wisconsin's eastern district well." The vote, on Nov. 20, was unanimous with 95 yeas.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 6:

NEW YORK DISTRICT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Brenda K. Sannes to serve as a U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of New York. Sannes has served as an assistant U.S. attorney in the district since 1995, including service as chief of its appellate section since 2005, and previously worked as an assistant U.S. attorney in California and as a private practice lawyer. There was no floor debate on the nomination, but Sen. Charles E. Schumer, D-N.Y., said in a statement that Sannes "has shown real leadership and legal acumen - and she certainly has the expertise and the experience to capably fill a seat on the federal bench." The vote, on Nov. 20, was unanimous with 96 yeas.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 7:

CONNECTICUT DISTRICT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Victor Allen Bolden to serve as a U.S. District Judge for the District of Connecticut. A supporter, Sen. Patrick J. Leahy, D-Vt., said Bolden had impeccable credentials, including five years of experience as corporation counsel for New Haven, Conn., and work as general counsel and assistant counsel for the NAACP's Legal Defense & Educational Fund and as a private practice lawyer. Leahy also praised Bolden for his work ensuring that New Haven complied with a Supreme Court order for the city to ensure racial nondiscrimination in its process for evaluated whether to promote its firefighters. No senators spoke against Bolden's nomination on the Senate floor. The vote, on Nov. 20, was 49 yeas to 46 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

NAYS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM

For more information about Targeted News Service products and services, please contact: Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service LLC, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://targetednews.com.

-1182423

LOAD-DATE: November 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

November 20, 2014 Thursday

Gov. jumps into immigration debate

BYLINE: JAMES MONTELEONE Politics Notebook

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C2

LENGTH: 407 words

Gov. Susana Martinez jumped into the national immigration debate this week with an op-ed published in the Washington Times that called on Congress to find a bipartisan solution.

"Until our representatives in Washington stop acting like politicians and start leading, the immigration issue will continue to go unaddressed," Martinez wrote. "...Until they act, our immigration problem will continue to severely impact the states, leaving border governors like me to deal with another Washington failure."

Martinez's article, published Tuesday by the Republican-leaning Washington newspaper, comes as Democratic President Barack Obama prepares to announce an executive order expected to expand the number of immigrants in the U.S. illegally who are eligible for deferred deportation action status.

Martinez also touted her own efforts to repeal the New Mexico law that provides driver's licenses to immigrants in the country illegally, alongside jabs at former Gov. Bill Richardson.

STILL FUNDRAISING:

Campaign 2014 may have ended, but the Democratic Party of New Mexico still is beating the bushes to drum up a little more cash to aid one of their candidates.

The party, in an email to donors this week, asked supporters to chip in again to help Land Commissioner Ray Powell in his vote recount. Unofficial poll returns showed Powell trailing Republican opponent Aubrey Dunn by fewer than 1,000 votes, triggering an automatic state-funded recount.

"Help Ray Powell stay in office," the fundraising email said.

Donations will go toward legal expenses associated with the recount effort in Powell's race, state party Executive Director Jon Lipshutz said. The money also might go toward other "ancillary costs" related to getting party volunteers to the Secretary of State's Office in Santa Fe to monitor the recount procedures, he said.

LEADERSHIP RANKS:

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., was tapped to serve as a vice chairwoman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

Lujan Grisham's appointment to the leadership role continues New Mexico's representation in the group's leadership. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., previously served as chairman of the caucus before being named this week as the head of the national Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the campaign arm of the Democratic caucus designed to help elect House Democrats. The new chairwoman of the Hispanic caucus is Rep. Linda Sánchez, D-Calif.

James Monteleone: jmonteleone@ abqjournal.com

LOAD-DATE: November 20, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

375 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Quarterly News

November 20, 2014 Thursday

Kelly Ward Will Stay on as DCCC Executive Director

BYLINE: By Emily Cahn and Abby Livingston

LENGTH: 338 words

Newly minted Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Chairman **Ben Ray Luján** said Thursday that Kelly Ward will stay on as executive director of the committee for the second straight cycle.

Luján said in an interview with CQ Roll Call earlier this week he hoped Ward would remain for another stint at the top of the committee - tasked with helping Democrats as they try to regain a majority of seats in the House. On Thursday, **Luján** announced Ward accepted the position, and noted she is the first person to spend two consecutive cycles at DCCC leader.

"Kelly Ward brings infectious energy, unrivaled determination and key strategic insights to her job, and I am so pleased that she has agreed to stay on at the DCCC," **Luján** said in a news release. "After working with Kelly for the past two years, I've been so impressed with her ability to both develop the strategy and operationalize the day-to-day work needed to aggressively take the fight to Republicans, and we're lucky to have her lead our team."

This will be Ward's fourth cycle at the committee. She started in 2010 as incumbent retention director. In 2012, she was promoted to political director. And in 2014, former DCCC Chairman Steve Israel named her executive director.

Ward said she's excited for another cycle.

"I'm lucky to have worked with Chairman Israel as we weathered a storm that could have been worse in 2014, and I look forward to building on the fundamentals we have in place for a successful election night in 2016," she said in the release.

House Democrats have a tough task, given they just lost a net of at least 12 seats - with one race in Arizona headed to a recount.

Related:

Luján Pledges to Bring Farmer's Work Ethic to DCCC

New DCCC Chairman Eyes Current Executive Director

Democrats Look to Ward to Energize 2014 Takeover Attempt

Roll Call Results Map: Results and District Profiles for Every Seat

Get breaking news alerts and more from Roll Call in your inbox or on your iPhone.

Source: CQ News
©2014 Congressional Quarterly Inc. All Rights Reserved.

LOAD-DATE: November 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: NEWSLETTERS

Copyright 2014 CQ-Roll Call, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

November 20, 2014 Thursday 11:59 PM EST

DCCC: DCCC Chairman Ben Ray Lujan Names Kelly Ward as Executive Director

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 499 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee issued the following news release:

DCCC Chairman **Ben Ray Lujan** announced today that DCCC Executive Director Kelly Ward will serve as Executive Director for the 2016 cycle, continuing to bring her savvy political instincts and organizational skills to the committee for another cycle. Ward, a DCCC veteran, House strategist and skilled political operative, is the first Executive Director in recent memory to serve for a second election cycle. Politico has called Ward a "quietly effective behind-the-scenes operator" and a "motivating force" at the DCCC. Under Ward's leadership with outgoing Chairman Steve Israel, the DCCC outraised the NRCC by $41 million, despite being in the minority, and launched the largest ad buy from any group in the House or the Senate campaigns.

"Kelly Ward brings infectious energy, unrivaled determination and key strategic insights to her job, and I am so pleased that she has agreed to stay on at the DCCC," DCCC Chairman **Ben Ray Lujan** said. "After working with Kelly for the past two years, I've been so impressed with her ability to both develop the strategy and operationalize the day-to-day work needed to aggressively take the fight to Republicans, and we're lucky to have her lead our team."

In the tough climate of 2014, House Democrats held losses well below the historic average for the President's midterm and even picked up three Republican-held seats. The DCCC won 46 percent of the "Toss Up" races from Rothenberg and 38 percent of the "Toss Up" races from the Cook Report. Nearly half (47 percent) of the DCCC IE dollars were invested in races that House Democrats won. Democrats won 17 of the 26 races that were decided by less than 5 points.

Ward said: "I'm honored to be working with Chairman **Lujan** and House Democrats, who are committed to expanding our ranks, holding Republicans accountable and strengthening the middle class. I'm lucky to have worked with Chairman Israel as we weathered a storm that could have been worse in 2014, and I look forward to building on the fundamentals we have in place for a successful election night in 2016."

Ward has served as the DCCC's Executive Director since November 2012. Before becoming Executive Director, Ward served as the DCCC's Political Director, where she oversaw candidate redistricting, recruitment, campaign planning and strategy, leading to victory in 78 percent of the seats considered Toss Up by the Rothenberg Report and 69 percent of the seats considered Toss Up by the Cook Political Report. She previously managed Alan Khazei's U.S. Senate campaign, ran former Congressman Harry Mitchell's first congressional campaign, ran several nonprofit advocacy campaigns and worked for former Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano. She earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Arizona and has her Master's Degree from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 24KuanRap-101121 30FurigayJof-4943092 30FurigayJof

LOAD-DATE: November 21, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

November 20, 2014 Thursday 12:00 AM EST

DCCC : Quick Clip: DCCC Chairman Ben Ray Lujan on MSNBC on the President's Immigration Action

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 174 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee issued the following news release:

On MSNBC's Rachel Maddow (http://youtu.be/Chw9jAn5KsQ) Show last night, DCCC Chairman **Ben Ray Lujan** said that President Obama has taken an important first step on immigration, and that House Republicans need to stop stalling comprehensive reform, as they have for more than 500 days.

On President Obama's actions on immigration reform, Chairman **Lujan** said: "This is the first step, and the President's taken an important step, but it's the first step. I hope that House Republicans use the rest of this year to move comprehensive immigration reform because it's House Republicans that have been stalling this bill for 510 days. Republicans have a chance to act, but sadly we're hearing more and more talk from Republicans about a government shutdown. I'm certainly hopeful they're listening to the American people because the American people do not want the government shut down."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 24KuanRap-101121 30FurigayJof-4943099 30FurigayJof

LOAD-DATE: November 21, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

378 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Quarterly News

November 19, 2014 Wednesday

Luján Pledges to Bring Farmer's Work Ethic to DCCC

BYLINE: By Emma Dumain

LENGTH: 1255 words

Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, who has ruffled plenty of feathers lately, reclaimed some goodwill with her caucus Monday, bypassing more established members to name **Ben Ray Luján** the next chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

It won't erase all of the negativity percolating among her flock - demoralized after Election Day and antsy over the stasis at the leadership table - but the decision to elevate the New Mexico Democrat is being called "smart" and "savvy," even by those who count themselves among Pelosi's critics.

Rep. Maxine Waters of California, a member of the Congressional Black Caucus and the top Democrat on Financial Services, said Pelosi's pick was "refreshing" and "lovely."

"He was not talked about as one of the usual suspects," Waters told CQ Roll Call. "It shows a recognition that someone who shows promise should be given opportunities," even if that person isn't the loudest or the most demonstrative.

Rep. Marcy Kaptur of Ohio said she was "pleasantly surprised" by the selection, predicting **Luján** would "ingratiate himself" in a way that other DCCC chairmen had not. (She grimaced when recalling the tenure of now-Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, whom she called "power driven.")

Rep. Marcia L. Fudge, D-Ohio, the outgoing chairwoman of the CBC who has never been shy in expressing consternation about Rep. Steve Israel's DCCC leadership, said all members will be able to work with **Luján**.

A former House Democratic aide who worked closely with **Luján's** office said he truly represents the future of House Democratic leaders: "There's a certain group of mid-level management members who always get referred to as 'the next generation,' but he is the first to come after them."

In the 114th Congress, he will be the only completely new face in the senior leadership ranks, and the only one who was elected after the Democratic wave of 2006.

Elected in 2008, **Luján** is relatively new to Congress, but not so new that he'll be criticized for leapfrogging members who have done their time and paid their dues. He's not a media darling or a Sunday show regular, but that means he's avoided the kind of scrutiny that's dogged the three members who were at one point considered front-runners for the job: Reps. Donna Edwards of Maryland, Jim Himes of Connecticut and Jared Polis of Colorado.

Luján isn't a household name outside of Washington, D.C., but that's part of what's made him so well-regarded among his colleagues.

Members, staffers and political observers describe him as low-key and unassuming, someone who puts his head down and does his job, and who doesn't care whether the task at hand is exciting or glamorous. One Democratic aide said he never misses meetings or appointments, and it's that perfect attendance record and positive attitude that gets noticed in a town that likes to reward happy warriors.

In an interview with CQ Roll Call Tuesday, **Luján** attributed his legislative style to the examples set by his parents, especially his father, the late Ben **Luján**, who served as speaker of the New Mexico House.

"My father ... always respected members, he always respected people," **Lujan** said. "Mom and Dad always raised me that way: You respect your elders, you respect your neighbors and you treat your family with respect and dignity. And that's how I've translated my work in the Congress."

He chalked up his work ethic to his upbringing on a farm.

"No job was too small," **Luján** said. "You did it all. When I was very young in age, milking goats. Still to this day ... cleaning the pens. You can imagine all that that entails. Cutting grass, cutting wood, stacking wood, doing what I need to do, and so I bring that same work ethic to the Congress of what we need to do: No job is too small, no job is too large, you need to roll up your sleeves and be willing to do everything that you're asking others to do, and do it to the best of your ability and hope you succeed."

But being likable and hard-working isn't enough to successfully run an operation like the DCCC, and not everyone's sure whether **Luján** has what it takes to recruit the right candidates, raise the most money and build the infrastructure to win back seats in 2016.

Sources familiar with the third-term congressman say he's more than capable, especially when it comes to bringing people together and building consensus around a compelling message - something many House Democrats think the party lacked this cycle. He's progressive, but can talk about the issues in a way that doesn't alienate moderates; and at 42, he's seen as someone who can bridge the gap between older and younger members.

As a Latino, he'll represent a departure from the past eight years of white men leading the House Democrats' top fundraising machine.

In terms of experience, he has proved he can raise money. As the recent chairman of BOLD PAC, which raises money on behalf of CHC members and candidates, **Luján** raised nearly $1.7 million over two cycles, a PAC record.

And he's no stranger to the DCCC: In the 2014 cycle, he was co-chairman of both the Latino and Tribal councils, and he served on the Campaign Services and Recruitment committees.

Pelosi's decision to tap **Luján** was something of a surprise to political observers, who expected the California Democrat to pick one of the more obvious contenders actively lobbying for the job. It was also something of a surprise to **Luján**, who had only been discussing the position with Pelosi for about a week prior to the announcement. He said he learned he'd gotten the job about two hours before the scheduled news conference where Pelosi revealed her selection.

"I responded to the leader that although I was not pursuing this, I'm willing to do the work and take whatever role and responsibility it is that I need to, to help my colleagues and make sure we're reaching out to the American people," **Luján** said of his initial conversation with Pelosi.

Less than 24 hours after getting the assignment, **Luján** is already being called "the chairman" by staff, and he spent Tuesday being trailed across Capitol Hill by a member of the DCCC press team.

Though many House Democrats said they want a more inclusive and collaborative DCCC for the 2016 cycle, **Luján** didn't seem eager to reinvent the wheel. He praised Israel as someone who "set the expectations very high" and suggested he'd like to retain Kelly Ward, the current executive director.

As for his expectations in terms of electoral possibilities, **Luján** is going on the record early with a prediction that House Democrats stand to win.

"Look, I think we're going to have our work before us, but I'm optimistic," he said. "I see gains. I see an electorate we can reach out to. The same way I was born and raised rolling up my sleeves and getting to work, that's what the American people want to hear and see."

Related:

Chaffetz Wins Four-Way Showdown for Oversight Gavel

Eshoo Wins Backing of Steering and Policy Committee Over Pallone

New RSC Chair Flores: 'I'm No Shill for Leadership'

Democrats Re-Elect Pelosi, Leadership Team for 114th Congress

Democrats Fume in Caucus as Duckworth Denied Vote

RSC Chairmanship Race Tests Conservatives

With New House Democratic Leadership Team, Pelosi Looks Out for Her Own

Power Plays: House Gavel and Ranking Member Battles (Updated)

Secret Service Hearing Spotlights Chaffetz's Chairmanship Hopes

Roll Call Results Map: Results and District Profiles for Every Seat

Get breaking news alerts and more from Roll Call in your inbox or on your iPhone.

Source: CQ News
©2014 Congressional Quarterly Inc. All Rights Reserved.

LOAD-DATE: November 21, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: NEWSLETTERS

Copyright 2014 CQ-Roll Call, Inc. All Rights Reserved

379 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Hotline

November 19, 2014 Wednesday

Lujan Chairmanship Earns Pelosi Praise

BYLINE: Jack Fitzpatrick

LENGTH: 105 words

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan's** (D-NM 03) selection as chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee earned House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA 12) some goodwill among her critics, including Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA 43), who said, "He was not talked about as one of the usual suspects. It shows a recognition that someone who shows promise should be given opportunities."

Lujan said he did not actively seek the position, but was approached by Pelosi and said he was "willing to do the work" if selected. (**Roll Call**)

Lujan said he hopes current DCCC executive director Kelly Ward stays on for the 2016 cycle. (**Roll Call**)

LOAD-DATE: November 19, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Magazine

Copyright 2014 The National Journal Group, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

380 of 500 DOCUMENTS

MSNBC

November 19, 2014 Wednesday

SHOW: THE RACHEL MADDOW SHOW 9:00 PM EST

THE RACHEL MADDOW SHOW for November 19, 2014

BYLINE: Rachel Maddow

GUESTS: **Ben Ray Lujan,** Cristina Jimenez

SECTION: NEWS; Domestic

LENGTH: 7661 words

HIGHLIGHT: In a primetime address tomorrow before the nation, the president of the United States will declare his plans to protect what could be up to 5 million people from deportation. Interview with U.S. Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico.

CHRIS HAYES, "ALL IN" HOST: That is "ALL IN" for this evening.

THE RACHEL MADDOW SHOW starts right now.

Good evening, Rachel.

RACHEL MADDOW, MSNBC HOST: Good evening, Chris. Thank you.

HAYES: You bet.

MADDOW: Thanks to you at home for joining us this hour.

Do you remember a guy named Randy Scheunemann? Randy Scheunemann, he was the top policy adviser to the McCain/Palin campaign in 2008. That`s him, the guy with the beard there.

He doesn`t have that memorable a face -- I don`t mean that in a bad way. I just mean, he doesn`t -- you don`t see him and instantly know who he is. He also has a names that is kind of hard to pronounce, definitely hard to spell.

Honestly, Randy Scheunemann has never been a super famous guy in politics. He did really pop in the news one time that you might remember because it was a scandal in that presidential campaign. When John McCain was running for president, you might remember that Russia started a war with the nation of Georgia. You might further remember that John McCain, as a candidate for president, came out when that war started and said, "We are all Georgians now."

John McCain was pledging, basically, that if he were president, the United States would act as if we were Georgia. We, America, would go to war with Russia on behalf of this other country.

And at the time that John McCain presidential candidate was pledging a war with Russia because we are all Georgians now, at the time that he was doing that, the lobbying firm of his top foreign policy adviser Randy Scheunemann had just been hired and put on the payroll by the nation of Georgia. That`s the one time you might remember Randy Scheunemann. The guy whose lobbying fee is very easily -- might have gotten the United States military into a shooting war with Russia.

But McCain did not win the presidency and Randy Scheunemann went back to a standard Washington foreign policy guy. And you don`t hear much about him anymore. You haven`t heard much about him since then -- until this week.

Until this week, a really, really weird story about Randy Scheunemann was broken by "The Daily Beast". It turns out, Randy Scheunemann belongs to a private skiing club in Montana. I did not know there was such a thing as a private skiing club. I thought like, you know, you buy a lift ticket, then you go ski on a mountain with other people who are skiing on the mountain and that`s skiing.

I -- apparently, there are places you can do it privately without the riffraff and Randy Scheunemann apparently belongs to one of those. And on the ski left, at his private skiing lift, "The Daily Beast" and a number of other outlets now report that Randy Scheunemann got into a fight. He got into a fight on the ski lift with a white supremacist, specifically with this guy, who is sort of America`s foremost white supremacist.

This is a guy named Richard Spencer. He was recently forcibly deported from Budapest when he tried to organize and international white supremacist conference and the nation of Hungary caught him trying to sneak into their country even though they had banned him. He calls for the creation of a white homeland. He runs an organization called the National Policy Institute, to try to advance the goal of a white homeland. His group is based in Whitefish, Montana.

He`s also founded a few online white supremacist magazines and Web sites, including this one which is called Alternative Right.

And apparently making a career as a white supremacist leader these days is a pretty remunerative thing. At least the dude is making enough money to belong to the same private ski club that Randy Scheunemann does in Montana. Who even knew there were private ski clubs? Anyway, there are. And apparently, the two of them got on a fight on the ski lift.

Insults were exchanged, punches were threatened. And the reason it all broke in the news this week is that private ski club in Montana, it`s called the Big Mountain Club, they apparently in this fight between two of their members felt they had to decide between them, which of these two guys was going to be allowed to stay as a member of their private ski club. Randy Scheunemann, Washington policy adviser guy, adviser to John McCain, or the Aryan Nation white supremacist guy who is trying to build a homeland for the endangered white race from his home base in Montana.

The Big Mountain Club in Whitefish, Montana, decided they`d go with the white supremacist. They kicked Randy Scheunemann out and kept the Ku Klux other guy, yes!

And so, now, in the wake of that, you have Whitefish, Montana, City Council meetings that have suddenly gotten very crowded. They look like this, totally packed with local residents who apparently realize they have the leader of a white nationalist movement living in their town getting in fights on their ski lifts.

Local anti-racist effort has sprung up in Whitefish. They`re trying to figure out some way to force this guy out or maybe pass an anti- discrimination ordinance that would annoy the guy enough that he might leave on his own. There`s big to do in Montana.

But what happened in that ski lift fight between the Washington establishment guy and the kook out there white wing fringe guy -- I mean, despite the fact that amazingly the kook right wing fringe guy appears to have won, what is amazing about that story being in the news right now is that that ski lift fight is basically a tiny snowy pageant version, like the winter passion play version of what`s happening in Washington right now between the mainstream establishment Randy Scheunemann types and the fringy guys who keep beating them in fights.

The white supremacist guy who got in the fight with Randy Scheunemann is basically organizing for an international race war, or at least telling people to prepare for the international race war that he certainly thinks is coming, and he definitely hopes is coming. He wants to build a white homeland.

If you look at the online racist forums and magazines that he started, some of it tries to appear sort of academic, sort of pundit-y, right? This new variety of white supremacy tries to play at trying to appear like they are mainstream. Sometimes, though, the real thing just slips through.

This is one of the blog posts at Alternative Right, this thing that Richard Spencer founded. This is a post they put up on Holocaust Remembrance Day last year. As you can see they`ve titled it Holocaust Amnesia Day.

And then under a picture of a stack of corpses, people killed in the Holocaust, the post says sarcastically, "I cannot believe it has crept up on me again. Today, I discovered it`s Holocaust Memorial Day and I`m fresh out of onions." The implication is how am I going to force myself to pretend to cry over the Holocaust which may or may not have happened? Yes.

This is Alternative Right. This is the guy who fought with Randy Scheunemann on the ski lift in Montana and who the town of Whitefish, Montana, is now freaking out about him running his white supremacist business out of their town.

Another person who has written at Richard Spencer`s Alternative Right is this guy. His name is Jason Richwine. You see the post is called model minority? This is Jason Richwine`s posts at Alternative Right.

This one happens to be about how Hispanics are inherently disposed to criminal behavior. He argues in this post that you can statistically control for all other factors and you still end up with this racial innate truth that Hispanics are just more criminally minded than white people are.

This is Jason Richwine. He also does this pseudo academic white supremacist stuff in other places. He wrote a doctoral dissertation called "IQ and Immigration Policy", at Harvard in which he tried to make the academic case that non-white people are just genetically inferior when it comes to intelligence. And therefore, he argued, immigration policy should basically be managed to keep America as white as possible if we know what`s good for us.

Quote, "The average IQ of immigrants in the United States is substantially lower than that of the white native population. And the difference is likely to persist over several generations." Quote, "No one knows whether Hispanics will reach IQ parity with whites, but the prediction that new Hispanic immigrants will have low IQ children and grandchildren is difficult to argue against."

Then, he goes on to Richard Spencer`s Alternative Right and explains how Hispanics are inherently criminal, then in his career somehow he crosses over into supposedly respectable right wing thing tank land and he continues making the same case.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JASON RICHWINE, AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE: Race is different in all sorts of ways. Probably the most important way is in IQ. Decades of psychometric testing has indicated that at least in America, you have Jews with the highest average IQ usually followed by East Asian, and then you have non-Jewish whites, Hispanics and then black Americans. These are real differences. They`re not going to go away tomorrow. And for that reason, we have to address them in our immigration discussions and our debates.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MADDOW: You can just rank the races by intelligence. Black people and Hispanic people are just inherently stupid -- inherently stupider than white people, at least. This is just the facts. These are real differences.

Generation to generation to generation, it`s never going to go away. It`s racially inherent. So, you ought to think about that when devising your immigration policy. Think about race because you want to make sure that you don`t have -- it`s disgusting, right?

In the 2012 election, Republicans did poorly. President Obama got re- elected, Democrats picked up seats in the House and Senate.

One of the Republican senators who was not up for re-election that year in 2012 but who was still seemed to be a very safe seat and a probably former leader in his party, was Senator Jim DeMint of South Carolina. Right after the 2012 election, Jim DeMint of South Carolina surprised everyone by quitting the United States Senate. He quit right in the middle of his second term because he said, instead he had wanted to go run the Heritage Foundation. Screw this Senate thing. I want real power.

You might remember after the 2012 losses for the Republican Party, they did an autopsy report where they decided that the party should reach out to more minorities and even though the people who wrote the autopsy report were not supposed to consider any specific policy measures, they said they couldn`t resist, they unanimously recommended that the Republican Party endorse and champion immigration reform.

Jim DeMint said to heck with that, he quit the party and went to run the Heritage Foundation, which he then turned into the main conservative institution fighting against that, fighting against immigration reform and specifically taking on the mission of making sure that no elected Republicans would actually support immigration reform. He would not only draw the line, he would hold the line.

And to start that process once he was in his new job, Jim DeMint hired good Old Jason Richwine as a senior policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation, and got Jason Richwine to be one of the two authors on this Heritage Foundation report on why it would be a terrible thing, a fiscally disastrous thing for America to reform immigration law. Jason Richwine, the guy who posted the white supremacist Web sites, who says you can rank groups according to their IQ. Black and brown are inherently criminal and they`re at the bottom racially speaking when it comes to intelligence.

Jim DeMint had him look at what immigration reform would mean for our country. And it turns out, when Jason Richwine looks at something like that, he thinks it`s a bad idea. Jason Richwine decided that immigration reform would be very expensive for our nation.

He crunched the numbers and decided that it would cost the American taxpayers $6.3 trillion. Trillion. Trill -- 6 point -- it would be the cost of going to the moon and back a thousand times. That`s what his calculating machine says when he was asked to calculate the cost. That said, his calculating machine was built in a beer hall in Bavaria in 1923, so maybe it doesn`t count that well anymore.

Thanks to reporting first at "The Washington Post," then some other places, it pretty quickly came out that Jason Richwine, this guy who the Heritage Foundation had hired to write this report, had a long history of white supremacist writings.

And when that all came out, Heritage did not fire him. They allowed him to quietly resign.

It was an interesting thing sort of in terms of the history of all this. I`m not sure it seemed all that important at the time but now, it seems important. They never rescinded the Jason Richwine report. This is still the Heritage Foundation`s official analysis of immigration reform in America and what it would cost based on Jason Richwine`s eugenicist methodology. And, of course, it suggests that the reason it would be so costly is immigration reform is because immigrants are a terribly costly thing to our nation because they`re inherently racially interior to white people and they`d never contribute economically to this country because they`re essentially, you know, sort of subhuman, at least sub-white. They`ll always be economic parasites because, you know, brown.

That is the Heritage Foundation position on immigration reform. They never rescinded that report. They never fired the guy either. He did resign.

And the Heritage Foundation is implacably opposed to any immigration reform because of what they think of immigrants. And the Heritage Foundation has won the argument with the Republican Party on this. You remember after 2012, the Republican Party was going to embrace officially, was going to embrace and champion immigration reform.

There are now only two years later no Republicans in positions of power in national politics who are in favor of immigration reform. Jim DeMint has won on that.

And now, that President Obama has today announced that he will move forward on his own to reform as much of the immigration form as he can without Congress, now that President Obama has today announced that tomorrow night, in a primetime address, he will announce and describe and make the case for those policy changes, now, Jim DeMint and his group no longer have to fight to try to hold Republicans in line in terms of being against immigration reform. They`ve already done that. They`ve already won that fight with the Republican.

Now what they have to do is lead Republican strategy for how to fight President Obama who is going to do this. And what they decided they want is a government shutdown. No blank check for amnesty.

A lame duck Congress has to pass legislation by three weeks from today in order to keep the government open, keep the government funded.

Jim DeMint and Heritage say the government should not be funded unless the president is also blocked from taking executive action. And they know what they`re doing here in terms of this as a tactic. The last time we got a government shutdown was this time last year. It was because of Jim DeMint and the Heritage Foundation. It`s because they -- they really made it happen.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: The Heritage Action to defund Obamacare town hall is in full swing. So far, it`s getting massive turnouts everywhere it pops up. The guy behind all this and the nationwide tour, the president of the Heritage Foundation, the former senator, Jim DeMint.

JIM DEMINT, HERITAGE FOUNDATION: So, Heritage Action, we`re going to be doing dozens of town halls around the country. And I`m convinced, the more Americans know about Obamacare, the more they`re going to stand with those of us who want to stop it.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MADDOW: Who want to stop it magically by shutting down the government.

You might remember this from the last shutdown. The Heritage Foundation even did stuff like basically movie trailers to try to build a national movement to support the shutdown effort.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DEMINT: But if Obama would not accept a funding bill for the government that fully funds the government because it didn`t have his failed law in it, then he would be shutting down the government. And that`s a case we`re going to take to the American people.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MADDOW: The fight against Obamacare. It`s not over.

You might remember during the 16-day shutdown, the last one we had, remember, they would hold these votes, these periodic votes about whether or they should reopen the government. Heritage Foundation was whipping those votes. Look, key vote, telling Republicans they`d be rated on their Heritage Foundation scorecard as to whether or not they defied Jim DeMint and the Heritage Foundation and voted to reopen the government.

Heritage Foundation was giving the Republicans orders -- vote no when you have a chance to reopen the government. And they kept the government shut for 15 days.

Most of the time, the Republicans did just vote no, sometimes instead, they would out of fear cancel the vote. Look at this. Quote, "FOX News is told that a decision by Heritage Action to come out against the emerging bill drove some Republicans to oppose the plan and help therefore helped sideline the proposal." Heritage said we shouldn`t do it so we stopped trying to do it.

We got a 16-day government shutdown last year because Jim DeMint and Heritage said they wanted it.

(BEGIN AUDIO CLIP)

SEN. JOHNNY ISAKSON (R), GEORGIA: Quite frankly, Heritage Action came out against any compromise and the Republicans could not come together.

(END AUDIO CLIP)

MADDOW: Heritage Foundation and Jim DeMint are the people who organized the last government shutdown. And Republican leadership said they didn`t want a shutdown then either. Right?

Back a year ago the Republican leadership was like, we don`t want a shutdown. Of course we`re not going to shut down the government. This is the last thing they want.

Same way they`re saying now, they don`t want another shutdown. But you know what? Last time around, these kooky guys on the ski lift made them do it. Won the fight. Got to metaphorically stay in the private ski club, the kooky guys did, not the establishment guys did.

And now, the Heritage Action folks, the Jim DeMint side of the fight, they are trying to make Republicans do it again. Even as Republicans say they don`t want to, they`re trying to force them to.

This is Heritage now telling Republicans that they should fight immigration reform the same way they fought Obamacare this time last year. Shut down the government. No blank check for amnesty. Don`t fund the government. Shut it down over President Obama`s immigration actions.

Republican leadership, John Boehner, Mitch McConnell, almost all the rest of the leadership, is out explicitly saying, we don`t want a shutdown -- just like they said this time last year. They had Hal Rogers, who`s the chair of the appropriations committee in the House, come forward and say, he thinks he has a plan. He`s come up with a way to defund just the parts of the government that specifically relate to what President Obama about to announce on immigration. You could keep just defund those small parts of the government but keep the rest of the government open and running.

Today, the Heritage Foundation laid down the marker on that and said, oh, no, Republicans, that`s not good enough. Nothing short of a full shutdown is good enough. They said this rescission policy that Hal Rogers has come up with, that, too, would be a blank check for amnesty.

So, this time last year, the Republican establishment fought the crazy shutdown people and the crazy shutdown people won and we got a government shutdown. That was over Obamacare.

Now, the fight is over immigration reform, but it is still the fight between the same Republican leadership and the same crazy shutdown people. And the crazy shutdown people this time on this issue are really crazy, I mean, to the point of publishing reports about immigration reform that come with their own pointy little white hat that has eye holes in it.

Jim DeMint and the shutdown chorus on the substance of this, on the policy on immigration, they are really, really, really out there, on the get deported from Budapest eugenicist fringe.

That alone should make them less powerful on this issue. And the Republican establishment is supposed to have more leverage now against this kinds of guys, since they have increased the size of their majorities in both the House and increase their numbers in the Senate, enough to take over.

But you know what? Every time recently when we have seen the kook fringe and the establishment fight each other on the right, every time we`ve seen Randy Scheunemann and the white supremacist guy fighting on the ski lift, it has been the kook guy who has won the fight.

Is the Republican establishment now stronger, so they`ll be able to stand up to these guys this time? Are we going to have a government shutdown from the Republicans in reaction to what Obama is going to announce tomorrow night, two weeks since the election, three weeks until a shutdown? Ultimately, who is going to call the shots here? Who is running this place?

Watch this space.

MADDOW: One the even of his big announcement about immigration reform tomorrow night, President Obama tonight invited 18 Democrats from Congress to come to the White House for dinner and for a conversation about that plan that he`s about to unveil.

Among the lawmakers there tonight was Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico. Congressman **Lujan** has just been named the new chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, DCCC, which means it will be his job over the next two years to oversee the effort by Democrats to win back control of the House.

Congressman **Lujan** joins us live from the White House, having stepped out from this meeting.

Congressman, thanks for braving the cold for us. I appreciate you being here.

REP. BEN RAY LUHAN (D), NEW MEXICO: Rachel, it`s a pleasure to be with you here. It`s not too cold out.

MADDOW: Oh, good. Actually, I was going to say, you don`t look -- you`re not chattering your teeth yet, so I don`t feel guilty yet.

So, what can you tell us? What can you -- what beans can you spill about what you`ve learned about the president`s announcement for tomorrow?

LUJAN: What we learned tonight is an important briefing about the actions that the president will be taking with comprehensive immigration reform -- you know, actions that were taken by presidents since Eisenhower, presidents like Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush who took action to keep families together. At the time, George H.W. Bush took action, it kept 40 percent of those who were undocumented together.

And what the president laid out was a very clear plan. It`s going to be bold, but it`s going to be tough. It`s accountability, paying taxes, background checks, getting line. You know, contrary to what Republicans are saying, I think Marco Rubio said it best when he said that the environment that we have today is de facto amnesty.

What the president is doing is not amnesty. It`s accountability.

MADDOW: In terms of what the White House and what you guys are expecting from the Republicans, does the White House and do you guys in Congress on the Democratic side have any expectation of what Republicans are going to try to do to stop this and what the sort of counterstrategy is going to be from the Democratic side?

LUJAN: Well, this is the first step. And the president`s taken an important step, but it`s the first step. I hope that House Republicans use the rest of this year to move comprehensive immigration reform because it`s House Republicans that have been stalling this bill for 510 days. Republicans have a chance to act. But sadly, we`re hearing more and more talk from Republicans about a government shutdown.

And I`m certainly hopeful they`re listening to the American people because the American people do not want the government shut down.

MADDOW: You have an important new job in Democratic politics. You`re going to be in charge of maximizing the number of House seats for Democrats in the next election. Thinking with that sort of

electoral hat on, I have to ask you, if you think that it would have been a better political move for the White House to do this before this last election, anybody who might have been protected by the president not acting in a pro-immigrant way, it seems like they lost anyway.

Should this have happened earlier? Could it have been politically helpful for Democrats?

LUJAN: Well, you know, House Republicans would constantly say the president should or should not act. And they turned this into a political fight.

This is about keeping families together. I`m certainly hopeful that we can talk about that more going forward as opposed to what the political and the politics that Republicans were throwing at us on this.

Look, Rachel, it`s important that the president take this action but even more important that House Republicans move forward and get something passed. We have a few days left and we need to get it passed. But in the end, I think the American people are going to watch closely and they`re going to see who is for them and who is against them.

MADDOW: Congressman Ben **Lujan** of New Mexico, thanks very much for talking with us about this. And congratulations on your new gig, sir.

LUJAN: Thank you, Rachel. Look forward to talking to you again.

MADDOW: Indeed, thanks.

All right. Much more to come on this busy news night, including a best new thing in the world that people that work on this show have been begging for, for three years now. Three years they`ve been asking for this. They`re finally getting it. It`s a good one.

Please stay with us tonight.

MADDOW: This morning, the incoming class of House freshmen held their office space lottery. New members all lined up, they drew a number to assign first dibs on office space in the new Congress come January when they`ll all be sworn in. The lower the number, the better your pick of office space.

Now, there is a superstition apparently about this lottery. The superstition is that incoming members of Congress in the past who performed some kind of stunt before drawing their lottery number, thereby increased their luck. So, that`s the superstition. That`s the back story.

This morning congresswoman to be Gwen Graham`s name was called, then this happened.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Ready?

(CHEERS)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Ms. Graham has drawn number six.

(CHEERS)

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MADDOW: Brand-new Florida Democratic Congresswoman Gwen Graham`s staffer busts a full-on back flip, the stunt, and then she pulls a six, which is a really good number. So, she`ll get a really great office. And presumably, she`ll get bonus points of some kind for the staffer doing the back flip wearing slacks and dress shoes.

But I have to tell you, as awesome as that is, that is not the best new thing in the world today. We have something that nosed that out for best new thing. I swear, it`s even better.

Stay with us.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I am a DREAMer and I live in fear that my mother will be deported. President Obama, will you include her in your administration relief? Will you include my mother?

BARACK OBAMA, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: Hold on. Hold on. Hold on. Hold on.

You`re a DREAMer, and I gave you relief administratively and we`re going the work on the next one. The Republicans are blocking immigration reform.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HAYES: That was taken two days before Election Day. It was shot by a group called United We Dream.

United We Dream is one of the more active voices on the immigration reform movement. And by active, I mean directly active.

For months, direct action immigration activists have been pushing hard for reform even after Republicans in the House dropped the ball on immigration reform as legislation earlier this year, even though President Obama has been their ally on the substantive need for immigration reform and House Republicans were the ones that blocked it, United We Dream and other activist groups made a decision to keep their pressure focused on President Obama.

Congressional Republicans never did act, but tomorrow night, the president will make his official announcement of his plan to reform the immigration system by executive action.

So, how does that feel to the folks who have been pushing President Obama on this for months and months and months now? He`s been saying he agrees but they`ve been pushing and pushing and pushing. Now, that it`s actually going to happen, how`s that feel to them?

Joining us now is Cristina Jimenez. She`s an immigration reform advocate. She`s co-founder of United We Dream.

Ms. Jimenez, thanks very much for being here.

CRISTINA JIMENEZ, UNITED WE DREAM: Thanks for having me.

MADDOW: I feel like saying congratulations on what`s about to happen, but I guess I should ask if you feel vindicated, if you feel like what the president`s about to do is in part a reaction to the pressure you guys put on him?

JIMENEZ: Definitely. I think for us, Rachel, this is the result of months and years of organizing, of advocating, of the courage of people who are undocumented, directly affected by immigration laws who have come out, shared their stories, like myself, like my parents and many who have organized across the country.

Really, the announcement that is planned for tomorrow is the result of all of that work for many years, not only of young people but all of our communities. So, it is a victory to see that all of our effort has led the president to take this decision. Certainly, not everything we had hoped for and we have advocated for but it`s something we`re proud of to see how undocumented communities have pushed for this happen.

MADDOW: In terms of that decision, obviously, it`s a statement in itself to have people who are legally vulnerable because they`re undocumented, because they have undocumented family members, to see people put themselves in a position of both naming themselves, coming out, putting themselves in a position where they could be arrested, that is a brave thing to do and it`s a statement in itself.

There`s also the strategic decision to go not just be on that comfort level, but to also really target President Obama who all the while said he agreed with you.

How -- how did you arrive at that decision and why did you know that would pay off? Why not spend all of this time -- I know you protested people like John Boehner, too. But why not put all your pressure on the Republicans?

JIMENEZ: Rachel, you know, actions are louder than words. And we have realized that this discussion and this debate about immigration has been a political football for both parties. And it`s not until today that we actually see some actual action behind the words.

And so, you know, we had been advocating for legislation to happen. Ultimately, we know that it is going to be a permanent legislation that allows our communities and people like me to become citizens, one day because we`re eager to be part of the fabric of society.

We`re already part of it. We want to contribute. And that`s been the goal. But it was very clear from Republicans that they were just not on board.

MADDOW: Yes.

JIMENEZ: They blocked immigration reform. The Senate passed a bipartisan bill last year, and, you know, Speaker Boehner and the rest of the GOP in the House did not move the bill.

So, for us, when we look at our work in 2013, we said we don`t see Republicans moving. We have to strategically visit shift our efforts and get the president to do what he has legal authority for.

MADDOW: That`s interesting.

So, you saw the Republicans as a brick wall that really wasn`t -- at least after the Senate, after the House Republicans decided they weren`t going to move, they were a brick wall that wasn`t worth pushing your heads on. Instead, push for where you might get a response.

JIMENEZ: Because we are having -- over 1,000 deportations happening every day. Under President Obama, more than 2 million people have been deported. That was the pain, that was the urgency of our community.

We could not wait to be a political football between the two parties. So, we decided to focus on the president. And we`ve now gotten him to the point that he`s going to make an announcement that will benefit families.

And, you know, Rachel, it would be a bittersweet moment for us, because there`s going to be many DREAMers, immigrant youth across the country, and families that will now benefit from the program.

MADDOW: Oh, it will certainly be a limited action. I mean, by necessity in some parts and also by choice. I mean, there will only be a solution when Congress can pass something.

And if Congress does pass something, literally legislation that passes through both houses and gets to a president`s desk to sign, I have a real feeling the reason that will happen is because of you guys. You guys are one of the most effective direct action groups I`ve ever seen in my lifetime.

So, congratulations on your work. I know you really wanted this.

JIMENEZ: Thank you so much, Rachel, and the work keeps going.

MADDOW: Yes, Cristina Jimenez is co-founder of United We Dream. We`ll be right back.

Stay with us.

MADDOW: So, the new NBC poll, the new NBC/"Wall Street Journal" poll that came out. If this poll were a medical test, the resulting diagnosis would be schizophrenia. I mean, no offense to schizophrenia.

Look at this. Do you favor the basic idea of reforming the immigration system? Do you favor a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants? The answer, yes, 57 percent of the country favors that.

OK. How about if we achieve that goal the way President Obama says he wants to? Do you favor a pathway for undocumented immigrants that also requires them to pay a fine and any back taxes and to pass a background check, like the president want? Do you want that?

The answer: yes, with an exclamation point -- 74 percent yes. We love that idea. As a nation, we love what the president wants to do to reform immigration policy. Great. That seems very simple.

Now that the president is going to act on immigration policy, let`s ask about that. Do you favor what the president is about to do? No.

No. We love this policy. We hate this policy. How dare this president does what we want?

Here`s my other favorite. They asked people what the newly elected Congress should do in Washington. What do you want them to do?

And this is the list of ranked policies -- policies ranked in terms of what people want the new Congress to do. Look at the top five. The top five most popular policies the American people want this Congress to pursue are: number one, lowering the cost of student loans, also increase spending on infrastructure, raising the federal minimum wage, approving more money to fight Ebola, and limiting carbon emissions to fight climate change.

Those are the five most popular policies on the whole list of things that Congress should do. The top five are all things that the Republicans who were just elected to lead the Congress are adamantly opposed to.

So, as a nation, we just elected a Congress that has pledged to fight tooth and nail against the policies that we most want to see enacted.

And here`s the best part. When asked are you happy with what you just did, are you happy with electing this new majority that`s pledging to stand against everything you want, does that seem like a good thing? The answer is yes. Yes, very happy with the result of the election.

So, Americans want very specific things for the country. And we`re also delighted to elect the people who will stop the country from getting those things.

It`s almost like people don`t really know what`s going on in politics. Or they don`t really know what decisions are being made and by whom in Washington. It`s almost like the public isn`t that well-informed about who wants what, what`s going on with policy and politics that even on issues that they say they care about. It`s almost like we don`t know.

In totally unrelated news, did you see that none of the broadcast networks are planning on carrying the president`s speech tomorrow night, on this big change on immigration policy? None of them. This thing that everybody has been freaking out about for the last two years, the biggest thing brewing in

American politics for a mile, NBC is not going to carry the speech, CBS isn`t carrying it, ABC isn`t carrying it.

We`ll carry it. We`re going to have a special coverage of the president`s prime time address starting at 7:45 Eastern Time tomorrow night. I`ll be anchoring it with Chris Hayes and lots of other folks.

But if you didn`t want to watch us and you wanted to watch on the really low numbers on your cable box, they`ll be doing, you know, game shows and reality shows and stuff instead. No network coverage of the address tomorrow.

And that does happen. I mean, networks do occasionally give a president the one-finger salute. Less than three weeks before the midterms in 1982, the RNC tried to buy a big block of primetime national TV time for President Reagan to give a campaign speech. The networks in 1982 said no to that.

So, then the Reagan White House said, OK, the president won`t give a campaign speech. Instead he`ll give a nonpartisan address on the economy. NBC and CBS went ahead and aired that but ABC said no that year. ABC stations chose instead to run shows like "Entertainment Tonight" and "PM Magazine."

That wasn`t the only time that President Reagan got blanked on TV. One of the things, it`s interesting, when you read the Reagan diaries, one of the things that President Reagan said frustrated him, than anything else when he was president, was that he couldn`t get the public to agree with his position on Nicaragua. He really wanted to get involved in that civil war. He wanted to arm the rebels, trying to overthrow the government. And Congress said no to that. Ultimately he ended up doing it secretly and illegally and getting caught for it.

But he was frustrated about that. He knew he was a great communicator. He believed he could move the country to his way of thinking on almost anything but on this issue of Nicaragua, which was really important to him, no matter how much he talked about it, the country hated the idea.

Well, twice during his presidency in 1986 and again in 1988, the Reagan White House scheduled national primetime TV addresses for the president to talk about how much he wanted to arm the Contras in Nicaragua, both times the networks all refused to air that Reagan speech.

In 1987, President Reagan asked for time to give another primetime speech about his disastrous Supreme Court nomination of Robert Bork. The networks also said no to that speech.

Under Poppy Bush for the first time, the networks stopped carrying all presidential conferences as a matter of course. In 1992, when Poppy Bush was on his way to losing his re-election effort, the networks all said no for the first time ever to covering a presidential press conference because what President Bush was going to do was basically hold a campaign event and they felt they had no obligation to defer to him on that. Well, in that election, of course, Bill Clinton beat Poppy Bush to become president, but then once he was president, Bill Clinton paid the price for that precedent having been set that now sometimes networks wouldn`t cover presidential press conferences and appearances.

In 1993, and again in 1995, President Clinton wanted to do big, you know, saturation coverage televised presidential press conferences, one on his economic plan, one on the issue of welfare reform. Both times almost all the networks said no to carrying that.

For our current president, as recently as April, the networks said no to a White House request for air time so President Obama could talk about the success of sign-ups for Obamacare. Liberals lament that the success for Obamacare, 7 million people signing up for insurance in the first rollout of Obamacare, people lament that that go so much less coverage than the various troubles with the Web site and all the other glitches. Well, part of the reason why is that when President Obama wanted a big primetime platform to do a formal major address proclaiming the success of the new law, the networks all said no, and instead chose to air "NCIS" and "The Voice" and "Marvels: Agents of Shield."

Well, now tomorrow night again, the networks are saying that they have way more important things to do than show President Obama`s speech. Unlike some of those other times that I justice mentioned, President Obama is going to go ahead and give the speech in primetime anyway. It won`t be on the networks. But we`ll see it here when he does it.

We`ll be right back.

MADDOW: OK, best new thing in the world today starts with a prank. You probably heard about this week, there`s a small town in Germany which played a role in Nazi history that it`s still living down to this day, basically one of the top Nazis who served Hitler was once buried in this little town. Enough said about that.

But because of that history, neo-Nazis in Germany like to gather in this town to march in honor of the dead Nazi. And the town does not honor the dead Nazi. The town is not neo-Nazi. And, frankly, lots of regular people who live in that town are sick of the neo-Nazi showing up there to march every year.

So, you may have seen this, this week. This year, they transformed the march which is supposed to support the neo-Nazi cause into its opposite. As the neo-Nazis marched through the town, they started to see weird signs like this one who said if the furor only knew. They didn`t knew why, but along the road of the march, there were these messages painted on the ground in the intervals that said things like, "thank you for raising 5,000 euros."

And the Nazis did not know it before they showed up for this march, but as they marched, I think it started to dawn on them at some point, at least the brighter among them, that they had inadvertently been tricked to participating in a walk-a-thon, for every meter they walked along the march route, they were raising money for something.

The payoff came at the end when they learned that their march for the neo-Nazi cause, in honor of a dead Nazi, had actually been turned into a fundraiser for an anti-Nazi group, for a group that exists to persuade neo- Nazis to defect and escape from that life.

The neo-Nazi marchers had advertently been tricked into raising 10,000 euros, about 12,000 bucks, for a group called Exit Deutschland, which is a great prank and a very satisfying story and that`s why it got worldwide coverage this week.

But here`s the thing. This isn`t the first time that Exit Deutschland, this group that helps people stop being Nazis, it`s not the first time they have turned something pro-Nazi into its opposite.

Three years ago, when I had roughly the same haircut and definitely the same jacket, we first reported on another cool version of this same idea.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MADDOW: About 600 white supremacist skinheads turned up to Nazi rockout to bands like Radical and Burning Hate. The first 250 skinheads to show up to the racist concert got this free t-shirt. It says in German, hardcore rebels, national and free.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MADDOW: Is that ringing a bell? Free t-shirt with a neo-Nazi message handed out at a skinhead concert. The idea was you would take the t-shirt home, wear it around and hopefully you Nazi scumbag, you`d eventually wash that t-shirt and when you did wash that t-shirt, the pro-Nazi design would wash off to reveal a completely different message. And also contact information for how to get out of the neo-Nazi life.

So, this is what happens when you wash it. We actually got one of the shirts and it has been sitting around in our offices since 2011, just waiting for us to have an excuse for us to wash it and see if it

works. And honestly, and three years is a long time to have a potentially inflammatory neo-Nazi propaganda sitting around in our cubicle farm for just anybody to find and deeply misunderstand.

So, today, we put our offensive t-shirt on producer Nick Tutz (ph), who is a very good sport and is in no way sympathetic to neo-Nazism. Then we had Nick take off the shirt and throw it in the wash to see what would happen.

For the record, we also do not ordinarily ask Nick to do our laundry. But as I said, he`s a very good sport. But the result is, it worked. The original message is gone. Now it says in German, what your shirt can do, you can do also. In other words, your shirt can change to stop being pro Nazi, and so can you. It says below it in small print, it says, you know, call this number basically to get help, tells the shirt owner where to go if they want help getting away from their neo-Nazi friends.

Exit Deutschland tells us since they started this t-shirt campaign three years ago, we broke that story three years ago, since them, they say the number of people who have contacted them to try to get out of the scene has tripled.

And now, this new march prank, the accidental walk-a-thon, which has become an international hit, as far as news stories go, this will bring them some more money and possibly more candidates for their services.

So, from pro-Nazi march to anti-Nazi walkathon and far hard core Nazi t-shirt, to helpful and unexpectedly practical help in stopping being a Nazi, it`s all very smart.

But you know what, it`s the fact that we finally washed the damn t- shirt and it doesn`t live on producer Tricia McKinney`s (ph) desk skiving everybody out anymore, that honestly is the best new thing in the world today. Our office now has 100 percent less of what appeared to be Nazi regalia. Yay! I`m sorry, it took us three years to get rid of that.

But that does it for us. We`ll see you again tomorrow.

Now, it`s time for "THE LAST WORD WITH LAWRENCE O`DONNELL".

Good evening, Lawrence.

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

LOAD-DATE: November 20, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

TRANSCRIPT: 111901cb.471

DOCUMENT-TYPE: SHOW

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Transcript

Copyright 2014 CQ-Roll Call, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Copyright 2014 MSNBC
All Rights Reserved

National Public Radio

November 19, 2014 Wednesday

SHOW: Morning Edition 11:00 AM EST

House Leadership Ranks Remain Mostly Stagnant For Democrats

ANCHORS: Juana Summers

GUESTS: Nancy Pelosi, Marcia Fudge, **Ben Ray Lujan**, Eric Swallwell

LENGTH: 546 words

RENEE MONTAGNE: Also on the Hill yesterday, House Democrats re-elected their top leadership. Nancy Pelosi will continue as minority leader, but as NPR's Juana Summers reports from Capitol Hill, there are rumblings among Democrats that Pelosi is not doing enough to promote younger members.

JUANA SUMMERS: Seventy-four. That's the average age of the top three members of House Democratic leadership. We're talking about Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, Congressman Steny Hoyer and Congressman Jim Clyburn. Now, take the same three positions - just switch the party to Republican. The average drops by 20 years to 54. And it's not just the Democratic leaders who are older. It's the whole conference. By and large, House Republicans are younger than Democrats. And the Democratic leadership has barely changed in the last decade. When asked if it was time for a change, here's how Pelosi responded.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

NANCY PELOSI: What was the day that any of you said to Mitch McConnell when they lost the Senate three times in a row, aren't you getting a little old, Mitch? Shouldn't you step aside? Have you ever asked him that question?

JUANA SUMMERS: Questions about Pelosi's leadership continue on Capitol Hill. While Pelosi was a big fundraiser for her fellow Democrats, some have question Democrats' messaging in the run-up to the election. Congresswoman Marcia Fudge is the outgoing chair of the Congressional Black Caucus.

MARCIA FUDGE: Our caucus is very disenchanted and disappointed. I mean, why would we not be? We've lost three straight elections in large numbers. And so, obviously, you know, we're going to be upset. And for those people who say they're not, they're not being honest.

JUANA SUMMERS: Perhaps recognizing the growing pressure to present a more youthful face, Pelosi made an unexpected pick to join party leadership. That's **Ben Ray Lujan**, a 42-year-old Hispanic lawmaker from New Mexico. Here's how Pelosi described him.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

NANCY PELOSI: A dynamic and forward-looking leader with a fresh energy and ideas House Democrats need for victory in 2016.

JUANA SUMMERS: As head of the DCCC, **Lujan's** first job will be recruiting new Democratic candidates. I asked whether or not he worried about the party's talent pool and whether there were paths to leadership available for young up-and-comers. Here's what he had to say.

BEN RAY LUJAN: I think we have some incredible young members, young candidates and incredible energy with the youth all across the country. And I think that only leads to more opportunities. We need to make sure we're getting more young people that are eager to serve in public office.

JUANA SUMMERS: Congressman Eric Swallwell is 34 years old and represents California. Like many young Democrats, he pointed to **Lujan** as evidence the party isn't going gray.

ERIC SWALLWELL: I think he represents the next generation of leaders in the Congress, and so I think his ability to use that to go out and recruit candidates across the country is going to be of great value to our party.

JUANA SUMMERS: But for now, there's no change at the top. Come January, Pelosi will kick off her seventh term as Democratic leader - five of those in the minority. Juana Summers, NPR News, the Capitol.

LOAD-DATE: November 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Transcript

Copyright 2014 National Public Radio (R)
All Rights Reserved

382 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

November 18, 2014 Tuesday

Rep. Ben Ray Luján appointed head of DCCC; NM representative 2nd Latino in post

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C1

LENGTH: 476 words

WASHINGTON - Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, a New Mexico Democrat, saw his national political profile elevated dramatically Monday when House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi made a surprise announcement naming him chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

In his new role, **Luján** will take control of the U.S. House Democrats' election strategy and become a key member of the House Democratic leadership structure. The announcement came as a shock on Capitol Hill, as several more senior members' names had been floated for the position. **Luján** will become just the second Latino to hold the post. Former Rep. Tony Coelho of California headed the committee in the 1980s.

"I am pleased to recommend to our colleagues **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico, a dynamic and forward-looking leader with a fresh energy and ideas that Democrats need for victory in 2016," Pelosi

said at a Capitol Hill news conference. "He has bold vision and determined leadership to deliver wins in difficult districts. I am confident (**Luján**) will prove a tireless champion."

A beaming **Luján** - son of the late New Mexico House Speaker Ben **Lujan** - apologized for being tardy to the news conference, saying he couldn't get off the phone with his "mama," who was "joyous" about the news.

"It got a little emotional," **Luján** told the Journal afterward, saying his mother told him his late father would have been proud of him. "We shared some tears and shared some laughs."

While the DCCC chairmanship is a high-profile, plum assignment for **Luján**, he faces a steep climb heading into the 2016 political cycle. House Democrats were drubbed in elections this month and Republicans now control both chambers of Congress. Democrats would have to pick up about 30 seats to capture control of the House.

At the news conference, **Luján** said he was up to the challenge.

While Democrats were congratulating **Luján**, officials at the National Republican Congressional Committee appeared pleased with the selection, as well - but for different reasons. Ian Prior, spokesman for the NRCC, said **Luján** is among the most liberal members of the House and his politics will fall flat with many Americans.

Larry Sabato, chairman of the Center for Politics at the University of Virginia and one of the nation's best handicappers of House and Senate races, said **Luján** - while a surprise pick - has some qualities that can be helpful to the Democrats. Sabato also said he has his work cut out for him.

"**Luján** is a Westerner, Hispanic, and young and energetic," Sabato said. "That last quality will be critical as he attempts to climb Mount Everest and somehow restore Democrats to the House majority."

Luján has proved a popular member of the Democratic House caucus and most recently served as vice chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. **Lujan's** Democratic congressional colleagues from New Mexico praised his appointment.

LOAD-DATE: November 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: **LUJÁN:** Surprise appointment

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Congressional Quarterly News

November 18, 2014 Tuesday

New DCCC Chairman Eyes Current Executive Director

BYLINE: By Emily Cahn and Emma Dumain

LENGTH: 360 words

Incoming Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Chairman **Ben Ray Luján** said Tuesday he hopes the current Executive Director, Kelly Ward, will stay on for the 2016 cycle.

House Democrats endured sweeping losses in 2014, but Ward earned top praise from **Luján**, who said she is respected by the caucus.

"I have tremendous respect for Kelly Ward," **Luján** told CQ Roll Call in a Tuesday interview. "It's been an honor working with her throughout the years, getting to know her, she reaches out to members, she respects members, and I think she's incredible. So someone like Kelly, if not Kelly herself is someone that I hope that we would serve."

Ward just finished her third cycle at the committee. She served as incumbent retention director toward the end of 2010. In 2012, she was promoted to political director. DCCC Chairman Steve Israel asked Ward to serve as executive director in 2014.

If Ward is offered and accepts the executive director role, she will again start the Hurculean task of winning the majority for House Democrats.

In 2014, Republicans netted at least 12 seats, with a few races still too close to call. That puts Democrats even further into the minority.

The 2016 cycle is slated to be a better political environment for Democrats. But with the large number losses, it will be difficult for Democrats to regain control of the chamber before the next redistricting round after 2020.

Ward was non-committal when asked whether she is open to another cycle as executive director.

"I'm honored by Chairman **Luján's** confidence and faith, especially because he will be such an impressive leader in his new role," Ward said in a statement via a DCCC spokeswoman.

Related:

Democrats Re-Elect Pelosi, Leadership Team for 114th Congress

Pelosi Chooses **Ben Ray Luján** as DCCC Chairman (Updated)

Unsuccessful House Candidate Already 'In' for 2016

Democrats Eyeing 5 House Race Rematches in 2016

Exclusive: NRCC Chairman Reveals Top Targets for 2016

Roll Call Results Map: Results and District Profiles for Every Seat

Get breaking news alerts and more from Roll Call in your inbox or on your iPhone.

Source: CQ News
©2014 Congressional Quarterly Inc. All Rights Reserved.

LOAD-DATE: November 20, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: NEWSLETTERS

Copyright 2014 CQ-Roll Call, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Environment and Energy Daily

November 18, 2014 Tuesday

CAMPAIGN 2016: To pick up seats, Dems put their faith in lawmakers from the Mountain West

SECTION: POLITICS Vol. 10 No. 9

LENGTH: 736 words

Jennifer Yachnin, E&E reporter

Democrats have slotted a pair of moderate lawmakers from the Mountain West to helm their 2016 congressional campaign committees, but there are likely no hidden messages -- like a new emphasis on energy development -- as the party consolidates power in the Mountain time zone.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) announced yesterday that she will choose Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D-N.M.) to be the next chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, while Senate leaders last week selected Sen. Jon Tester (D-Mont.) to helm the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee last week.

But while both lawmakers are regarded as moderates on energy policies, those views are unlikely to be reflected in competitive races as Democrats attempt to claw back seats lost in the 2014 midterm cycle. In an interview with E&E Daily, Tester suggested that his own voting record is likely to have little impact as Democrats defend incumbents in 10 states and look to poach from the two dozen Republican seats in play this cycle. "I don't know that it matters a heck of a lot, to be honest with you," said Tester, who serves on the Appropriations and Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs panels. "There's no cookie-cutter approach around campaigns. Everybody has to be able to run their own in their own state and be able to listen to their people and move forward." Geoffrey Skelley, associate editor of Larry Sabato's Crystal Ball at the University of Virginia's Center for Politics, said that while Democrats will look to retain gains in Western states like Nevada, Colorado and New Mexico in the presidential contest next cycle, that doesn't mean issues like energy production will necessarily dominate in congressional contests elsewhere. "If anything, it probably just means that those issues will get more attention simply because these individuals are in charge," Skelley said. "It's kind of chicken-and-egg: They got picked, and maybe this will be an end result, that those issues will get more attention." Skelley said that Pelosi's selection of **Luján** -- a move that surprised political observers, as five other lawmakers had publicly vied for the post -- is more notable because it marks the first time a Latino lawmaker will head the campaign committee. Sen. Robert Menendez (D-N.J.) led the DSCC in the 2010 election cycle.

In a statement announcing her pick, Pelosi called **Luján** "a dynamic and forward-looking leader with the fresh energy and ideas House Democrats need for victory in 2016." **Luján**, a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee and former chairman of the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission, has proved himself a decent fundraiser, typically bringing in more than $1 million in each of his campaigns. It's noteworthy that neither **Luján** nor Tester hails from a state that's considered a fundraising powerhouse. At age 42, **Luján** is likely one of the youngest people ever to

helm the DCCC. Then-Rep. Rahm Emanuel (D-Ill.) was 45 when he took over the committee at the start of the 2006 cycle. **Luján** is the son of the late New Mexico state House Speaker Ben **Luján** (D) -- and is a distant cousin to both Rep. Michelle **Luján** Grisham (D-N.M.) and former George H.W. Bush administration Interior Secretary Manuel **Luján**, who was a Republican member of Congress from Albuquerque.

But Scott Segal, a partner representing power companies, oil and gas, and manufacturing at the law firm Bracewell & Giuliani, suggested that Democrats are also trying to showcase their diversity in another way: by featuring more moderate lawmakers at the helm of both campaign committees. **Luján** will replace New York Rep. Steve Israel, while Tester will succeed Sen. Michael Bennet (D-Colo.). "Who is in charge of the campaign committees does not determine in any appreciable way the issue selection for the next congressional race," Segal said. "Those individuals were chosen to show the political diversity within the party, to put a more moderate, business-orientated face on the party's apparatus, particularly in light of the shellacking they took in the 2014 midterms." He added: "It seems clear to me that candidates that favor a more modest approach to the federal government were favored [in 2014], and I think you could say that the electorate that Mr.**Luján** serves and Mr. Tester serves are comfortable with a more modest federal government." Reporter Nick Juliano contributed.

LOAD-DATE: December 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Environment and Energy Publishing, LLC

385 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Gannett News Service

November 18, 2014 Tuesday

House Dems again tap Nancy Pelosi as their leader

BYLINE: Catalina Camia, USA TODAY

SECTION: Pg. ARC

LENGTH: 277 words

Catalina Camia, USA TODAY

WASHINGTON -- Nancy Pelosi was elected Tuesday to a new term as House minority leader, despite election losses by Democrats.

Pelosi, the first female speaker of the House, was unopposed and elected by voice vote as Democrats chose their leadership team for the next Congress.

House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer of Maryland was also expected to win another term as the No. 2 Democratic leader.

The new Congress to take office in January will have at least 244 Republicans and 186 Democrats. There are five House races that are too close to call or going to runoffs in December. Even without those undecided seats, Republicans will have their largest House majority since 1949, according to House records.

Pelosi, first elected in 1987, was nominated by Rep. Eric Swalwell, a fellow California Democrat, who hailed her as someone who listens and "builds consensus among our members."

She moved Monday to diversify the Democratic leadership with her selection of Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico, 42, to be chairman of the party's campaign committee. **Lujan** will be the first Hispanic to lead the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

"We're going to see a lot more Democrats get elected in 2016, and those numbers are going to surprise you," he said.

Lujan takes the place of Rep. Steve Israel of New York, who is staying in leadership in the new position of chairman of policy and communications. Reps. Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut and Donna Edwards of Maryland will serve as co-chairs of the Steering and Policy Committee, which is charged with making committee assignments and helping to shape the Democrats' agenda.

Follow @ccamia on Twitter.

LOAD-DATE: November 19, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Gannett Company, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

386 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Hotline

November 18, 2014 Tuesday

Lujan Chosen as DCCC Chairman

BYLINE: Jack Fitzpatrick

LENGTH: 201 words

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA 12) selected Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-NM 03) to serve as chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee in a surprise pick. **Lujan** was not mentioned as a possibility as frequently as Reps. Jim Himes (D-CT 04), Joaquin Castro (D-TX 20), Jared Polis (D-CO 02), Donna Edwards (D-MD 04), and Lois Frankel (D-FL 22).

Pelosi called **Lujan** "a dynamic and forward looking leader with fresh energy and ideas." (**National Journal**)

ISRAEL: 'WE FUNDAMENTALLY MADE THE RIGHT DECISIONS.' Outgoing DCCC Chairman Steve Israel (D-NY 03) said he wasn't "going to sugarcoat the fact that we fell short," but that "when bombs were bursting in air, and we were in the trenches, we fundamentally made the right decisions, as tough as they were."

Israel said directly that former New York City Councilman Domenic Recchia (D-NY 11) was Democrats' only choice against Rep. Michael Grimm (R). "It's easy for people who have never recruited to criticize recruitment," he said. "In the case of Domenic Recchia, we began a very aggressive recruitment process. We talked to many people and every single one of them with the exception of Domenic Recchia chose not to run." (**Washington Post**)

LOAD-DATE: November 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Magazine

Copyright 2014 The National Journal Group, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

The New York Times

November 18, 2014 Tuesday
Late Edition - Final

Democrats Shake Lineup in House Political Team

BYLINE: By JONATHAN MARTIN

SECTION: Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 15

LENGTH: 426 words

WASHINGTON -- House Democrats, searching for a new generation of leaders and with an eye on the increasingly important Latino vote, have selected Representative **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico to lead the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

They also named Representative Steve Israel of New York, whom Mr. **Luján** succeeds, to a new leadership post dedicated to communicating the party's agenda in the House.

Mr. **Luján**, 42, who was first elected in 2008, comes from a politically prominent Democratic family in New Mexico. His father, Ben **Luján**, was once speaker of the State House and was a longtime political power broker.

The younger **Luján** has been active in the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and is well liked by Representative Nancy Pelosi, Democrat of California, the minority leader, and other members of the party leadership, which also gave him a coveted seat on the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

As chairman of policy and communications, Mr. Israel, who ran the House Democratic campaign arm this year, will work to develop a unifying and clear line of attack against the House Republican majority.

Mr. Israel's position will be similar to the post Senator Charles E. Schumer, Democrat of New York, holds for Senate Democrats as head of the caucus's Democratic Policy and Communications Committee.

The appointment of Mr. Israel is both an acknowledgment that congressional Democrats have been unable to effectively define Republicans and that Ms. Pelosi does not fault him for the party's net loss of 12 seats in the midterm elections this month.

Mr. Israel, 56, is one of a handful of House Democrats thought to have his eye on ascending in the leadership ranks. There has been private grumbling among young House Democrats about their leadership, with some in the caucus hoping for fresh blood.

But both Ms. Pelosi and Representative Steny H. Hoyer of Maryland, the minority whip, have made clear their intent to continue serving in their posts, and no one has stepped forward to challenge them. Ms. Pelosi, particularly, is a fund-raising powerhouse for Democrats.

Her selection of Mr. **Luján** over other ambitious House Democrats, some with extensive fund-raising connections of their own, suggests she is keeping a firm grip on the caucus's political apparatus.

While House Republicans will hold 244 seats in the next Congress -- the most they have had since the end of World War II -- Democrats are hopeful that they can make gains in 2016, a presidential year when the composition of the electorate is likely to be more favorable for them.

URL: http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/18/us/changes-announced-in-house-democrats-political-team.html

LOAD-DATE: November 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The New York Times Company

388 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Newsday (New York)

November 18, 2014 Tuesday
ALL EDITIONS

Steve Israel gets new post; Leaves DCCC role to take new leadership job; Ben Ray Lujan, first Latino in post, replacement

BYLINE: BY TOM BRUNE tom.brune@newsday.com

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. A39

LENGTH: 441 words

Rep. Steve Israel will take on a newly created post to direct House Democratic policy and communications in the next Congress, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) said yesterday as she named the first Latino to head the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee to succeed him.

Israel, a Huntington Democrat, will get his wish to remain in the House Democratic leadership as he steps down after two elections and four years despite grumbling by some Democrats that their party failed to get its message across as it lost at least 15 seats in the mid-term elections earlier this month.

"In his new role as chair of something called Policy and Communications, Congressman Israel will be an invaluable asset to our caucus working closely with the Steering and Policy Committee to develop our caucus message, jump start the middle class, and to reignite the American dream," Pelosi said at a news conference.

Israel, who has chafed recently about the difficult DCCC job, said, "You have no idea how happy I am. This may be the happiest day of my life."

Israel in an interview said he will serve in a capacity similar to the role Sen. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) plays for Senate Democrats as chairman of the Democratic Policy and Communications Committee.

Replacing Israel as DCCC chairman, Pelosi said, will be Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-N.M.), a four-term congressman who was vice chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, where he led its political action committee.

Pelosi called **Lujan** "a dynamic and forward looking leader with a fresh energy and ideas."

The appointments will not be effective until tomorrow, after the House Democrats vote on their leaders for the next Congress in a closed session in the morning. Pelosi and her lieutenants, Reps. Whip Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) and James Clyburn (D-S.C.), are unopposed and expected to win.

Still, some Democrats publicly complained about the Democratic leadership yesterday.

"We think clearly there was a lack of a coherent and compelling message," Rep. Marcia Fudge (D-Ohio), chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus, told Politico. "We believe that certainly our leadership worked hard, but there's obviously something lacking because we lost so many seats."

But Israel said he has no plans to change the Democrats' essential focus on the middle class and women.

"Our country is experiencing the deepest and the most acute anxiety for the middle class in history," Israel said at the news conference. "And this new position within the Democratic leadership will bring our messaging and our policies, particularly on middle-class anxieties, to a new and never before seen level for our caucus."

LOAD-DATE: November 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: AP / J. Scott Applewhite - Rep. Steve Israel puts his arm around Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-N.M.), his replacement to head the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee From far left are

Rep. Donna Edwards (D-Md.), Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi and Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.). More Steve Israel photos: newsday.com/politics

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Newsday, Inc.

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

November 18, 2014 Tuesday

Pelosi picks Luján to head House Democrats' political wing

BYLINE: Steve Terrell, The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: NATIONAL POLITICAL NEWS

LENGTH: 721 words

Nov. 18--House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi announced Monday that U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** of Santa Fe will chair the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the political wing of the House Democrats.

The committee is responsible for recruiting candidates, raising funds, handling public relations and helping with get-out-the-vote efforts.

Pelosi told The Washington Post that **Lujan**, 42, "is really a focused operational person. ... I'm choosing him because of his political astuteness, and he can manage all of this very well."

Lujan said in an interview Monday that he and Pelosi first talked about the position a week ago. Pelosi asked him to keep it quiet, he said. "My mom's the only person I spoke to about it," he said. At a news conference about the appointment on Monday, **Lujan** apologized for being late, saying, "I couldn't get Mom off the phone."

Pelosi long has had a good relationship with **Lujan**, who was just re-elected to his fourth term representing New Mexico's 3rd Congressional District. In 2011, Pelosi visited Santa Fe, where she praised the congressman and his father, former state House Speaker Ben **Lujan** at public events. **Lujan**, according to The Washington Post's U.S. Congress Votes Database, has voted with the House Democratic leadership 93 percent of the time.

The Post described **Lujan's** new position as "a plum assignment heading into a 2016 political cycle that is expected to be much more beneficial for Democrats." The Post described the New Mexico congressman as "a fresh and much younger face among top House Democrats."

The move also could be seen as a sign of the growing importance of Hispanics in national politics. **Lujan** will be the second Hispanic chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. The first was Anthony Coelho of California, who served three terms as chairman starting in the early 1980s.

But after the brutal shellacking House Democrats took in this year's election, some might not see the job of managing the caucus' political operation as enviable. **Lujan** will face the challenge of rebuilding the operation.

This year, the party lost at least a dozen House seats to Republicans in the midterm elections, leaving them with the lowest number of Democrats in the House since the 1940s. "It's true we have the biggest deficit of Democrats in some time," **Lujan** said. "But this is a great opportunity to make gains in 2016." He said he believes that with his "humble beginnings" he can resonate with voters across the country who feel left out by the Republican Congress.

Lujan had expressed interest in running for chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, of which he's currently vice chairman. But he said Monday, "I will no longer be pursuing that this year." He said he's backing Rep. Linda Sanchez of California for that job.

A liberal activist group called the Progressive Change Campaign Committee praised Pelosi's decision -- but mostly for not choosing another Congressman who was interested in the job, Rep. Jim Himes of Connecticut.

"We thank Leader Pelosi for not selecting Jim Himes to lead the DCCC -- thereby rejecting the Wall Street wing of the Democratic Party," the group's co-founder Adam Green said in a statement. "In order to win key House races, Democrats must run on big, bold, populist ideas like those championed by Elizabeth Warren. This means recruiting economic populist candidates -- especially in red and purple states -- and working with them to integrate a populist vision into their campaign messaging. The PCCC will be doing this, and we hope to partner with Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** and others to achieve success in 2016."

Some of the Washington press corps expressed shock at **Lujan's** appointment. Lynn Sweet, Washington bureau chief of the Chicago Sun Times, said in a tweet that the "little-known" **Lujan's** appointment was "controversial."

Among those who had been mentioned for the job were better-known members of Congress, including Himes, Rep. Jared Polis of Colorado, Rep. Donna Edwards of Maryland and Rep. Joaquin Castro of Texas.

Contact Steve Terrell at sterrell@sfnewmexican.com Read his political blog at www.santafenewmexican.com/news/blogs/politics.

___ (c)2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC

LOAD-DATE: November 19, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20141118-SF-Pelosi-picks-**Luján**-to-head-House-Democrats-political-wing-20141118

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican

States News Service

November 18, 2014 Tuesday

TRANSCRIPT OF PELOSI PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY NOV. 18, 2014

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 1400 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi:

Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi held a press conference today to announce her recommendations of Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-NM), Congressman Steve Israel (D-NY), Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) and Congresswoman Donna Edwards (D-MD) for House Democratic Leadership positions. Below is a transcript of Leader Pelosi's opening statement, as well as a question and answer session.

Leader Pelosi's Opening Remarks

"Good afternoon everyone. The Chairman of the Democratic Caucus has informed Members that tomorrow we will elect the Leadership team for the 114th Congress.

"Should I receive the honor of serving as the House Democratic Leader, I will be proud to recommend the Members gathered here for important positions of leadership in our Caucus in the new Congress. As the next Chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, I am pleased to recommend to our Caucus Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico. He is a dynamic and forward-looking leader with the fresh energy and ideas House Democrats need for victory in 2016. Congressman **Lujan** has the bold vision and determined leadership to deliver wins in difficult districts. I am confident that Congressman **Lujan** will prove a tireless champion for our Members and candidates across the country, and I'm absolutely delighted to recommend him to the Caucus.

"As Chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee for the past four years, Congressman Steve Israel has consistently proved the depth of his wisdom and the strength of his strategic vision in making our case to the American people. In his new role - and we thank him for his leadership over those four years - in his new role as Chair of something called Policy and Communications, Congressman Israel will be an invaluable asset to our Caucus, working closely with the Steering and Policy Committee to develop our Caucus message, jumpstart the middle class and to reignite the American dream. Thank you, Mr. Israel, for agreeing to serve.

"Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut - well her innovative and unrelenting leadership is essential to our Caucus. She is what I call the godmother behind the When Women Succeed, America Succeeds' agenda. Her work on behalf of students and working families is unparalleled. Congresswoman DeLauro is the lioness of our Caucus, and I look forward to continuing to work with her as the co-Chair of the Steering and Policy Committee.

"I have to say about Rosa: the 40-some Members that were here from the freshman class of last year - we had 51, I think it's now 45 - they have entrusted their hopes, dreams, aspirations and their career paths to Rosa. And she understands their aspirations, as well as even more senior Members. So she is an institution that everyone by popular demand insisted that she, again, serve in this role. It pleased all of us; but I'm glad it pleased Rosa to do that.

"Congresswoman Donna Edwards of Maryland has been an energetic and impassioned voice within our Caucus ever since she came to Congress. As Chair of the Democratic Women's Working Group, she has been a forceful champion of America's women - continuing the work that she began as co-founder and executive director of the National Network to End Domestic Violence. Congresswoman Edwards' deep grasp of policy and priorities of middle-class families will make her a great asset to our caucus in the role of Policy Co-Chair.

These Members are tested and tenacious Members of our Caucus. They have the energy and the vision to win progress for the American people. I'm excited to work with them in these important roles, and I'm very pleased and honored to yield to my nominee to be Chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico.

* * *

Q: I have a question for Congressman **Lujan**. Just managing expectations - Republicans have built their largest majority sine at least the Truman Administration, possibly even the Hoover Administration if they can pick up one seat from these outstanding races. Where do you manage expectations? And is it a realistic goal to try to take back the majority?

Rep. **Lujan**. As Steve pointed out - as Chairman Israel pointed out, so many of the American people didn't come out to vote this year. As we're celebrating and remembering the 50th year of the Voting Rights Act and we continue to see Republicans chip away at that. I think that it's important that we go talk to more and more people. And I think we can set those expectations high. Going into 2016, we're going to see more of the electorate involved, excited, ready to work, and get ready to get more people elected. And so I think that, again, working closely with Steve and the team, we'll see those numbers as they roll out. But you saw those very close elections this year where Republicans spent a record amount of money. I think we're going to see a lot more Democrats get elected in 2016, and those numbers are going to surprise you.

Q: To add to that point here. Very soon we're probably going to have an executive order from the President. And not all Latino voters see issues the same: some will see the things the way most Republicans appear to see this issue. How do you see that playing out in the near term? I know two years is a long way away, but how do you see that playing out in the Latino community as this fight will probably emerge in the next few days here as to what the positions are?

Rep. **Lujan**. Chad, Republicans have been solving comprehensive immigration reform for over two years now. They've had a chance to put a bill up to vote; Speaker Boehner has stalled that. If Republicans in the House and the Senate aren't happy with actions that the President will consider - and we'll see what those look like going forward - they're in charge. They can put a bill forward, and I certainly hope that we can come together and work that way. I don't believe this is going to poison the well. And I'm certainly hopeful that we'll see more of that.

Q: Leader, there was some criticism this week about the decision to not let Representative Duckworth vote via proxy. And a lot of that is being directed to you given your position on leaves for women who have children, Family and Medical Leave Act. Could you respond to some of that criticism?

Leader Pelosi. First of all, let me say, I was one of the ones who said to Congresswoman Duckworth: "Don't come back here. This is the most glorious experiences in your life, your center of the universe will change for you when you have this precious new baby."

The rules of the Caucus are the same as the rules of the House: no proxy voting. And it would require changing rules of the Caucus as opposed to different from the rules of the House. She understood that full well. The fact is is that it's really important to be here, to be in Caucus; it's more important to vote on the Floor. If I were to make a fight, I'd vote to have a proxy on the Floor than whatever is going on in the Caucus. But the fact is: we don't know what's going on in the lives of many people - I think one of our Members may be having an operation this week or that - you're going to establish a situation where we're going to determine who has a note from the doctor or not. It's really a place we shouldn't go down, but is not to be confused with not having family and medical leave. We wish her

well; she's a heroine to our country; we're very excited about the baby. And in fact, knowing about the baby, I appointed Congresswoman Duckworth to the Benghazi committee. Only five appointments did I have. I wanted our strongest Members there. She informed me of her good news and I just said: "Just take it as it comes to the extent that you can serve, we want you to be there."

So I don't know why all this fuss was made about a vote in the Caucus. I think that if the House wants to change its rules about proxies in general that applies to the Floor and the Caucus, it's another thing. But we wish her well. She has all of our good wishes and prayers. And I had a very lovely conversation with her. But even again, knowing of her beautiful expectation very early on, I said: "We need our best thinking there. We need you on the Benghazi committee."

I just want to ask **Ben Ray Lujan** if he would speak to his mom.

[Congressman **Lujan** speaks in Spanish]

Leader Pelosi. Thank you all.

LOAD-DATE: November 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

US Official News

November 18, 2014 Tuesday

New Mexico: News Briefs: NMDOT releases holiday anti-DWI ad

LENGTH: 826 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Chaves County has issued the following news release:

NMDOT releases holiday anti-DWI ad

ALBUQUERQUE (KRQE) - A powerful new anti-DWI ad is hitting the airwaves. The makers of the ad say unfortunately it's inspired by many true stories. Just a few years ago in Albuquerque, a 10-year-old boy called 911 after his dad Michael Vigil took him and a friend to Hooters and then allegedly got behind the wheel drunk.

They were able to call for help before they were hurt, but many times the children can't and end up hurt. The ad is part of the New Mexico Department of Transportation's Holiday Superblitz campaign so it will run through the holidays on TV and radio.
More victims suing archdiocese for sexual assault

SANTA FE (KRQE) - Five more victims are suing the archdiocese of Santa Fe, accusing priests of sexual abuse. More than two dozen victims have made similar claims in recent years. The latest lawsuit alleges three people suffered abuse in Las Vegas, New Mexico dating as far back as the 1970s. Another alleged victim says she was abused by a priest in Albuquerque.

Investigators issue warning of mail thefts

LA PLATE COUNTY, Colo. (KRQE) - There has been a rash of mail thefts in La Plata County Colorado. While investigators are following leads on multiples suspects they've issuing a warning to residents.

They suggest you don't put out-going mail in your mail-box but instead drop it in a secure U.S. Postal Service box. If you have no choice, put the mail out close to pick-up time and remove mail on a daily basis.

Innovate ABQ makes changes to board

ALBUQUERQUE (KRQE) - Last week, KRQE News 13 reported how the board, aimed at creating new businesses and jobs in Albuquerque, was criticized for not being diverse.

Innovate ABQ is a joint effort by UNM, the city and private businesses and is housed at the First Baptist Church on Broadway and Central. Critics are not sure the board, made up of all white men, knows what New Mexicans need.

KRQE News 13 learned the board is now expanding to 11 members and will include a spot for a member from Bernalillo County. It also added Patricia Vincent-Collawn from PNM.

Council votes in favor of new stadium

ALBUQUERQUE (KRQE) - Albuquerque will soon get a new sports stadium built with money that was set aside to lure Tesla to New Mexico.

Monday night, the council approved a plan to use $12 million in bond funds to build a baseball complex on the west side near Community Stadium. Another $13 million will go toward projects along Route 66 including some for a new bus rapid transit system. Also, $10 million will be used to lure other manufacturing companies to Albuquerque. The plan was a compromise between councilors and the mayor.

Evidence room technician could face more charges

FARMINGTON, N.M. (KRQE) - An evidence room technician accused of stealing pills and cash from the police department evidence room in Farmington pleaded not guilty to charges.

Right now, Ashley Goodvoyce is facing charges of embezzlement, tampering with public records, four counts of possession of a controlled substance and 36 counts of acquisition of a controlled substance by misrepresentation. But a San Juan County judge says more charges are coming.

He told the Daily Times that the initial charges were filed before the police department determined the total number of items stolen from the evidence room. Goodvoyce is accused of taking more than 600 pills and almost $6,000.

National parks may hike prices

CHACO CULTURE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK (KRQE) - National Park visitors may be paying more than double to visit some of them.

Chaco Culture National Historical Park wants to raise its price per vehicle from $8 to $20. The National Park Service says the profits would help maintain trails and renovate buildings. The price hike would be phased over a three-year period. Chaco Canyon is one of 100 national parks planning to increase fees.

Pelosi picks **Lujan** as campaign chairman

ALBUQUERQUE (KRQE) - U.S. House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi has tapped a New Mexico congressman to be the head of the party's campaign committee.

Democrat **Ben Ray Lujan** was picked to take over for New York Rep. Steve Israel as chairman of the Democratic congressional campaign committee. Pelosi made the announcement through Twitter saying **Lujan**'s vision and leadership would mean victory for Democrats in 2016.
'Maze Runner' sequel begins filming downtown

ALBUQUERQUE (KRQE) - Downtown Albuquerque took on a different look Monday with scorched cars and sand lining the streets. It was all for an upcoming movie being filmed.

It's the upcoming sequel to "The Maze Runner: Scorch Trials." Some of the filming is taking place in front of the federal building. Filming will primarily take place around the Albuquerque area and last through January. At least 250 New Mexico crew members, 18 actors, and 1,800 extras will be hired.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: November 19, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Washington Post Blogs
The Fix

November 18, 2014 Tuesday 7:11 PM EST

The average age of the Democratic House leadership is 64. It's 53 for Republicans.; Age ain't nothing but a number?

BYLINE: Aaron Blake

LENGTH: 424 words

In America, Republicans are increasingly the party of older Americans. But in Congress, that's still the Democrats.

Democrats just added the youngest member of leadership in Congress, with 42-year-old Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-N.M.) being tapped as chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. Despite this, they still have a far older leadership team than Republicans. By more than a decade, on average.

The average age of the top five House Democrats (including the party chairman as No. 5) is now 64.2 years old, down slightly from 65 last Congress, as compared to 53 for the top five House Republicans.

And **Lujan** and 56-year-old House Democratic Caucus Chairman Xavier Becerra (D-Calif.) bring that average age down quite a bit. Because aside from them, the top three House Democrats - Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) and Jim Clyburn (D-S.C.) - are three of the four oldest leaders in Congress.

Part of the reason Democratic leaders are older, though, is that their conference is older. A Wall Street Journal analysis in 2011 showed that House Democrats, on average, were more than five years older than House Republicans. (These are old numbers, so it's not apples-to-apples, but they are probably close to where things stand today, given that Democrats added some seats in the 2012 election and the GOP added some in 2014.)

Five years doesn't sound like a lot, but across hundreds of members of Congress, it's a significant difference. And it's a big reason that Democratic leaders are considerably older three years hence.

Below, we compared the average age of the top five leaders in each chamber for each party, and also showed the average age of their members (again, circa 2011, not today). You'll notice that Democrats have older memberships in both chambers, along with older leadership.

You'll also notice that House Democrats are significantly older than House Republicans, but they're about on-par with Senate members from both parties. The Senate does skew a little bit older historically, but the numbers suggest, as much as anything, that the House GOP caucus is considerably younger.

All of these things are cyclical, of course, and when Pelosi, Hoyer and Clyburn step down, they'll likely be replaced by much younger members such as Becerra or maybe **Lujan**, or 55-year-old Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.).

But for now, Pelosi seems to be content to stick around for a while. And given her fundraising prowess, it's hard to see Democrats supplanting her. Which suggests that the youth movement will remain in waiting.

LOAD-DATE: November 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2014 Washingtonpost.Newsweek Interactive Company, LLC d/b/a Washington Post Digital
All Rights Reserved

Despite losses and grumblings among rank-and-file, Nancy Pelosi isn't going anywhere;
She stacks her team with fresh blood but makes clear she won't leave until Democrats win back House control.

BYLINE: Ed O'Keefe

LENGTH: 1042 words

After more than a decade in power, Nancy Pelosi sits atop a beleaguered House minority whose influence is so diminished that questions are being raised about a change in leadership.

But Democrats are expected to easily reelect Pelosi as their leader on Tuesday despite grumblings about stewardship of the caucus, and she quickly reasserted control on Monday, filling out her leadership team with a mix of old allies and fresh faces. thes

And she reminded everyone of how key she was to their recent success, and that she intended to stick around.

"I'm the one that brung everyone to the party by winning the House in the first place," she said in an interview.

"I could have walked away, but we built something and then we want to take it to the next step," she added later. That next step is winning back control of the House, she said - only then will she think about leaving.

Pelosi appointed a 42-year old New Mexico Latino lawmaker with no national profile to help lead the Democrats back to the majority in 2016. She gave an ally from the New York suburbs a new role as a top caucus spokesman. And she put two women - a Connecticut liberal and a black woman from Maryland's Prince George's County - in charge of doling out committee assignments.

In addition to Minority Whip Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.) and the third-in-command, Rep. James E. Clyburn (D-S.C.), Pelosi's team now presents more age, gender, racial and geographic balance. But she emphasized that they will continue reporting to her until Democrats retake control of the House.

"It depends on what members want," she said. "But I thought I'd be long gone by now."

"I thought we'd win the third term in the majority [in 2010] and I would have completed some of the work," she added. "I'm not here because I want to have the accoutrement of being leader. I'm here because we have a mission to accomplish for the American people."

Pelosi became speaker in 2007 after her party won 230 seats in the 2006 midterms. She may be left next year with just 185 seats, a steep drop that could take 10 years for to reverse.

In recent interviews, House Democrats universally agreed that Pelosi's leadership position was safe after she raised more than a record $101 million for the party in the past two years, but after the decisive losses some hinted that it may be time to start thinking about new leadership.

"People don't follow politics [closely], but they see the same faces, the same issues," said Rep. Patrick Murphy (D-Fla.), a 31-year-old who just won his second term. "I think the first party to really wake up to that and change things, the quicker they are to adapt and put some younger, fresher folks out front, the better off the party will be as a whole."

Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Tex.), who begins her 20th year in office next year, agreed. "My message would be, use us all. Use us all. Spread us out. Provide leadership positions for those who want them and you will see a new day in the caucus."

Rep. Peter Welch (D-Vt.) said that Democrats don't have a leadership problem, but should have talked more about the economy: "The problem is we don't have an agenda that's resonating."

Rep. Gerald E. Connolly (D-Va.) said that Democrats "were allergic to talking about a robust economy."

Even Rep. Rosa L. DeLauro (D-Conn.), a Pelosi confidante who will co-chair the caucus's policy and steering committee, said that Democrats need a more aggressive national message focused on the economy "in the same way that the Republicans spent their money against Barack Obama day in and day out. They even had him responsible for the Ebola crisis. Come on, Christ, give me a break."

Pelosi said that the party faced unprecedented spending by Republicans and outside conservative groups that flooded swing districts and made it difficult for Democrats to defend seats and make gains.

"It was more expensive to advertise in Arkansas than it was in Los Angeles on TV, it was so fierce," she said.

Looking ahead, Pelosi on Monday tapped Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D-N.M.) to lead the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, putting him in charge of recruiting new candidates and winning back seats in 2016, when the presidential election should make it easier for Democrats to turn out supporters.

After two grueling election cycles that saw Democrats lose seats, Pelosi rewarded the outgoing DCCC chairman, Rep. Steve Israel (D-N.Y.), 56, with a new policy and communications position in hopes of streamlining the party message. DeLauro, 71, will share leadership of the caucus's powerful policy and steering committee with Rep. Donna Edwards (D-Md.), 56. The pair will help pick committee assignments for new members.

Pelosi called **Luján** "a focused operational person. He understands that getting out the vote is what this is and how we message to our base and how we message across the board to the persuadables and the rest."

Luján teared up and spoke in Spanish as he accepted the job at a press conference on Monday. He will be a much younger face alongside Pelosi, 74, Hoyer, 75, and Clyburn, 74.

He is the first Latino ever to hold the DCCC job. His father, Ben **Luján**, once served as speaker of the New Mexico House, and his cousin is Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (D-N.M.), another member of New Mexico's congressional delegation.

On Wednesday, Democrats are expected to settle a divisive race for one of the few choice assignments left: the party's top dog on the influential Energy and Commerce Committee.

Reps. Frank Pallone Jr. (D-N.J.) and Anna G. Eshoo (D-Calif.) have spent the past 10 months campaigning for the top job since the committee's current senior Democrats, Reps. Henry A. Waxman (Calif.) and John D. Dingell (Mich.), announced plans to retire.

The contest is an intriguing proxy fight between Pelosi and Hoyer. Pelosi is backing fellow Californian Eshoo; Hoyer is with Pallone.

Pelosi repeatedly referred to Eshoo as "the future" of her party - even though the women are separated by just three years in age. She also said that it would be helpful for another California Democrat to have a prominent role to raise campaign cash from west coast supporters and companies with business before the committee.

After all, Pelosi said, "I have a lot of other work to do."

ed.okeefe@washpost.com

LOAD-DATE: November 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2014 Washingtonpost.Newsweek Interactive Company, LLC d/b/a Washington Post Digital
All Rights Reserved

Washington Post Blogs

November 18, 2014 Tuesday 12:38 AM EST

Ben Ray Lujan chosen as next DCCC chairman

BYLINE: Ed O'Keefe

LENGTH: 731 words

This item has been updated.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) has selected Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-N.M.) to serve as the next chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, a plum assignment heading into a 2016 political cycle that is expected to be much more beneficial for Democrats.

Pelosi plans to make the decision official on Monday afternoon, but previewed her pick in an interview with The Washington Post, saying that **Lujan** "is really a focused operational person. He understands that getting out the vote is what this is and how we message to our base and how we message across the board to the persuadables and the rest."

"I'm choosing him because of his political astuteness, and he can manage all of this very well," she said during an interview in her office at the U.S. Capitol.

Pelosi is expected to be easily reelected as House minority leader when Democrats meet behind closed doors on Tuesday morning to begin their leadership elections for the next Congress. Her lieutenants, Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) and Rep. James Clyburn (D-S.C.) also are expected to win another term atop the caucus.

Lujan, 42, will be a fresh and much younger face among top House Democrats. **Lujan**, who will be the first Latino ever to hold the job of party campaign chairman, begins his fourth term in Congress in January. He is a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee and a vice chairman with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, leading the group's political action committee with a focus on helping more Latinos win seats in Congress.

The congressman's father, Ben **Lujan**, once served as speaker of the New Mexico House of Representatives and his cousin is Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (D-N.M.), another member of New Mexico's congressional delegation.

Pelosi also detailed plans Monday to fill out her leadership team. She will give outgoing DCCC chairman, Rep. Steve Israel (D-N.Y.), the newly created position of chairman of policy and communications -- essentially a leading messaging role for the caucus. Israel has led the DCCC through the last two political cycles, during which the party failed to retake the majority, losing at least eight seats this year.

Two loyal Pelosi allies, Reps. Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.) and Donna Edwards (D-Md.), will be tapped to serve as co-chairmen of the caucus's policy and steering committee. The influential roles give longtime Pelosi friend DeLauro and Edwards, who is considered a rising star and potentially future statewide candidate in Maryland, the job of determining which party members will serve on key committees next year.

Lujan is a dark-horse candidate to lead the DCCC, someone who's name hadn't been floated publicly in recent days. Other names mentioned included Rep. Joseph Kennedy III (D-Mass.), who asked that his name be withdrawn from consideration. Others included Rep. Jim Himes (D-Conn.), who served as the committee's finance chairman for the past two years, and Rep. Joaquin Castro (D-Tex.), a freshman member whose brother, Julian Castro, is serving as secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

Pelosi called Himes "a wonderful person" who did "better than anybody" in assuring that Democrats gave money to the DCCC for the election cycle. She met with Castro last Thursday about the role, but disputed news reports that she was on the verge of picking him.

"I read about it in the paper. Or not in the paper - but people were calling me saying 'I hear you're going to announce Joaquin.' I've never had a conversation with Joaquin about this, he's never told me he's interested," she said.

She said she spoke with and selected **Lujan** "in the last few days."

During the interview, Pelosi said that she has no plans to relinquish her leadership position until Democrats retake control of the House.

"I could have walked away, but we built something and then we want to take it to the next step," she said.

Asked what happens when Democrats get to that next step, she said: "We win."

And will she stay in her role if that happens?

"I don't know," she said. "It depends on what members want. But I thought I'd be long gone by now."

"I thought we'd win the third term in the majority and I would have completed some of the work. I'm not here because I want to have the accoutrement of being leader. I'm here because we have a mission to accomplish for the American people," she said.

LOAD-DATE: February 5, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2014 Washingtonpost.Newsweek Interactive Company, LLC d/b/a Washington Post Digital
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal: Blogs (New Mexico)

November 17, 2014 Monday

In a surprise, Ben Ray Lujan to lead DCCC

BYLINE: Michael Coleman, JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: INSIDE THE BELTWAY

LENGTH: 467 words

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, a New Mexico Democrat, will serve as the next chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee following a surprise announcement from House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi today.

Pelosi first dropped the news in an interview with the Washington Post's Ed O'Keefe Monday afternoon and then made it official at a Capitol Hill news conference at about 2:45 Mountain time. **Lujan**, who just won election to a fourth term, will become the second Hispanic chairman of the House Democrats' primary political arm.

"I am pleased to recommend to our colleagues **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico, a dynamic and forward-looking leader with a fresh energy and ideas that Democrats need for victory in 2016," Pelosi said at the news conference. "He has bold vision and determined leadership to deliver wins in difficult districts. I am confident (**Lujan**) will prove a tireless champion."

The DCCC chairmanship is a high-profile plum assignment for **Lujan** heading into a 2016 political cycle. But after a bruising election for House Democrats in 2014, **Lujan** has a steep climb ahead. House Democrats need to pick up about 30 seats to capture control of the House. Some of the 2014 race outcomes are not yet decided.

Larry Sabato, chairman of the Institute for Politics at the University of Virginia and one of the nation's best handicappers of House and Senate races, told me **Lujan** - while a surprise pick - has some qualities that can be helpful to the Democrats. Sabato also said he has his work cut out for him

"**Lujan** is a Westerner, Hispanic, and young and energetic," Sabato said. "That last quality will be critical as he attempts to climb Mt. Everest and somehow restore Democrats to the House majority. More realistically, he'll want to try to get Democrats back over the 200-member mark after 2016 so that they can be in the game. Right now, House Democrats are by far the least relevant caucus in either house of Congress."

Lujan, beaming and sounding confident in his new role, told those attending the press conference that he was late because he "couldn't get my mom off the phone."

Lujan told me in an interview in September that he had designs on the chairmanship of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus - an influential Capitol Hill group he has been climbing the ranks of - but he made no mention of a possible DCCC chairmanship. The Post called **Lujan** a "dark horse" candidate "who's name hadn't been floated publicly in recent days."

"I'm choosing him because of his political astuteness, and he can manage all of this very well," Pelosi told the Post.

Pelosi said she would stay on board as minority leader. **Lujan** takes over the DCCC role from Rep. Steve Israel, whose performance was underwhelming in the last election cycle, based on the results.

We'll have more in tomorrow's paper.

LOAD-DATE: November 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: benray

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

396 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal: Blogs (New Mexico)

November 17, 2014 Monday

Luján named head of DCCC

BYLINE: Michael Coleman, JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: INSIDE THE BELTWAY

LENGTH: 997 words

WASHINGTON - Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, a New Mexico Democrat, saw his national political profile elevated dramatically Monday when House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi made a surprise announcement naming him chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

In his new role, **Luján** will take control of the U.S. House Democrats' election strategy and become a key member of the House Democratic leadership structure. The announcement came as a shock on Capitol Hill, as several more senior members' names had been floated for the position in recent days. **Luján** will become just the second Latino to hold the post. Former Rep. Tony Coelho of California, who was a member of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, headed the committee in the 1980s.

"I am pleased recommend to our colleagues **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico, a dynamic and forward-looking leader with a fresh energy and ideas that Democrats need for victory in 2016," Pelosi said at a Capitol Hill news conference to announce the pick. "He has bold vision and determined leadership to deliver wins in difficult districts. I am confident (**Luján**) will prove a tireless champion."

A beaming **Luján** - son of the late New Mexico House Speaker Ben **Lujan** - apologized for being tardy to the news conference, saying he couldn't get off the phone with his mother, " who was "joyous" about the news.

"It got a little emotional," **Luján** told the Journal afterward, saying his mother told him his late father would have been proud of him. "We shared some tears and shared some laughs."

While the DCCC chairmanship is a high-profile, plum assignment for **Luján**, he faces a steep climb heading into the 2016 political cycle. House Democrats were drubbed in congressional elections this month, and Republicans now control both chambers of Congress. Democrats would have to pick up about 30 seats to capture control of the House.

At the news conference, **Luján** said he was up to the challenge.

"House Republicans are once again talking about shutting down the government rather than working with Democrats and the president to tackle the issues facing families across our nation," **Luján** said. "I will work to make sure House Republicans are held accountable for this reckless behavior and that the American people see the clear difference between House Democrats (and Republicans). There will be great opportunities in 2016 to make gains with the more favorable electorate during the presidential year. We will be on the offensive to put the majority in play."

While Democrats were congratulating **Luján** on Capitol Hill, officials at the National Republican Congressional Committee - the DCCC's counterpart - appeared pleased with the selection, as well - but for different reasons. Ian Prior, spokesman for the NRCC, said **Luján** is among the most liberal members of the House and his politics will fall flat with many Americans.

"In selecting Ben **Luján** to head the DCCC, Nancy Pelosi has chosen a member of the uber-liberal House Progressive Caucus who has routinely voted for budgets that include amnesty for illegal immigrants, tax rates as high as 49%, and a massive expansion of Obamacare," Prior said. "This pick will give rise to plenty of awkward moments on the 2016 campaign trail as Democrats in swing states will have to distance themselves from incoming Chairman **Luján**, the very person tasked with helping them get elected."

Larry Sabato, chairman of the Center for Politics at the University of Virginia and one of the nation's best handicappers of House and Senate races, said **Luján** - while a surprise pick - has some qualities that can be helpful to the Democrats. Sabato also said he has his work cut out for him.

"**Luján** is a Westerner, Hispanic, and young and energetic," Sabato said. "That last quality will be critical as he attempts to climb Mount Everest and somehow restore Democrats to the House majority. More realistically, he'll want to try to get Democrats back over the 200-member mark after 2016 so that they can be in the game. Right now, House Democrats are by far the least relevant caucus in either house of Congress."

"House Republicans are once again talking about shutting down the government rather than working with Democrats and the president to tackle the issues facing families across our nation," **Luján** said. "I will work to make sure House Republicans are held accountable for this reckless behavior and that the American people see the clear difference between House Democrats [and Republicans]. There will be great opportunities in 2016 to make gains with the more favorable electorate during the presidential year. We will be on the offensive to put the majority in play."

Luján has proved a popular member of the Democratic House caucus and most recently served as vice chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. **Lujan**'s Democratic congressional colleagues from New Mexico praised his appointment.

"Congressman **Luján** has been a dynamic leader in the Hispanic Caucus and in New Mexico," said Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham. "He will build on that leadership for the Democratic Party and will engage key constituencies to build a path to the majority for Democrats in Congress. During his time in Congress, Congressman **Luján** has been a strong advocate for working families and the middle class. I fully support him as the messenger for Democratic priorities and I look forward to working with him to achieve those goals."

"Ben Ray has shown strong leadership in the House and is greatly respected by his colleagues. I can't think of anyone better-suited for this important post," said Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M.

"Congressman **Luján**'s incredible enthusiasm, intelligence and leadership have made him an effective congressman for New Mexico and a great partner in Washington," said Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M. "Having Congressman **Luján** in the House leadership will help shine a light on issues that matter to New Mexicans, from immigration to rural development to clean energy. I am extremely proud of him today."

LOAD-DATE: November 19, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan,** D-N.M., center, thanks House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., right, after she announced he will take over as head of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee from Rep. Steve Israel, D-N.Y., left, during a news conference at the Capitol in Washington, Monday, Nov. 17, 2014.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

397 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Associated Press

November 17, 2014 Monday 10:53 PM GMT

New Mexico Dem tapped to head campaign committee

SECTION: WASHINGTON DATELINE; POLITICAL NEWS

LENGTH: 289 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON (AP) - House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi announced Monday that she had tapped Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** to head the campaign committee and try to get the party back on track after a drubbing in midterm elections.

The 42-year-old **Lujan**, who would be the first Hispanic to hold the post, will succeed New York Rep. Steve Israel as chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

The midterms of President Barack Obama's second term were widely expected to be tough for Democrats, but the party had an even tougher going as Republicans claimed a commanding majority and captured seats in typically favorable states such as New York, Illinois and Maine.

Democrats lost at least a dozen seats and Republicans should hold 246 in the next Congress, the most in nearly 70 years.

Lujan told reporters at a news conference that the 2016 presidential election year should be more favorable.

"We will be on the offensive to put the majority in play," he said.

Despite their strength at an historic low, Democrats plan to stand pat with their leadership at elections on Tuesday. Democrats are expected to re-elect the 14-term Pelosi as leader and 17-term Rep. Steny Hoyer of Maryland for the No. 2 job.

In addition to **Lujan**, Pelosi is recommending that Israel serve as chairman of policy and communications, crafting a message for the party; Rep. Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut to be the Steering Committee co-chairman and Rep. Donna Edwards of Maryland to be policy co-chair.

The Democratic caucus is expected to approve the slate.

Lujan told reporters Monday that he wants to "take lessons from the recent elections and get right to work."

Lujan is well-versed in politics. His father Ben was the former state House speaker in New Mexico.

LOAD-DATE: November 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

CNN Wire

November 17, 2014 Monday 9:19 PM GMT

Pelosi picks Lujan to helm DCCC

BYLINE: By Eric Bradner, CNN

LENGTH: 172 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON (CNN)

WASHINGTON (CNN) -- House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi is tapping a fresh face -- 42-year-old Latino Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico -- to replace Rep. Steve Israel of New York at the helm of the party's campaign efforts.

Israel chaired the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee during the 2012 and 2014 elections but had said in the wake of this year's Republican victories that he wouldn't seek a third term in that role.

Lujan, a former state utility regulator who was first elected to Congress in 2008, is set to start his fourth term representing a congressional district that includes Santa Fe.

Pelosi tweeted the news of **Lujan's** selection Monday.

Lujan is one of the Democratic caucuses younger members, a group that has faced pressure to bring newer members to the leadership table. **Lujan** will face a tall task: After a drubbing in the 2014 midterms, Democrats have just 186 House seats to the GOP's 244, with five races still undecided.

TM & © 2014 Cable News Network, Inc., a Time Warner Company. All rights reserved.

LOAD-DATE: November 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Cable News Network
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Quarterly News

November 17, 2014 Monday

Pelosi Chooses Ben Ray Luján as DCCC Chairman (Updated)

BYLINE: By Emma Dumain and Abby Livingston

LENGTH: 372 words

Updated 4:47 p.m. | In a shock to her caucus, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi selected Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico as chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee for the 2016 cycle.

Luján will lead his caucus' political arm and all aspects of the campaign to take back the gavel: fundraising, messaging, recruiting and getting out the vote.

The choice is Pelosi's lone decision, but it was a total shock to most Democrats on Capitol Hill.

"I am pleased recommend to our colleagues **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico, a dynamic and forward-looking leader with a fresh energy and ideas that demcorats need for victory in 2016," Pelosi said in a Monday news conference. "He has bold vision and determined leaership to deliver wins in difficult districts. I am confident [he] will prove a tireless champion."

Luján is not the first Hispanic to lead the committee. Rep. Tony Coelho of California ran the committee for three terms in the 1980s.

Running the DCCC will be a herculean task after the midterm elections translated into House Democrats' smallest caucus in modern history.

House Democrats will need to win around 30 seats in order to capture the gavel back for the party. Some of the 2014 race outcomes are still pending.

As for **Luján**, he apologized for tardiness to the press conference because "I couldn't get Mom off the phone."

On a serious note, he said there are "great opportunities in 2016 to make gains with the more favorable electorate during a presidential year."

Reps. Donna Edwards of Maryland, Jim Himes of Connecticut, Jared Polis of Colorado and Joaquin Castro of Texas were previously believed to have the inside track for the job.

Pelosi first confirmed the news to The Washington Post in an interview. She tweeted the announcement as well.

Related:

Exclusive: NRCC Chairman Reveals Top Targets for 2016

Pelosi Meets With 5 Potential DCCC Chairmen

High Stakes for Pelosi, Party With Energy and Commerce Fight

House Democrats Look for Answers, Accountability After Midterm Losses

Jon Tester Named DSCC Chairman

Roll Call Election Map: Race Ratings for Every Seat

Get breaking news alerts and more from Roll Call in your inbox or on your iPhone.

Source: CQ News
©2014 Congressional Quarterly Inc. All Rights Reserved.

LOAD-DATE: November 20, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: NEWSLETTERS

Copyright 2014 CQ-Roll Call, Inc. All Rights Reserved

400 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Quarterly News

November 17, 2014 Monday

With New House Democratic Leadership Team, Pelosi Looks Out for Her Own

BYLINE: By Emma Dumain

LENGTH: 614 words

At a surprise press conference Monday, Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi introduced the appointed members of a reconfigured leadership team.

The California Democrat's top lieutenants in the 114th Congress will overwhelmingly include familiar faces in new roles, a signal that she will continue a practice of rewarding and empowering her allies as needs shift within the caucus.

A clear sign of that tradition comes with the re-appointment of Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-Conn., as co-chairwoman of the Democratic Steering and Policy Committee.

At one point, Steering and Policy leadership positions were supposed to come with term limits, but DeLauro has kept her seat at the table for years past her would-be expiration date. Pelosi described DeLauro, a close friend, as a "lioness" and "an institution" who will stay at Steering and Policy "by popular demand."

With DeLauro's longtime co-chairman George Miller, D-Calif., retiring this year, Pelosi has given his job to Rep. Donna Edwards, D-Md. She was most recently the leader of the House Democratic women's working group, where she touted priorities close to Pelosi's heart.

Edwards also was at one point considered a front-runner for chairwoman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; Pelosi announced Monday that Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., would be the chairman of the DCCC for the next cycle - and one of the few truly new faces in House Democratic leadership in the next Congress.

Pelosi's real power play on Monday was in creating an entirely new position for outgoing DCCC Chairman Steve Israel, D-N.Y., who up until Monday afternoon was a man without a home in leadership. In the new House Democratic power structure, he will serve under the title "chairman of policy and communications."

"Congressman Israel will be an invaluable asset to our caucus, working closely with the Steering and Policy Committee to develop our caucus message, jump start the middle class and reignite the American dream," said Pelosi, who four years ago made sure that Rep. Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., newly finished with his tour of duty leading the DCCC, got to be a de facto member of leadership as ranking member on Budget.

Earlier on Monday - before **Luján's** appointment and Pelosi's press conference - Israel sent fellow House Democrats a memo outlining the gains and shortfalls of the 2014 election cycle that read as a defense of his own leadership at the DCCC. Members are privately, and not-so-privately, grumbling about what went wrong on Election Day so that House Republicans now have the largest majority in almost a century.

Meanwhile, in elevating **Luján** to lead the DCCC, Pelosi cleared the way for another California Democrat - who, incidentally, is also a favorite of the minority leader - to move up into a leadership post.

Luján was poised to be the chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus in the 114th Congress, but told CQ Roll Call on Monday that he would no longer be running for the position. Next in line is Rep. Linda T. Sanchez, D-Calif., whom Pelosi has previously tapped to be the ranking member of the Ethics Committee and one of the five Democrats on the special Benghazi investigative panel.

An aide close to Sanchez said that she was exploring her options, while **Luján** said he would endorse her for the position.

Hispanic Caucus elections are on Tuesday, as are elections for minority leader, minority whip, assistant leader and caucus chairman and vice-chairman.

Abby Livingston contributed to this report.

Roll Call Results Map: Results and District Profiles for Every Seat

Get breaking news alerts and more from Roll Call in your inbox or on your iPhone.

Source: CQ News
©2014 Congressional Quarterly Inc. All Rights Reserved.

LOAD-DATE: November 20, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: NEWSLETTERS

Copyright 2014 CQ-Roll Call, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

November 17, 2014

PELOSI -- Announces House Democratic Leadership Changes

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 426 words

November 17, 2014

Contact: Drew Hammill, 202-226-7616

Pelosi Announces House Democratic Leadership Changes

Washington, D.C. - Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi released the following statement today regarding her recommendations for House Democratic Leadership positions:

"The Chairman of the Democratic Caucus has informed Members that we will meet tomorrow to organize the Caucus and elect the Leadership team for the 114th Congress.

"Should I receive the honor of serving as House Democratic Leader, I will make the following recommendations to my colleagues in the caucus: Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** as Chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, Congressman Steve Israel of New York to be Chair, Policy and Communications, Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut as Steering Co-Chair and Congresswoman Donna Edwards of Maryland as Policy Co-Chair.

"Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** is a dynamic and forward-looking leader with the fresh energy and ideas House Democrats need for victory in 2016. Congressman **Lujan** has the bold vision and determined leadership to deliver Democratic wins in difficult districts - and I am confident he will prove a tireless champion for our members and candidates across the country.

"As Chairman of the DCCC for the past four years, Congressman Steve Israel has consistently proved the depth of his wisdom and the strength of his strategic vision in making our case to the American people. In his new role as Chair, Policy and Communications, Congressman Israel will be an invaluable asset to our Caucus, working closely with the Steering and Policy Committee to develop our Caucus message, jumpstart the middle class and reignite the American dream.

"Rosa DeLauro's innovative and unrelenting leadership is essential to our Caucus. She is the insistent vision behind the When Women Succeed, America Succeeds agenda, and her work on behalf of students and working families is unparalleled. Congresswoman DeLauro is the lion of our caucus, and I look forward to continuing to work with her to move our country forward.

"Congresswoman Donna Edwards has been an energetic and impassioned voice within our Caucus ever since she came to Congress. As Chair of the Democratic Women's Working Group, she has been a forceful champion of America's women - continuing the work she began as co-founder and executive director of the National Network to End Domestic Violence. Congresswoman Edwards' deep grasp of policy and the priorities of middle class families will make her a great asset to our caucus in the role of Policy Co-Chair."

LOAD-DATE: November 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COH

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Copyright 2014 CQ Transcriptions, LLC
All Rights Reserved
CQ Transcriptions

All materials herein are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of CQ Transcriptions. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.

REP. NANCY PELOSI, D-CALIF., HOLDS A NEWS CONFERENCE

November 17, 2014 Monday

EVENT DATE: **November 17, 2014**

TYPE: NEWS EVENT

SPEAKER: REP. NANCY PELOSI, D-CALIF.,, HOUSE MINORITY LEADER

WITNESSES:
REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M.
REP. STEVE ISRAEL, D-N.Y., CHAIRMAN, DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE
REP. DONNA EDWARDS, D-MD.

TEXT:

PELOSI: Good afternoon, everyone. The chairman of the -- hi.

(LAUGHTER)

PELOSI: Hi. The chairman of the House Democratic Caucus has informed members that tomorrow we will elect the leadership team for the 114th Congress. Should I receive the honor of serving as the House Democratic leader, I will be proud to recommend members gathered here for important positions of leadership in our caucus in the new Congress.

As the next chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, I'm pleased to recommend to our colleagues Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico, a dynamic and forward-looking leader with a fresh energy and ideas House Democrats need for victory in 2016.

He has bold vision and determined leadership to deliver wins in difficult districts. I am confident that Congressman **Lujan** will prove a tireless champion for our members and candidates across the country, and I'm absolutely delighted to recommend him to the caucus.

As chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee for the past few years -- four years, Congressman Steve Israel has consistently proved the depth of his wisdom and the strength of his strategic vision in making the -- our case to the American people. In his new role -- and we thank him for his leadership over those four years.

In his new role as chair of something called Policy and Communications, Congressman Israel will be an invaluable asset to our caucus working closely with the Steering and Policy Committee to develop our caucus message, jump start the middle class, and to reignite the American dream. Thank you, Mr. Israel, for agreeing to serve.

Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut, her innovative and unrelenting leadership -- unrelenting -- unrelenting leadership is essential to our caucus. She is what I call the godmother When Women Succeed, America Succeeds agenda.

Her work on behalf of students and working families is unparalleled. Congresswoman DeLauro is a lioness of our caucus, and I look forward to continuing to work with her as co-chair of the Steering and Policy Committee.

I have to say about Rosa, the 40-some members that are here from the freshman class of last year -- we had 51, I think it's now 45 -- they have entrusted their hopes, dreams, aspirations and their career path to Rosa, and she understands their aspiration as well as even more -- senior members.

So she is an institution that everyone by popular demand insisted that she again serve in this role. It pleased all of us. I'm glad it pleased Rosa to do that.

Congresswoman Donna Edwards of Maryland has been an energetic and impassioned voice within our caucus since she came to caucus. As chair of the Democratic Women's Working Group, she has been a forceful champion for America's women, continuing to work as she began as co- founder and executive director of the National Network to End Domestic Violence.

Congresswoman Edwards' deep grasp of policy and priorities of middle-class families will make her a great asset to our caucus in the role of policy co-chair. These members are tested and tenacious members of our caucus. They have the energy and the vision to win progress for the American people. I'm excited to work with them in these important roles.

And I'm very pleased and honored to yield to my nominee to be chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, Ben Ray -- Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico.

LUJAN: Thank you, Leader Pelosi. And I want to apologize for everyone for keeping everyone waiting. It was me that caused the delay. I shared with Speaker Pelosi as I was walking in that I couldn't get mom off the phone. And as I was visiting with mom to visit with her, you can imagine it was emotional. It was joyous.

My father, who passed away two years ago, was the former speaker of the New Mexico House of Representatives and was actively involved fro a grassroots perspective in organizing leaders and making sure that we were looking after the working people of America. So I want to apologize for the press ahead of time for that delay as well.

I want to thank Leader Pelosi for the opportunity and commend her and Chairman Israel for their leadership. I've been working with the chairman as part of the Latino Council and saw the tremendous job he did in recruiting at the DCCC and in growing in a historically challenging cycle.

I look forward to working with him in the coming days so that I can hit the ground running, take lessons from the recent elections, and get right to work to ensure that we have the great candidates, resource and messages to begin a successful 2016. I know that Chairman Israel has already been recruiting, working actively as he always has from day one, and I look forward to that same work ethic going forward.

Already less than a month removed from the elections, House Republicans are once again talking about shutting down the government rather than working with Democrats and the president to tackle the issue facing families across our nation. They've stood in the way of increasing the minimum wage, equal pay for equal work and comprehensive immigration reform.

As the chair of the DCCC, I will work to make sure that House Republicans are held accountable for this reckless behavior and that the American people see the clear difference between House Democrats, who have a plan for job creation, make college more affordable, raise the minimum wage and fix our broken immigration system.

There will be great opportunities in 2016 to make gains with the more favorable electorate during a presidential year. And with many districts held by Republicans that President Obama won, we will be on the offensive to put the majority in place.

Again, thank you Leader Pelosi, and I look forward to getting to work.

PELOSI: Thank you very much, Chairman **Lujan.** It is with my -- with great appreciation and admiration for a job well done that I now yield to the new chair of Communications and Policy, Congressman Steve Israel of New York, really of the whole country. He travels so much.

ISRAEL: Thank you, Leader. Thank you. Now if you think that Ben Ray is happy, you have no idea how happy I am.

PELOSI: Even happier than his mom?

ISRAEL: This may be the happiest day in my life. I am -- I'm incredibly excited by Leader Pelosi's decision to reorganize the leadership of our caucus and create a position as chairman of Policy and Communications.

Leader Pelosi and I have talked about this extensively. I'm going to be very brief, and then I'm going to brag on -- on my friend Ben Ray. Our country is experiencing the deepest and the most acute anxiety for the middle class in history.

In the past election, one third of the eligible voters voted for a Democrat or a Republican. Two thirds of voters stayed home because they've lost faith in government's ability to understand their anxiety and solve their economic challenges.

In fact, if you take a look at the past several elections, voters have us all on a very short leash. They give a majority and they take it away very quickly literally every few years because of this intense economic anxiety that they have.

And it's understandable. Since the recovery began, the economy's grown 12 percent. Corporate profits have grown 46 percent. The stock market has grown 92 percent, but median household income has declined by 3 percent. So no wonder they're anxious. No wonder they feel this insecurity.

Now voters on both -- both parties have -- voter have put both parties on a short leash, but intuitively they know that Democrats have always been the party of the middle class and working families and will continue to be the party of the middle class and working families.

And this new position within the Democratic leadership will bring our messaging and our policies, particularly on middle-class anxieties, to a new and never before seen level for our caucus.

And I look forward to working with Leader Pelosi, working closely with Steering and Policy, working with every member of our caucus to project and amplify and focus intensely on that message that we are the party of the middle class and we are the party of middle-class security and opportunity.

Leader Pelosi wants to proactively create a middle-class movement that focuses on wage growth in the middle class, that focuses on new opportunities. And that's precisely what this new effort will do, and precisely what the leader has asked me to focus on in terms of policy and communications.

Now, a final word about **Ben Ray Lujan.** I shared the D triple C for four years. And I must tell you that I can't think of a group of members more operational, more committed, more devoted, more dedicated than Donna Edwards, who did our recruiting, and **Ben Ray Lujan,** who, when given a mission, just did the mission. No drama, no excitement. Just achieved the goal. Both Donna and Ben Ray were just incredibly positive and operational. I'm very grateful to both of them. And I look forward to supporting Donna in her new position as co-chair Steering and Policy, and supporting Ben Ray in his new position as chair of the D triple C. So, thank you, Leader Pelosi, for giving me this opportunity and allowing me to continue my work for the D triple C with Ben ray.

Thank you.

PELOSI: Thank you very much, Chairman Israel. I don't know when this takes effect. I guess when the members vote tomorrow. After we -- after we have our own elections. And since I don't have an opponent, there -- a possibility that I might get elected, but we'll see tomorrow. And then we take these recommendations to the caucus. And one of the -- the election of Steering and Policy chairs, though, is it is a function of the Steering and Policy Committee.

The Steering piece is that, you know -- or the committee assignments, et cetera -- the policy piece is just as it says. And Rosa DeLauro is an expert on both. As I said, by popular demand of the members, she is back in that position as the leader on policy in our caucus. Since she came to the Congress, we have learned a lot from her, and continue to do so as co-chair of Steering and Policy.

Thank you.

. DELAURO: Thank you very, very much. And it's a really exciting day. And I want to say thank you to you, Madam Leader, and for your continued trust in me, and the continued trust of -- of my colleagues. It's -- as you mentioned, that is heartwarming. Because you're always -- it's always more difficult with your peers. You want to make sure that they're -- they're standing with you.

I'm delighted to serve again as co-chair of Steering and Policy for another two years, and so looking forward to working with -- with a partner here with Congresswoman Donna Edwards. And we have worked together over the last couple of years, particularly on issues that are affecting both working women and working men in our community.

And also pleased to work with the Steering and Policy Committee as we address the pressing issues that face the American people.

Democrats have an important mission in the next two years. We need to stand up for the middle class. We need to stand up for the working poor, and for the vulnerable. And the important economic

issues of the day -- the most important challenge for people today is that they're in jobs that don't pay them enough money to live on. The leader understands that to (inaudible). And, quite frankly, there's no one better able to lead us as we face those economic challenges. And that's what we need to do for the middle class and for working men and women in this nation. And that is, is to look at the kinds of -- how we create jobs, how we look at increasing that minimum wage, how we look at rebuilding this country through infrastructure and creating jobs that cannot be outsourced. How we pay attention to education and the cost of -- of allowing people to go to school again in -- in this nation.

Today we know that student loan debt is larger than credit card debt. Big issues that we need to face. And, as I said, that the -- the leader understands that better than anyone. She has a clear vision. She has a progressive vision. She listens, she understands, and she brings together the interests of a very diverse caucus. It's not homogeneous. I don't have to tell you about a Democratic Caucus. And leading us is -- is a task that she takes on, and she really demonstrates to the caucus her strength. And by doing that, provides strength to where we want to try to go.

So, I am proud to serve in the leadership with Leader Pelosi, with the rest of my colleagues here, and I'm proud to be a part of what is a very, very strong team. And I would just say to the folks out there, don't underestimate us.

(LAUGHTER)

PELOSI: Wow. Thank you, Rosa, for your ongoing leadership and your strong message.

We have a newcomer to the leadership in the House Democratic Caucus -- not a newcomer to being a leader, though, as chair of the Democratic Women's Working Group, she led us around the country on a bus. When women succeed, America succeeds. She leads us with her deep values, her political astuteness, her knowledge of the issues. She's going to be just a wonderful addition to the leadership as she chairs -- co-chairs with Rosa the Steering and Policy Committee.

Congresswoman Donna Edwards of Maryland.

EDWARDS: Thank you, Madam Leader.

And I have to tell you, I am so blown away just to be standing here today as part of this new and refreshing leadership team. And I cannot thank the leader enough for displaying the confidence in me and my colleagues to put our foot forward for the 21st century for working people in this country.

And I want to say a couple of thank yous in addition to the leader. It has been a real privilege to work with Steve Israel, our outgoing chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, in recruiting a caliber class of candidates and making sure that we had the resources that we need to do the job.

And now we have the great privilege of being able to stand alongside, work with and for my good friend, **Ben Ray Lujan.** I cannot say enough about him. He truly is a leader. He has demonstrated that since day one that he came into the Congress. And I'm looking forward to the work that we're going to do together to do, as he's described, and that is put forward both an agenda for the American people and for working people that says, "We know who you are; we're invested in you; and we want you to be invested in us."

And I know that our soon-to-be chairman, **Ben Ray Lujan,** is doing to do that for us. And I look forward to supporting him in that effort.

And what can I say about my colleague, Rosa DeLauro? She is such a champion and has such energy. And I only hope I can match that energy on the Steering and Policy Committee.

PELOSI: You're not Italian, you see, and that's...

(CROSSTALK)

EDWARDS: That's right. I'm not. And so I have work to do, but I'm looking forward to doing it.

(LAUGHTER)

And, you know, I think that this is a really exciting day for our Democratic Caucus. Tomorrow will be more exciting when we cement it. But I think what you have standing before you is a leadership team that is interested in the future. And it's really committed every single bit of the way to making sure that working families understand that we are on their side; that we know that there is a struggle; that we know that they haven't had a raise in a very, very long time; that we know that every day they just want to get up and take care of themselves and their families, build a better life for their -- for their children.

And we have the responsibility of making sure that those dreams come true and that those opportunities are created, and that there are indeed ladders of opportunity for success for the American people. And I am looking forward to doing this.

So Rosa, I'm with you.

(LAUGHTER)

PELOSI: Thank you. Thank you very much, Congresswoman. Thank you all.

Tomorrow after our election, which will take place in the morning, our full leadership team will come forward to make our presentation and to answer your questions.

I just want to close by saying the following. Now, the Republicans have taken both Houses of the Congress of the United States. But when we did that in 2006 (inaudible) elect -- a Congress sworn in in 2007, we worked with President Bush on so many issues. We passed one of the biggest energy bills in the history of our country. We worked with him on a stimulus package. Rosa was very instrumental in helping as we did stimulus and the rebates, that they were refundable to low-income families.

Barney Frank said it was one of the most progressive pieces of legislation to come out of the Congress. We did that with President Bush. And of course, we worked with him on TARP when his own party abandoned him on that, but we were there. Just to name a few examples.

We opposed him on the war in Iraq and privatizing Social Security, but that did not have an influence on how we worked with him on other issues.

So I want the record to show that we did cooperate with President Bush, and I hope the record will soon show that the newly elected Republican Congress will work constructively with President Obama.

We -- we want to work with them to make progress for the American people. A couple of years ago it was building ladders of opportunity for everyone who wants to work hard and play by the rules to achieve the American dream, to reignite the American dream.

This past year, it was jump starting the middle class, creating good-paying jobs here in the United States by building infrastructure of our country, making college affordable, and When Women Succeed, American Succeeds with equal pay for equal work.

These are things that I think have a nonpartisan nature to them. They are supported by the American people. We have to communicate it in a stronger way. But hopefully we can do -- act upon all of that in a bipartisan way as go we go forward.

So I congratulate our leadership team. Part of the House Democratic leadership tomorrow will all be coming out of the caucus with the results of those elections and with an expanded opportunity for you to question our members then. But right now if you have questions -- yes?

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE) just managing expectations. Republicans have built their largest majority since at least the Truman administration, possibly even the Hoover administration if they can pick up one more seat from these outstanding races.

Where do you manage expectations, and is it a realistic goal to try to (inaudible) back a majority?

LUJAN: Look, as Steve pointed out, as Chairman Israel pointed out, we -- we saw so many of the American people that didn't come out to vote this year.

As we're celebrating and remembering the 50th year of the Voting Rights Act and we're continuing to see Republicans try to chip away at that, I think it's important that we just go talk to more and more people.

And I think we can -- we can set those expectations high. Going into 2016, we're going to see more of the electorate involved, excited, ready to work, and get ready to get more people elected. And so I think that, again, working closely with Steve and with the team, we'll see those numbers as they roll out.

But you saw those very close elections this year where Republicans spent a record amount of money. I think we're going to see more Democrats get elected in 2016 and those numbers are going to surprise you.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE) some things the way that most Republicans appear to see this issue. How do you see that playing out in the near term? I know two years is a long way away here, but how do you see that playing out in the Latino community as this fight will probably emerge maybe even in just the next few days here (inaudible)?

LUJAN: Chad (ph), the Republicans have been selling comprehensive immigration reform for over two years now. They've had a chance to put a bill up to vote. Speaker Boehner has stalled that. If Republicans in the House and the Senate aren't happy with actions that the president will consider -- and we'll see what those look like going forward -- they -- they're in charge. They can put a bill forward.

And I certainly hope that we can come together and work that way. I don't believe this is going to poison the well. This should encourage everyone to work together, and I'm certainly hopeful that we'll see more of that.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE) and a lot of that seemed directly (inaudible) positions on leave for women who have (inaudible). Could you respond to some of that criticism (ph)?

PELOSI: Sure. First of all, let me say that we do have -- I was one of the ones who said to Congresswoman Duckworth, don't come back here. This is the most glorious experience of your life. The center of the universe will change for you when you have this precious new baby.

The rules of the caucus are the same as the rules of the House, no proxy voting, and would require changing rules of the caucus to -- as opposed to -- as different from the rules of the House. She understood that full well.

The fact is is that it's really important to be here, to be in caucus. It's more important to vote on the floor. If I were to make a fight, I'd vote to have a proxy to vote on the floor than in whatever's going on in the caucus.

But the fact is is that we don't know what's going on in the lives of many people. I think one of our members may be having an operation this week or that. You're going to establish a situation where we're going to determine who has a note from the doctor that's valid.

It's really a place we shouldn't go down, but it is not to be confused with not having family and medical leave. We wish her well. She's a heroine to our country. We're very excited about the baby. And in fact, knowing about the baby, I appointed Congresswoman Duckworth to the Benghazi committee. Only five appointments did I have. I wanted our strongest members there.

She informed me of her good news, and I said just take it as it comes. You know, to the extent that you can serve, we want you to be there. So I don't know why all this fuss was made about a vote in the caucus. I think if -- if the House wants to change its rules about proxies in general that applies to the floor and the caucus, that's -- that's another thing.

But we wish her well. She has all of our good wishes and prayers. And I had a very lovely conversation with her. But even again knowing that (inaudible) beautiful expectation very early on, I said we need your best -- our best thinking there. We need you to be there on the Benghazi committee.

I just want to ask **Ben Ray Lujan** if he would speak to his mom.

LUJAN: (SPEAKING IN SPANISH)

PELOSI: Thank you all.

END

LOAD-DATE: November 17, 2014

403 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Examiner (Washington, DC)

November 17, 2014 Monday
Examiner Edition

Rep. Ben Ray Lujan named new DCCC chairman

BYLINE: Sean Lengell, Sean Lengell, Poliical Correspondent

SECTION: PENNAVE

LENGTH: 418 words

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi announced Monday she has picked Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico as the new chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the fundraising and candidate-recruiting arm of House Democrats.

Lujan, who has served in the House since 2009, replaces Rep. Steve Israel of New York, who oversaw massive losses for House Democrats during the 2012 and 2014 elections.

Pelosi, who is expected to be re-elected minority leader by House Democrats later this week, called **Lujan** "a dynamic and forward- looking leader with a fresh energy and ideas House Democrats need for victory in 2016."

Lujan has his work cut out for him. House Democrats so far have suffered a net loss of 15 seats as a result of the Nov. 4 midterm elections -- with a handful of races still undecided -- after losing 12 seats in 2012. Republicans are set to begin the 114th Congress in January with the largest House majority since at least the 1950s.

Lujan, who will be the first Hispanic to lead the DCCC, wouldn't say if it was realistic to expect Democrats will win back the House in 2016. But he suggested the political landscape will be more favorable for his party in two years than it has been in recent congressional election cycles.

"I think it's important we just go talk to more and more people, and I think we can set those expectations high," he told reporters during a news event at the Capitol. "Going into 2016, we're going to see more of the electorate involved, excited, ready to work and ready to get more [Democrats] elected."

"We'll see those numbers [for the 2016 elections] as they roll out. But you saw those very close elections this year where Republicans spent a record amount of money. I think we're going to see more Democrats get elected in 2016, and those numbers are going to surprise you."

Pelosi also announced Reps. Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut and Donna Edwards of Maryland as co-chairs of the Democratic Steering and Policy Committee.

The minority leader also created a new leadership position for Israel; chairman of policy and communications.

"As Chairman of the DCCC for the past four years, Congressman Steve Israel has consistently proved the depth of his wisdom and the strength of his strategic vision in making our case to the American people," she said. "Congressman Israel will be an invaluable asset to our caucus."

The leadership positions won't be official until the full House Democratic Caucus votes on them later this week. But the vote is viewed as a formality.

LOAD-DATE: November 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: News

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: WHEX

Copyright 2014 ProQuest Information and Learning
All Rights Reserved
ProQuest SuperText
Copyright 2014 Clarity Media Group, Inc.

Federal News Service

November 17, 2014 Monday

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif. holds a news conference ahead of the House Democratic Caucus' organizational meeting on Tuesday, November 18.

LENGTH: 3891 words

Subject: "House Democratic Caucus' Organizational Meeting on Tuesday, November 18"

Participants: Representative Ben **Lujan** (D-NM); Representative Steve Israel (D-NY); Representative Rosa DeLauro (D-CT); Representative Donna Edwards (D-MD)

Location: HVC-Studio A, U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C.

Time: 16:00:00

Date: 2014-11-17

REPRESENTATIVE NANCY PELOSI (D-CA): Good afternoon, everyone.

The chairman of the House -- hi -- (laughter) -- the chairman of the House Democratic Caucus has informed members that tomorrow we will elect the leadership team for the 114th Congress. Should I receive the honor of serving as the House Democratic leader, I will be proud to recommend members gathered here for important decisions of leadership in our caucus in the new Congress.

As the next chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, I'm pleased to recommend to our colleagues Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico, a dynamic and forward-looking leader with a fresh energy and ideas House Democrats need for victory in 2016. He has bold vision and determined leadership to deliver wins in difficult districts. I am confident that Congressman **Lujan** will prove a tireless champion for our members and candidates across the country, and I'm absolutely delighted to recommend him to the caucus.

As chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee for the past few years, four years, Congressman Steve Israel has consistently proved the depths of his wisdom and the strength of his strategic vision in making the -- our case to the American people. In his new role -- and we thank him for his leadership over those four years -- in his new role as chair of something called policy and communications, Congressman Israel will be an invaluable asset to our caucus, working closely with the Steering and Policy Committee to develop our caucus message: jump-start the middle class and to reignite the American dream. Thank you, Mr. Israel, for agreeing to serve.

Congressman Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut, well, her innovative and unrelenting relationship, unrelenting, I mean, unrelenting leadership is essential to our caucus. She is what I call the godmother behind the when women succeed, America succeeds agenda. Her -- the -- work on behalf of students and working families is unparalleled. Congresswoman DeLauro is a lioness of our caucus, and I look to continue to work with her as co-chair of the Steering and Policy Committee.

I have to say about Rosa, the 30-some members that are here from the freshman class of last year -- we had 51; I think it's now 45 -- they have entrusted their hopes, dreams, aspirations and their career path to Rosa, and she understands their aspirations as well as senior members. So she is an institution that everyone by popular demand insisted that she, again, serve in this role. It pleased all of us; I'm glad it pleased Rosa to do that.

Congressman Donna Edwards of Maryland has been an energetic and an impassioned voice within our caucus since she came to Congress. As chair of the Democratic Women's Working Group, she has been a forceful champion for America's women, continuing to work as she began as co-founder and executive director of the National Network to End Domestic Violence. Congresswoman Edwards' deep

grasp of policy and priorities of middle class families will make her a great asset to our caucus in the role of policy co-chair.

These members are tested and tenacious members of our caucus. They have the energy and the vision to win progress for the American people. I'm excited to work with them in these important roles, and I'm very pleased and honored to yield to my nominee to be chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, Ben Ray -- Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico.

REPRESENTATIVE **BEN RAY LUJAN** (D-NM): Thank you, Leader Pelosi.

And I want to apologize to everyone for keeping everyone waiting. It was me that caused the delay. I shared with Speaker Pelosi, as I was walking in, that I couldn't get Mom off the phone. And I was visiting with Mom to visit with her - you can imagine it was emotional, it was joyous. My father, who passed away two years ago, was the former speaker of the New Mexico House of Representatives and was actively involved from a grassroots perspective in organizing leaders and making sure that we're looking after the working people of America. So I want to apologize to the press ahead of time for that delay as well.

I want to thank Leader Pelosi for the opportunity and commend her and Chairman Israel for their leadership. I've been working with the chairman as part of the Latino Council and saw the tremendous job he did in recruiting at the DCCC and in growing in an historically challenging cycle. I look forward to working with him in the coming days so that I can hit the ground running, take lessons from the recent elections and get right to work to ensure that we have the great candidates, resources and messages to begin a successful 2016. I know that Chairman Israel has already been recruiting, working actively, as he always has, from day one, and I look forward to that same work ethic going forward.

Already, less than a month removed from the elections, House Republicans are once again talking about shutting down the government rather than working with Democrats and the president to tackle the issues facing families across our nation. They've stood in the way of increasing the minimum wage, equal pay for equal work, and comprehensive immigration reform. As chair of the DCCC, I will work to make sure that House Republicans are held accountable for this reckless behavior and that the American people see the clear difference between House Democrats, who have a plan to spur job creation, make college more affordable, raise the minimum wage and fix our broken immigration system.

There will be great opportunities in 2016 to make gains with a more favorable electorate during a presidential year. And with many districts held by Republicans that President Obama won, we will be on the offensive to put the majority in play.

Again, thank you, Leader Pelosi, and I look forward to getting to work.

REP. PELOSI: Thank you very much, Chairman **Lujan**.

It is my - with great appreciation and admiration for a job well done that I now yield to the new chair of Communications and Policy, Congressman Steve Israel of New York, really of the whole country, he travels so much.

REPRESENTATIVE STEVE ISRAEL (D-NY): Thank you, Leader. Thank you.

Now, if you think that Ben Ray is happy - (laughter) - you have no idea how happy I am.

REP. PELOSI: Even happier than his mom? (Laughter.)

REP. ISRAEL: This may be the happiest day in my life. (Laughter.)

I am incredibly excited by Leader Pelosi's decision to reorganize the leadership of our caucus and create a position as chairman of Policy and Communications. Leader Pelosi and I have talked about this extensively, and I'm just going to be very brief and then I'm going to brag on my friend Ben Ray.

Our country is experiencing the deepest and the most acute anxiety for the middle class in history. In the past election, one-third of the eligible voters voted for Democrat or Republican; two-thirds of voters stayed home because they've lost faith in government's ability to understand their anxiety and solve their economic challenges.

In fact, if you take a look at the past several elections, voters have us all on a very short leash. They give the majority and they take it away very quickly, literally, every few years, because of this intense economic anxiety that they have. And it's understandable. Since the recovery began, the economy's grown 12 percent, corporate profits have grown 46 percent, the stock market has grown 92 percent, but median household income has declined by 3 percent. So no wonder they're anxious. No wonder they feel this insecurity.

Now, voters on both - of both parties - voters have put both parties on a short leash, but intuitively they know that Democrats have always been the party of the middle class and working families and will continue to be the party of the middle class and working families. And this new position within the Democratic leadership will bring our messaging and our policies, particularly on middle class anxieties, to a new and never-before-seen level for our caucus. And I look forward to working with Leader Pelosi, working closely with Steering and Policy, working with every member of our caucus to project and amplify and focus intensely on that message that we are the party of the middle class and we are the party of middle class security and opportunity.

Leader Pelosi wants to proactively create a middle class movement that focuses on wage growth in the middle class, that focuses on new opportunities, and that's precisely what this new effort will do and precisely what the leader has asked me to focus on in terms of policy and communications.

Now, a final word about **Ben Ray Lujan**. I chaired the DCCC for four years, and I must tell you that I can't think of a group of members more operational, more committed, more devoted, more dedicated than Donna Edwards, who did our recruiting, and **Ben Ray Lujan**, who, when given a mission, just did the mission -- no drama, no excitement, just achieved the goal. Both Donna and Ben Ray were just incredibly positive and operational. I'm very grateful to both of them and I look forward to supporting Donna in her new position as a co-chair, Steering and Policy, and supporting Ben Ray in his new position as chair of the DCCC.

So thank you, Leader Pelosi, for giving me this opportunity and allowing me to continue my work for the DCCC with Ben Ray. Thank you.

REP. PELOSI: Thank you very much, Chairman Israel.

I don't know when this takes effect, I guess when the members vote tomorrow -- (laughter) -- after we have our own elections. And since I don't have an opponent, there's a possibility that I might get elected, but we'll see tomorrow. And then we take these recommendations to the caucus.

And one of the -- the election of Steering and Policy chairs, though, is a function of the Steering and Policy Committee. The steering piece is, you know, the committee assignments, et cetera. The policy piece is just as it says, and Rosa DeLauro is an expert on both. As I said, by popular demand of the members she is back in that position as a leader on policy in our caucus. Since she came to the Congress we had learned a lot from her and continue to do so as co-chair of Steering and Policy.

REPRESENTATIVE ROSA DELAURO (D-CT): Thank you, Madam Leader.

REP. PELOSI: Thank you.

REP. DELAURO: Thank you very, very much. And it's a really exciting day, and I want to say thank you to you, Madam Leader, and for your continued trust in me and the continued trust of my

colleagues, as you mentioned. That is heartwarming because you always -- it's always more difficult with your peers. You want to make sure that they're standing with you.

I'm delighted to serve again as co-chair of Steering and Policy for another two years, and so looking forward to working with a partner here, with Congresswoman Donna Edwards. And we have worked together over the last couple of years particularly on issues that are affecting both working women and working men in our community.

And I'm also pleased to work with the Steering and Policy Committee as we address the pressing issues that face the American people. Democrats have an important mission in the next two years. We need to stand up for the middle class. We need to stand up for the working poor and for the vulnerable. And the important economic issues of the day, the most important challenge for people today is that they're in jobs that don't pay them enough money to live on.

The leader understands that to a fare-thee-well, and quite frankly there's no one who's better able to lead us as we face those economic challenges, and that what we need to do for the middle class and for working men and women in this nation, and that is, is to look at the kinds of how we create jobs, how we look at increasing that minimum wage, how we look at rebuilding this country through infrastructure and creating jobs that cannot be outsourced, how we pay attention to education and the cost of allowing people to go to school again in this nation.

Today we know that student loan debt is larger than credit card debt -- big issues that we need to face. And as I said, that the leader understands that better than anyone. She has a clear vision. She has a progressive vision. She listens. She understands. And she brings together the interests of a very diverse caucus. It's not homogenous. I don't have to tell you about a Democratic caucus. And leading us is a task that she takes on. And she really demonstrates to the caucus her strengths, and by doing that provides strength to where we want to try to go.

So I am proud to serve in the leadership with Leader Pelosi, with the rest of my colleagues here. And I'm proud to be a part of what is a very, very strong team. And I would just say to the folks out there -- don't underestimate us. (Laughter.)

REP. PELOSI: Wow. Thank you, Rosa, for your ongoing leadership and your strong message. We have a newcomer to the leadership in the House Democratic Caucus -- not a newcomer to being a leader, though, as chair of the Democratic Women's Working Group. She led us around the country on a bus. When women succeed, American succeeds. She leads us with her deep values, her political astuteness, her knowledge of the issues as she's going to be just a wonderful addition to the leadership as she co-chairs with Rosa the Steering and Policy Committee -- Congresswoman Donna Edwards of Maryland.

REPRESENTATIVE DONNA EDWARDS (D-MD): Thank you, Madam Leader. And I have to tell you, I am so blown away just to be standing here today as part of this new and refreshing leadership team, and I cannot think the leader enough for displaying the confidence in me and my colleagues to put our foot forward for the 21st century for working people in this country. And I want to say a couple of thank yous, in addition to the -- to the leader. It has been a real privilege to work with Steve Israel, our outgoing chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign committee in recruiting a caliber-class of candidates and making sure that we have the resources that we need to do the job.

And now, we have the great privilege of being able to stand alongside, work with and for my good friend, **Ben Ray Lujan**. I cannot say enough about him. He truly is a leader; he has demonstrated that since day one that he came into the Congress. And I'm looking forward to the work that we're going to do together to do as he's described, and that is, put forward both an agenda for the American people and for working people that says, we know who you are, we're invested in you, and we want you to be invested in us, and I know that our soon-to-be chairman, **Ben Ray Lujan**, is going to do that for us, and I look forward to supporting him in that effort. And what can I say about my colleague, Rosa DeLauro? She is such a champion and has such energy, and I only hope I can match that energy -- (laughter) -- on the Steering and Policy Committee --

REP. PELOSI: You're not Italian, you see, and that's -- (inaudible) --

REP. EDWARDS: That's right. I'm not. And so, I have work to do, but I'm looking forward to doing it. (Laughter.) And, you know, I think that this is a really exciting day for our Democratic Caucus. Tomorrow will be more exciting when we cement it. But I think what you have standing before you is a leadership team that is interested in the future. And it's really committed, every single bit of the way, to making sure that working families understand that we are on their side, that we know that there is a struggle, that we know that they haven't had a raise in a very, very long time, that we know that every day, they just want to get up and take care of themselves and their families, building a better life for their children, and we have the responsibility of making sure that those dreams come true, and that those opportunities are created, and that there are, indeed, ladders of opportunity for success for the American people, and I am looking forward to doing this.

So, Rosa, I'm with you. (Laughter.)

REP. PELOSI: Thank you. Thank you very much, Congresswoman. Thank you all. Tomorrow, after our elections, which will take place in the morning, our full leadership team will come forward to make our presentation and to answer your questions. I just want to close by saying the following: Now, the Republicans have taken both Houses of the Congress of the United States.

When we did that in 2006 -- Congress sworn in 2007, we worked with President Bush on so many issues. We passed one of the biggest energy bills in the history of our country. We worked with him on a stimulus package -- Rosa was very instrumental in helping us. We did the stimulus and the rebates -- that they were refundable to low-income families. Barney Frank said it was one of the most progressive pieces of legislation to come out of the Congress. We did that with President Bush.

And of course, we worked with him on TARP when his own party abandoned him on that, but we were there, just to name a few examples. We opposed him on the war in Iraq and privatizing Social Security, but that did not have any influence on how we worked with him on other issues. So I want the record to show that we did cooperate with President Bush, and I hope the record will soon show that the newly-elected Republican Congress will work constructively with President Obama. We want to work with them to make progress for the American people.

A couple of years ago, it was building ladders of opportunity for everyone who wants to work hard and play by the rules to achieve the American Dream, to re-ignite the American Dream. This past year, it was jumpstarting the middle class, creating good-paying jobs here in the United States by building infrastructure of our country, making college affordable and when women succeed, America succeeds, with equal pay for equal work.

These are things I think that have a non-partisan nature to them that they are supported by the American people. We have to communicate it in a stronger way. But hopefully, we can do -- act upon all of that in a bipartisan way as we go forward. So I congratulate our leadership team part of the House Democratic leadership. Tomorrow, we'll all be coming out of the caucus with the results of those elections and with expanded opportunity for you to question our members then. But right now, if you have questions -- yes?

Q: A question for Congressman **Lujan**. Advancing the expectations -- (inaudible) -- Truman administration -- (inaudible) -- Hoover administration if they can pick up one more seat from -- (inaudible). Where do you manage expectations, and is it a realistic goal to try to (be ?) back the majority?

REP. **LUJAN**: Look, as Steve pointed out, as Chairman Israel pointed out, we saw so many of the American people that didn't come out to vote this year. As we're celebrating and remembering the 50th year of the Voting Rights Act, and we're continuing to see Republicans try to chip away at that, I think it's important that we just go talk to more and more people, and I think we can -- we can set those expectations high.

Going into 2016, we're going to see more of the electorate involved, excited, ready to work, and get ready to get more people elected. And so I think that, again, working closely with Steve and with the team, we'll see those numbers as they roll out. But you saw those very close elections this year

where Republicans spent a record amount of money. I think we're going to see more Democrats get elected in 2016, and those numbers are going to surprise you.

Q: (Off mic) -- not all, you know, Latino voters, see it, saying some will see things the way that most Republicans -- (inaudible). How do you see that playing out in the near term? I know two years is a long way away here, but how do you see that playing out in the Latino community despite what will probably emerge maybe even in just the next few days here as a -- (inaudible)?

REP. **LUJAN**: Chad, the Republicans have been solving comprehensive immigration reform for over two years now. They've had a chance to put a bill up to vote, Speaker Boehner has stalled that. If Republicans in the House and the Senate aren't happy with actions that the president will consider -- and we'll see what those look like going forward -- they're in charge. They can put a bill forward. And I certainly hope that we can come together and work that way.

I don't believe this is going to poison the well, this should encourage everyone to work together. And I certainly hope that we'll see more of that.

STAFF: Last question.

Q: (Off mic) - Congresswoman Duckworth to vote via proxy, and a lot of that -- (inaudible). Could you respond to some of that --

REP. PELOSI: Sure. First of all, let me say that we do have -- I was one of the ones who said to Congresswoman Duckworth don't come back here. This is the most glorious experience of your life, the center of the universe will change for you when you have this precious new baby.

The rules of the caucus are the same as the rules of the House -- no proxy voting -- and would require changing rules of the caucus to -- as opposed to -- as different from the rules of the House. She understood that full well.

The fact is is that it's really important to be here, to be in caucus, it's more important to vote on the floor. If I were to make a vote, I'd vote to have a proxy to vote on the floor than whatever's going on in the caucus. But the fact is is that we don't know what's going on in the lives of many people. I think one of our members may be having an operation this week or that. You're going to establish a situation where we're going to determine who has a note from the doctor that's valid or not. It's really a place we shouldn't go down. But it is not to be confused with not having family and medical leave.

We wish her well. She's a heroine to our country. We're very excited about the baby. And in fact, knowing about the baby, I appointed Congresswoman Duckworth to the Benghazi committee. Only five appointments that I have, I wanted our strongest members there. She informed me of her good news, and I said just take it as it comes. You know, to the extent that you can serve, we want you to be there.

So I don't know why all this fuss was made about a vote in the caucus. I think if the -- if the House wants to change its rules about proxies in general that apply to the floor and the caucus, that's another thing. But we wish her well; she has all of our good wishes and prayers, and I had a very lovely conversation with her. But even, again, knowing that -- of her beautiful expectation very early on, I said, we need your best -- our best thinking there; we need you to be there on the Benghazi committee.

I just want to ask **Ben Ray Lujan** if he would speak to his mom.

REP. **LUJAN**: (In Spanish.)

(Laughter.)

REP. PELOSI: Thank you all. See you tomorrow. Thank you.

(END)

LOAD-DATE: December 19, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Transcript

Copyright 2014 Federal News Service, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

405 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Copyright 2014 CQ Transcriptions, LLC
All Rights Reserved
Financial Markets Regulatory Wire

All materials herein are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of CQ Transcriptions. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.

REP. NANCY PELOSI, D-CALIF., HOLDS A NEWS CONFERENCE

November 17, 2014 Monday

EVENT DATE: **November 17, 2014**

TYPE: NEWS EVENT

SPEAKER: REP. NANCY PELOSI, D-CALIF.,, HOUSE MINORITY LEADER

WITNESSES:
REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M.
REP. STEVE ISRAEL, D-N.Y., CHAIRMAN, DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE
REP. DONNA EDWARDS, D-MD.

TEXT:

PELOSI: Good afternoon, everyone. The chairman of the -- hi.

(LAUGHTER)

PELOSI: Hi. The chairman of the House Democratic Caucus has informed members that tomorrow we will elect the leadership team for the 114th Congress. Should I receive the honor of serving as the House Democratic leader, I will be proud to recommend members gathered here for important positions of leadership in our caucus in the new Congress.

As the next chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, I'm pleased to recommend to our colleagues Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico, a dynamic and forward-looking leader with a fresh energy and ideas House Democrats need for victory in 2016.

He has bold vision and determined leadership to deliver wins in difficult districts. I am confident that Congressman **Lujan** will prove a tireless champion for our members and candidates across the country, and I'm absolutely delighted to recommend him to the caucus.

As chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee for the past few years -- four years, Congressman Steve Israel has consistently proved the depth of his wisdom and the strength of his strategic vision in making the -- our case to the American people. In his new role -- and we thank him for his leadership over those four years.

In his new role as chair of something called Policy and Communications, Congressman Israel will be an invaluable asset to our caucus working closely with the Steering and Policy Committee to develop our caucus message, jump start the middle class, and to reignite the American dream. Thank you, Mr. Israel, for agreeing to serve.

Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut, her innovative and unrelenting leadership -- unrelenting -- unrelenting leadership is essential to our caucus. She is what I call the godmother When Women Succeed, America Succeeds agenda.

Her work on behalf of students and working families is unparalleled. Congresswoman DeLauro is a lioness of our caucus, and I look forward to continuing to work with her as co-chair of the Steering and Policy Committee.

I have to say about Rosa, the 40-some members that are here from the freshman class of last year -- we had 51, I think it's now 45 -- they have entrusted their hopes, dreams, aspirations and their career path to Rosa, and she understands their aspiration as well as even more -- senior members.

So she is an institution that everyone by popular demand insisted that she again serve in this role. It pleased all of us. I'm glad it pleased Rosa to do that.

Congresswoman Donna Edwards of Maryland has been an energetic and impassioned voice within our caucus since she came to caucus. As chair of the Democratic Women's Working Group, she has been a forceful champion for America's women, continuing to work as she began as co- founder and executive director of the National Network to End Domestic Violence.

Congresswoman Edwards' deep grasp of policy and priorities of middle-class families will make her a great asset to our caucus in the role of policy co-chair. These members are tested and tenacious members of our caucus. They have the energy and the vision to win progress for the American people. I'm excited to work with them in these important roles.

And I'm very pleased and honored to yield to my nominee to be chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, Ben Ray -- Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico.

LUJAN: Thank you, Leader Pelosi. And I want to apologize for everyone for keeping everyone waiting. It was me that caused the delay. I shared with Speaker Pelosi as I was walking in that I couldn't get mom off the phone. And as I was visiting with mom to visit with her, you can imagine it was emotional. It was joyous.

My father, who passed away two years ago, was the former speaker of the New Mexico House of Representatives and was actively involved fro a grassroots perspective in organizing leaders and making sure that we were looking after the working people of America. So I want to apologize for the press ahead of time for that delay as well.

I want to thank Leader Pelosi for the opportunity and commend her and Chairman Israel for their leadership. I've been working with the chairman as part of the Latino Council and saw the tremendous job he did in recruiting at the DCCC and in growing in a historically challenging cycle.

I look forward to working with him in the coming days so that I can hit the ground running, take lessons from the recent elections, and get right to work to ensure that we have the great candidates,

resource and messages to begin a successful 2016. I know that Chairman Israel has already been recruiting, working actively as he always has from day one, and I look forward to that same work ethic going forward.

Already less than a month removed from the elections, House Republicans are once again talking about shutting down the government rather than working with Democrats and the president to tackle the issue facing families across our nation. They've stood in the way of increasing the minimum wage, equal pay for equal work and comprehensive immigration reform.

As the chair of the DCCC, I will work to make sure that House Republicans are held accountable for this reckless behavior and that the American people see the clear difference between House Democrats, who have a plan for job creation, make college more affordable, raise the minimum wage and fix our broken immigration system.

There will be great opportunities in 2016 to make gains with the more favorable electorate during a presidential year. And with many districts held by Republicans that President Obama won, we will be on the offensive to put the majority in place.

Again, thank you Leader Pelosi, and I look forward to getting to work.

PELOSI: Thank you very much, Chairman **Lujan.** It is with my -- with great appreciation and admiration for a job well done that I now yield to the new chair of Communications and Policy, Congressman Steve Israel of New York, really of the whole country. He travels so much.

ISRAEL: Thank you, Leader. Thank you. Now if you think that Ben Ray is happy, you have no idea how happy I am.

PELOSI: Even happier than his mom?

ISRAEL: This may be the happiest day in my life. I am -- I'm incredibly excited by Leader Pelosi's decision to reorganize the leadership of our caucus and create a position as chairman of Policy and Communications.

Leader Pelosi and I have talked about this extensively. I'm going to be very brief, and then I'm going to brag on -- on my friend Ben Ray. Our country is experiencing the deepest and the most acute anxiety for the middle class in history.

In the past election, one third of the eligible voters voted for a Democrat or a Republican. Two thirds of voters stayed home because they've lost faith in government's ability to understand their anxiety and solve their economic challenges.

In fact, if you take a look at the past several elections, voters have us all on a very short leash. They give a majority and they take it away very quickly literally every few years because of this intense economic anxiety that they have.

And it's understandable. Since the recovery began, the economy's grown 12 percent. Corporate profits have grown 46 percent. The stock market has grown 92 percent, but median household income has declined by 3 percent. So no wonder they're anxious. No wonder they feel this insecurity.

Now voters on both -- both parties have -- voter have put both parties on a short leash, but intuitively they know that Democrats have always been the party of the middle class and working families and will continue to be the party of the middle class and working families.

And this new position within the Democratic leadership will bring our messaging and our policies, particularly on middle-class anxieties, to a new and never before seen level for our caucus.

And I look forward to working with Leader Pelosi, working closely with Steering and Policy, working with every member of our caucus to project and amplify and focus intensely on that message that we are the party of the middle class and we are the party of middle-class security and opportunity.

Leader Pelosi wants to proactively create a middle-class movement that focuses on wage growth in the middle class, that focuses on new opportunities. And that's precisely what this new effort will do, and precisely what the leader has asked me to focus on in terms of policy and communications.

Now, a final word about **Ben Ray Lujan.** I shared the D triple C for four years. And I must tell you that I can't think of a group of members more operational, more committed, more devoted, more dedicated than Donna Edwards, who did our recruiting, and **Ben Ray Lujan,** who, when given a mission, just did the mission. No drama, no excitement. Just achieved the goal. Both Donna and Ben Ray were just incredibly positive and operational. I'm very grateful to both of them. And I look forward to supporting Donna in her new position as co-chair Steering and Policy, and supporting Ben Ray in his new position as chair of the D triple C. So, thank you, Leader Pelosi, for giving me this opportunity and allowing me to continue my work for the D triple C with Ben ray.

Thank you.

PELOSI: Thank you very much, Chairman Israel. I don't know when this takes effect. I guess when the members vote tomorrow. After we -- after we have our own elections. And since I don't have an opponent, there -- a possibility that I might get elected, but we'll see tomorrow. And then we take these recommendations to the caucus. And one of the -- the election of Steering and Policy chairs, though, is it is a function of the Steering and Policy Committee.

The Steering piece is that, you know -- or the committee assignments, et cetera -- the policy piece is just as it says. And Rosa DeLauro is an expert on both. As I said, by popular demand of the members, she is back in that position as the leader on policy in our caucus. Since she came to the Congress, we have learned a lot from her, and continue to do so as co-chair of Steering and Policy.

Thank you.

. DELAURO: Thank you very, very much. And it's a really exciting day. And I want to say thank you to you, Madam Leader, and for your continued trust in me, and the continued trust of -- of my colleagues. It's -- as you mentioned, that is heartwarming. Because you're always -- it's always more difficult with your peers. You want to make sure that they're -- they're standing with you.

I'm delighted to serve again as co-chair of Steering and Policy for another two years, and so looking forward to working with -- with a partner here with Congresswoman Donna Edwards. And we have worked together over the last couple of years, particularly on issues that are affecting both working women and working men in our community.

And also pleased to work with the Steering and Policy Committee as we address the pressing issues that face the American people.

Democrats have an important mission in the next two years. We need to stand up for the middle class. We need to stand up for the working poor, and for the vulnerable. And the important economic issues of the day -- the most important challenge for people today is that they're in jobs that don't pay them enough money to live on. The leader understands that to (inaudible). And, quite frankly, there's no one better able to lead us as we face those economic challenges. And that's what we need to do for the middle class and for working men and women in this nation. And that is, is to look at the kinds of -- how we create jobs, how we look at increasing that minimum wage, how we look at rebuilding this country through infrastructure and creating jobs that cannot be outsourced. How we pay attention to education and the cost of -- of allowing people to go to school again in -- in this nation.

Today we know that student loan debt is larger than credit card debt. Big issues that we need to face. And, as I said, that the -- the leader understands that better than anyone. She has a clear vision. She has a progressive vision. She listens, she understands, and she brings together the

interests of a very diverse caucus. It's not homogeneous. I don't have to tell you about a Democratic Caucus. And leading us is -- is a task that she takes on, and she really demonstrates to the caucus her strength. And by doing that, provides strength to where we want to try to go.

So, I am proud to serve in the leadership with Leader Pelosi, with the rest of my colleagues here, and I'm proud to be a part of what is a very, very strong team. And I would just say to the folks out there, don't underestimate us.

(LAUGHTER)

PELOSI: Wow. Thank you, Rosa, for your ongoing leadership and your strong message.

We have a newcomer to the leadership in the House Democratic Caucus -- not a newcomer to being a leader, though, as chair of the Democratic Women's Working Group, she led us around the country on a bus. When women succeed, America succeeds. She leads us with her deep values, her political astuteness, her knowledge of the issues. She's going to be just a wonderful addition to the leadership as she chairs -- co-chairs with Rosa the Steering and Policy Committee.

Congresswoman Donna Edwards of Maryland.

EDWARDS: Thank you, Madam Leader.

And I have to tell you, I am so blown away just to be standing here today as part of this new and refreshing leadership team. And I cannot thank the leader enough for displaying the confidence in me and my colleagues to put our foot forward for the 21st century for working people in this country.

And I want to say a couple of thank yous in addition to the leader. It has been a real privilege to work with Steve Israel, our outgoing chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, in recruiting a caliber class of candidates and making sure that we had the resources that we need to do the job.

And now we have the great privilege of being able to stand alongside, work with and for my good friend, **Ben Ray Lujan.** I cannot say enough about him. He truly is a leader. He has demonstrated that since day one that he came into the Congress. And I'm looking forward to the work that we're going to do together to do, as he's described, and that is put forward both an agenda for the American people and for working people that says, "We know who you are; we're invested in you; and we want you to be invested in us."

And I know that our soon-to-be chairman, **Ben Ray Lujan,** is doing to do that for us. And I look forward to supporting him in that effort.

And what can I say about my colleague, Rosa DeLauro? She is such a champion and has such energy. And I only hope I can match that energy on the Steering and Policy Committee.

PELOSI: You're not Italian, you see, and that's...

(CROSSTALK)

EDWARDS: That's right. I'm not. And so I have work to do, but I'm looking forward to doing it.

(LAUGHTER)

And, you know, I think that this is a really exciting day for our Democratic Caucus. Tomorrow will be more exciting when we cement it. But I think what you have standing before you is a leadership team that is interested in the future. And it's really committed every single bit of the way to making sure that working families understand that we are on their side; that we know that there is a struggle; that we know that they haven't had a raise in a very, very long time; that we know that

every day they just want to get up and take care of themselves and their families, build a better life for their -- for their children.

And we have the responsibility of making sure that those dreams come true and that those opportunities are created, and that there are indeed ladders of opportunity for success for the American people. And I am looking forward to doing this.

So Rosa, I'm with you.

(LAUGHTER)

PELOSI: Thank you. Thank you very much, Congresswoman. Thank you all.

Tomorrow after our election, which will take place in the morning, our full leadership team will come forward to make our presentation and to answer your questions.

I just want to close by saying the following. Now, the Republicans have taken both Houses of the Congress of the United States. But when we did that in 2006 (inaudible) elect -- a Congress sworn in in 2007, we worked with President Bush on so many issues. We passed one of the biggest energy bills in the history of our country. We worked with him on a stimulus package. Rosa was very instrumental in helping as we did stimulus and the rebates, that they were refundable to low-income families.

Barney Frank said it was one of the most progressive pieces of legislation to come out of the Congress. We did that with President Bush. And of course, we worked with him on TARP when his own party abandoned him on that, but we were there. Just to name a few examples.

We opposed him on the war in Iraq and privatizing Social Security, but that did not have an influence on how we worked with him on other issues.

So I want the record to show that we did cooperate with President Bush, and I hope the record will soon show that the newly elected Republican Congress will work constructively with President Obama.

We -- we want to work with them to make progress for the American people. A couple of years ago it was building ladders of opportunity for everyone who wants to work hard and play by the rules to achieve the American dream, to reignite the American dream.

This past year, it was jump starting the middle class, creating good-paying jobs here in the United States by building infrastructure of our country, making college affordable, and When Women Succeed, American Succeeds with equal pay for equal work.

These are things that I think have a nonpartisan nature to them. They are supported by the American people. We have to communicate it in a stronger way. But hopefully we can do -- act upon all of that in a bipartisan way as go we go forward.

So I congratulate our leadership team. Part of the House Democratic leadership tomorrow will all be coming out of the caucus with the results of those elections and with an expanded opportunity for you to question our members then. But right now if you have questions -- yes?

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE) just managing expectations. Republicans have built their largest majority since at least the Truman administration, possibly even the Hoover administration if they can pick up one more seat from these outstanding races.

Where do you manage expectations, and is it a realistic goal to try to (inaudible) back a majority?

LUJAN: Look, as Steve pointed out, as Chairman Israel pointed out, we -- we saw so many of the American people that didn't come out to vote this year.

As we're celebrating and remembering the 50th year of the Voting Rights Act and we're continuing to see Republicans try to chip away at that, I think it's important that we just go talk to more and more people.

And I think we can -- we can set those expectations high. Going into 2016, we're going to see more of the electorate involved, excited, ready to work, and get ready to get more people elected. And so I think that, again, working closely with Steve and with the team, we'll see those numbers as they roll out.

But you saw those very close elections this year where Republicans spent a record amount of money. I think we're going to see more Democrats get elected in 2016 and those numbers are going to surprise you.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE) some things the way that most Republicans appear to see this issue. How do you see that playing out in the near term? I know two years is a long way away here, but how do you see that playing out in the Latino community as this fight will probably emerge maybe even in just the next few days here (inaudible)?

LUJAN: Chad (ph), the Republicans have been selling comprehensive immigration reform for over two years now. They've had a chance to put a bill up to vote. Speaker Boehner has stalled that. If Republicans in the House and the Senate aren't happy with actions that the president will consider -- and we'll see what those look like going forward -- they -- they're in charge. They can put a bill forward.

And I certainly hope that we can come together and work that way. I don't believe this is going to poison the well. This should encourage everyone to work together, and I'm certainly hopeful that we'll see more of that.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE) and a lot of that seemed directly (inaudible) positions on leave for women who have (inaudible). Could you respond to some of that criticism (ph)?

PELOSI: Sure. First of all, let me say that we do have -- I was one of the ones who said to Congresswoman Duckworth, don't come back here. This is the most glorious experience of your life. The center of the universe will change for you when you have this precious new baby.

The rules of the caucus are the same as the rules of the House, no proxy voting, and would require changing rules of the caucus to -- as opposed to -- as different from the rules of the House. She understood that full well.

The fact is is that it's really important to be here, to be in caucus. It's more important to vote on the floor. If I were to make a fight, I'd vote to have a proxy to vote on the floor than in whatever's going on in the caucus.

But the fact is is that we don't know what's going on in the lives of many people. I think one of our members may be having an operation this week or that. You're going to establish a situation where we're going to determine who has a note from the doctor that's valid.

It's really a place we shouldn't go down, but it is not to be confused with not having family and medical leave. We wish her well. She's a heroine to our country. We're very excited about the baby. And in fact, knowing about the baby, I appointed Congresswoman Duckworth to the Benghazi committee. Only five appointments did I have. I wanted our strongest members there.

She informed me of her good news, and I said just take it as it comes. You know, to the extent that you can serve, we want you to be there. So I don't know why all this fuss was made about a vote in the caucus. I think if -- if the House wants to change its rules about proxies in general that applies to the floor and the caucus, that's -- that's another thing.

But we wish her well. She has all of our good wishes and prayers. And I had a very lovely conversation with her. But even again knowing that (inaudible) beautiful expectation very early on, I said we need your best -- our best thinking there. We need you to be there on the Benghazi committee.

I just want to ask **Ben Ray Lujan** if he would speak to his mom.

LUJAN: (SPEAKING IN SPANISH)

PELOSI: Thank you all.

END

LOAD-DATE: November 17, 2014

406 of 500 DOCUMENTS

FOX - 31 KDVR (Denver)

November 17, 2014 Monday

Polis 'relieved' not to have gotten DCCC job he campaigned for

BYLINE: Eli Stokols

SECTION: POLITICS

LENGTH: 449 words

×

Polis 'relieved' not to have gotten DCCC job he campaigned for

DENVER -- House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi announced Monday afternoon that she is appointing Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** to serve as chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the role overseeing the caucus' fundraising and political operation.

In so doing, Pelosi bypassed Colorado Rep. Jared Polis, D-Boulder, who openly coveted the position and was among a half dozen lawmakers considered for the post.

Lujan, in his third term in the House representing New Mexico's 3rd Congressional District, will be the first Hispanic lawmaker to run the DCCC since the 1980s, a signal that Pelosi views Hispanic outreach as critical to the party's chances of rebounding from a bruising 2014 election that has left it with fewer House seats than it's held since the 1940s.

Lujan is known to be well-liked and energetic on Capitol Hill, but not a prolific fundraiser like Polis and Reps. Jim Himes of Connecticut and Donna Edwards of Maryland, who lobbied for the position mostly on their ability to raise money.

"Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** is an excellent choice for the DCCC chair," Polis said Monday afternoon in a statement. "My top priority since being elected to Congress has always been representing the people of Colorado and I'm relieved not to have to balance that with a partisan office.

"There is much work to be done to balance our budget, keep our economy moving forward, protect the environment of our beautiful state, and ensure that all Coloradans have access to affordable educational opportunities. I will continue to push innovative and bold new ideas, and look forward to working across the aisle to find solutions that improve the lives of Coloradans."

Polis, who is entering his fourth term in the House, is respected as a policy-focused workhorse on the Hill, but also viewed as a man in a hurry.

Earlier this year, he put his significant personal wealth behind two local control ballot measures as a way of forcing the state to deal with the ongoing battle between a growing oil and gas industry and homeowners concerned about the environmental and public health impacts of drilling.

In August, Polis finally agreed to pull the initiatives after Gov. John Hickenlooper formed a task-force to work on policy solutions, but not before alienating many Colorado Democrats who feared that his initiatives would backfire on their ticket in November.

A few months earlier, a Washington Post profile of Polis that focused on his hopes of being appointed DCCC Chairman included this noteworthy quote from his chief of staff:

"Look, he's either going to move up or move out," Dan Turrentine told the Post's Ben Terris.

LOAD-DATE: November 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: Rep. Jared Polis, D-Boulder. Rep. Jared Polis, D-Boulder.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Publication

Copyright 2014 Local TV LLC
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Gannett News Service

November 17, 2014 Monday

Pelosi taps first Latino to run campaign operations

BYLINE: Susan Davis, USA TODAY

SECTION: Pg. ARC

LENGTH: 149 words

Susan Davis, USA TODAY

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan,** D-N.M., will chair the House Democrats' 2016 campaign operation, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., announced Monday.

Lujan, 42, is the first Latino to be named chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. Pelosi praised him as a "dynamic and forward-looking" leader.

The news conference announcing his appointment started late as an apologetic **Lujan** explained: "I couldn't get mom off the phone."

The only person happier than **Lujan's** mother may be outgoing DCCC Chairman Steve Israel, D-N.Y., who is going to head up a new leadership position advising House Democrats on policy and communications. He made clear he was eager to hand over the post. "This may be the happiest day in my life," Israel quipped.

Democrats lost at least a dozen seats on Election Day, giving Republicans their largest majority since the World War II era.

LOAD-DATE: November 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Gannett Company, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

408 of 500 DOCUMENTS

National Journal Daily Extra AM

November 17, 2014 Monday

Ben Ray Lujan Is Surprise Pick to Head DCCC

BYLINE: Billy House

LENGTH: 591 words

In a surprise pick, Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico is the pick of House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi to be the next Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee chair.

Lujan, who is Hispanic, said he plans to "hit the ground running," and that his "expectations are high" for the 2016 congressional elections. He also showed some emotion, ending a news conference with Pelosi by blowing a kiss toward the cameras to his mother back home in New Mexico.

Pelosi called **Lujan** "a dynamic and forward looking leader with fresh energy and ideas," who she said would lead the party to victory in 2016,

Though **Lujan** is considered a rising star, the selection of the three-term House member nonetheless came as a surprisebecause five other Democrats had been mentioned more often in recent weeks as contenders to succeed outgoing DCCC Chairman Steve Israel of New York.

Lujan, 42, will head the party's political arm at a time when Democrats have seen their overall fortunes in the House decline dramatically, with a net loss of about 66 seats over four years.

While some believe the party's prospects for a modest rebound in 2016 are boosted with the prospect of Hillary Clinton topping a presidential ticket, for now Democrats will have fewer House members in the new Congress that convenes in January than at any time since the 1940s.

With **Lujan**, Pelosi has signaled an intention to continue its outreach to progressives and Hispanics, with the party eager to make up ground for the net loss of at least 66 seats since 2010.

Lujan ranked 62nd most liberal in 2013 in National Journal's vote ratings of House memebrs. He has been a modestif not spectacularfundraiser as he is about to enter his fourth term in Congress, having raised at least $1.2 million for his re-election campaign this cycle.

Other lawmakers described more publicly by party sources in recent weeks as vying for the job were Reps. Jim Himes of Connecticut, Joaquin Castro of Texas, Jared Polis of Colorado, Donna Edwards of Maryland, and Lois Frankel of Florida. Rep. Joe Kennedy, D-Mass., was said to be considered a candidate, but took himself out of the running.

Himes, who will also be entering his fourth term in the House, is seen as more of a centrist. But his candidacy came under attack in recent days by progressives, inside and outside of the House. He has served as the DCCC's finance chairman and has been successful in raising moneya lot of it from Wall Streetto help the campaigns of embattled Democrats.

But many complained that choosing the former vice president of Goldman Sachs would send the wrong message that the party was trying to cozy up to Wall Street.

The timing of the announcement came on the eve of Pelosi's unchallenged reelection as minority leader set for Tuesday morning in closed-door Democratic Caucus voting. The reasoning is a new DCCC chief controls a seat on the Democratic Steering and Policy Committeeand that panel of party leaders is itself set to meet later Tuesday to consider several matters.

At the same news conference where **Lujan** was announced as the new DCCC chief, Pelosi also announced that Edwards would be her pick to succeed outgoing Rep. George Miller of California as a co-chair of the steering committee. She will join Rep. Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut as a co-chair.

Pelosi also announced that Israel would be moving from the DCCC chairman's post to a new job of chair of policy and communications next session.

CORRECTION: An earlier version of this story incorrectly said that **Lujan** would be the first Hispanic chair of the committee.

LOAD-DATE: November 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Magazine

Copyright 2014 The National Journal Group, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

The New York Times Blogs
(First Draft)

November 17, 2014 Monday

Ben Ray Lujan to Helm Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee

BYLINE: JONATHAN MARTIN

SECTION: US; politics

LENGTH: 113 words

HIGHLIGHT: Representative Nancy Pelosi named Representative **Ben Ray Lujan,** a 42-year-old congressman from New Mexico, to succeed Representative Steve Israel as the chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

Representative Nancy Pelosi named Representative **Ben Ray Lujan,** a 42-year-old congressman from New Mexico, to succeed Representative Steve Israel as the chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

Mr. **Lujan,** who was first elected in 2008, comes from a politically prominent Democratic family in New Mexico. Mr. **Lujan,** who is Hispanic, is the son of the late Ben **Lujan,** once a state house speaker and longtime power broker in New Mexico politics. The younger **Lujan** has been active in the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and well-liked by his party's leadership, which named him to the whip team last year and gave him a seat on the coveted Energy and Commerce Committee.

LOAD-DATE: November 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: News

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2014 The News York Times Company
All Rights Reserved

Political Transcript Wire

November 17, 2014 Monday

REP. NANCY PELOSI, D-CALIF., HOLDS A NEWS CONFERENCE

LENGTH: 3818 words

REP. NANCY PELOSI, D-CALIF., HOUSE MINORITY LEADER, HOLDS A NEWS CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 17, 2014

SPEAKERS: REP. NANCY PELOSI, D-CALIF., HOUSE MINORITY LEADER

REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN**, D-N.M.

REP. STEVE ISRAEL, D-N.Y., CHAIRMAN, DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE REP. ROSA DELAURO, D-CONN., CO-CHAIR, DEMOCRATIC STEERING AND POLICY COMMITTEE

REP. DONNA EDWARDS, D-MD.

[*] PELOSI: Good afternoon, everyone. The chairman of the -- hi.

(LAUGHTER)

PELOSI: Hi. The chairman of the House Democratic Caucus has informed members that tomorrow we will elect the leadership team for the 114th Congress. Should I receive the honor of serving as the House Democratic leader, I will be proud to recommend members gathered here for important positions of leadership in our caucus in the new Congress.

As the next chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, I'm pleased to recommend to our colleagues Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico, a dynamic and forward-looking leader with a fresh energy and ideas House Democrats need for victory in 2016.

He has bold vision and determined leadership to deliver wins in difficult districts. I am confident that Congressman **Lujan** will prove a tireless champion for our members and candidates across the country, and I'm absolutely delighted to recommend him to the caucus.

As chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee for the past few years -- four years, Congressman Steve Israel has consistently proved the depth of his wisdom and the strength of his strategic vision in making the -- our case to the American people. In his new role -- and we thank him for his leadership over those four years.

In his new role as chair of something called Policy and Communications, Congressman Israel will be an invaluable asset to our caucus working closely with the Steering and Policy Committee to develop our caucus message, jump start the middle class, and to reignite the American dream. Thank you, Mr. Israel, for agreeing to serve.

Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut, her innovative and unrelenting leadership -- unrelenting -- unrelenting leadership is essential to our caucus. She is what I call the godmother When Women Succeed, America Succeeds agenda.

Her work on behalf of students and working families is unparalleled. Congresswoman DeLauro is a lioness of our caucus, and I look forward to continuing to work with her as co-chair of the Steering and Policy Committee.

I have to say about Rosa, the 40-some members that are here from the freshman class of last year -- we had 51, I think it's now 45 -- they have entrusted their hopes, dreams, aspirations and their career path to Rosa, and she understands their aspiration as well as even more -- senior members.

So she is an institution that everyone by popular demand insisted that she again serve in this role. It pleased all of us. I'm glad it pleased Rosa to do that.

Congresswoman Donna Edwards of Maryland has been an energetic and impassioned voice within our caucus since she came to caucus. As chair of the Democratic Women's Working Group, she has been a forceful champion for America's women, continuing to work as she began as co- founder and executive director of the National Network to End Domestic Violence.

Congresswoman Edwards' deep grasp of policy and priorities of middle-class families will make her a great asset to our caucus in the role of policy co-chair. These members are tested and tenacious members of our caucus. They have the energy and the vision to win progress for the American people. I'm excited to work with them in these important roles.

And I'm very pleased and honored to yield to my nominee to be chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, Ben Ray -- Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico.

LUJAN: Thank you, Leader Pelosi. And I want to apologize for everyone for keeping everyone waiting. It was me that caused the delay. I shared with Speaker Pelosi as I was walking in that I couldn't get mom off the phone. And as I was visiting with mom to visit with her, you can imagine it was emotional. It was joyous.

My father, who passed away two years ago, was the former speaker of the New Mexico House of Representatives and was actively involved fro a grassroots perspective in organizing leaders and making sure that we were looking after the working people of America. So I want to apologize for the press ahead of time for that delay as well.

I want to thank Leader Pelosi for the opportunity and commend her and Chairman Israel for their leadership. I've been working with the chairman as part of the Latino Council and saw the tremendous job he did in recruiting at the DCCC and in growing in a historically challenging cycle.

I look forward to working with him in the coming days so that I can hit the ground running, take lessons from the recent elections, and get right to work to ensure that we have the great candidates, resource and messages to begin a successful 2016. I know that Chairman Israel has already been recruiting, working actively as he always has from day one, and I look forward to that same work ethic going forward.

Already less than a month removed from the elections, House Republicans are once again talking about shutting down the government rather than working with Democrats and the president to tackle the issue facing families across our nation. They've stood in the way of increasing the minimum wage, equal pay for equal work and comprehensive immigration reform. As the chair of the DCCC, I will work to make sure that House Republicans are held accountable for this reckless behavior and that the American people see the clear difference between House Democrats, who have a plan for job creation, make college more affordable, raise the minimum wage and fix our broken immigration system.

There will be great opportunities in 2016 to make gains with the more favorable electorate during a presidential year. And with many districts held by Republicans that President Obama won, we will be on the offensive to put the majority in place.

Again, thank you Leader Pelosi, and I look forward to getting to work.

PELOSI: Thank you very much, Chairman **Lujan**. It is with my -- with great appreciation and admiration for a job well done that I now yield to the new chair of Communications and Policy, Congressman Steve Israel of New York, really of the whole country. He travels so much.

ISRAEL: Thank you, Leader. Thank you. Now if you think that Ben Ray is happy, you have no idea how happy I am.

PELOSI: Even happier than his mom?

ISRAEL: This may be the happiest day in my life. I am -- I'm incredibly excited by Leader Pelosi's decision to reorganize the leadership of our caucus and create a position as chairman of Policy and Communications.

Leader Pelosi and I have talked about this extensively. I'm going to be very brief, and then I'm going to brag on -- on my friend Ben Ray. Our country is experiencing the deepest and the most acute anxiety for the middle class in history.

In the past election, one third of the eligible voters voted for a Democrat or a Republican. Two thirds of voters stayed home because they've lost faith in government's ability to understand their anxiety and solve their economic challenges.

In fact, if you take a look at the past several elections, voters have us all on a very short leash. They give a majority and they take it away very quickly literally every few years because of this intense economic anxiety that they have.

And it's understandable. Since the recovery began, the economy's grown 12 percent. Corporate profits have grown 46 percent. The stock market has grown 92 percent, but median household income has declined by 3 percent. So no wonder they're anxious. No wonder they feel this insecurity.

Now voters on both -- both parties have -- voter have put both parties on a short leash, but intuitively they know that Democrats have always been the party of the middle class and working families and will continue to be the party of the middle class and working families. And this new position within the Democratic leadership will bring our messaging and our policies, particularly on middle-class anxieties, to a new and never before seen level for our caucus.

And I look forward to working with Leader Pelosi, working closely with Steering and Policy, working with every member of our caucus to project and amplify and focus intensely on that message that we are the party of the middle class and we are the party of middle-class security and opportunity.

Leader Pelosi wants to proactively create a middle-class movement that focuses on wage growth in the middle class, that focuses on new opportunities. And that's precisely what this new effort will do, and precisely what the leader has asked me to focus on in terms of policy and communications.

Now, a final word about **Ben Ray Lujan**. I shared the D triple C for four years. And I must tell you that I can't think of a group of members more operational, more committed, more devoted, more dedicated than Donna Edwards, who did our recruiting, and **Ben Ray Lujan**, who, when given a mission, just did the mission. No drama, no excitement. Just achieved the goal. Both Donna and Ben Ray were just incredibly positive and operational. I'm very grateful to both of them. And I look forward to supporting Donna in her new position as co-chair Steering and Policy, and supporting Ben Ray in his new position as chair of the D triple C. So, thank you, Leader Pelosi, for giving me this opportunity and allowing me to continue my work for the D triple C with Ben ray.

Thank you.

PELOSI: Thank you very much, Chairman Israel. I don't know when this takes effect. I guess when the members vote tomorrow. After we -- after we have our own elections. And since I don't have an opponent, there -- a possibility that I might get elected, but we'll see tomorrow. And then we take these recommendations to the caucus. And one of the -- the election of Steering and Policy chairs, though, is it is a function of the Steering and Policy Committee.

The Steering piece is that, you know -- or the committee assignments, et cetera -- the policy piece is just as it says. And Rosa DeLauro is an expert on both. As I said, by popular demand of the members, she is back in that position as the leader on policy in our caucus. Since she came to the Congress, we have learned a lot from her, and continue to do so as co-chair of Steering and Policy.

Thank you.

. DELAURO: Thank you very, very much. And it's a really exciting day. And I want to say thank you to you, Madam Leader, and for your continued trust in me, and the continued trust of -- of my colleagues. It's -- as you mentioned, that is heartwarming. Because you're always -- it's always more difficult with your peers. You want to make sure that they're -- they're standing with you.

I'm delighted to serve again as co-chair of Steering and Policy for another two years, and so looking forward to working with -- with a partner here with Congresswoman Donna Edwards. And we have worked together over the last couple of years, particularly on issues that are affecting both working women and working men in our community.

And also pleased to work with the Steering and Policy Committee as we address the pressing issues that face the American people.

Democrats have an important mission in the next two years. We need to stand up for the middle class. We need to stand up for the working poor, and for the vulnerable. And the important economic issues of the day -- the most important challenge for people today is that they're in jobs that don't pay them enough money to live on. The leader understands that to (inaudible). And, quite frankly, there's no one better able to lead us as we face those economic challenges. And that's what we need to do for the middle class and for working men and women in this nation. And that is, is to look at the kinds of -- how we create jobs, how we look at increasing that minimum wage, how we look at rebuilding this country through infrastructure and creating jobs that cannot be outsourced. How we pay attention to education and the cost of -- of allowing people to go to school again in -- in this nation.

Today we know that student loan debt is larger than credit card debt. Big issues that we need to face. And, as I said, that the -- the leader understands that better than anyone. She has a clear vision. She has a progressive vision. She listens, she understands, and she brings together the interests of a very diverse caucus. It's not homogeneous. I don't have to tell you about a Democratic Caucus. And leading us is -- is a task that she takes on, and she really demonstrates to the caucus her strength. And by doing that, provides strength to where we want to try to go.

So, I am proud to serve in the leadership with Leader Pelosi, with the rest of my colleagues here, and I'm proud to be a part of what is a very, very strong team. And I would just say to the folks out there, don't underestimate us.

(LAUGHTER)

PELOSI: Wow. Thank you, Rosa, for your ongoing leadership and your strong message.

We have a newcomer to the leadership in the House Democratic Caucus -- not a newcomer to being a leader, though, as chair of the Democratic Women's Working Group, she led us around the country on a bus. When women succeed, America succeeds. She leads us with her deep values, her political astuteness, her knowledge of the issues. She's going to be just a wonderful addition to the leadership as she chairs -- co-chairs with Rosa the Steering and Policy Committee.

Congresswoman Donna Edwards of Maryland.

EDWARDS: Thank you, Madam Leader.

And I have to tell you, I am so blown away just to be standing here today as part of this new and refreshing leadership team. And I cannot thank the leader enough for displaying the confidence in me and my colleagues to put our foot forward for the 21st century for working people in this country.

And I want to say a couple of thank yous in addition to the leader. It has been a real privilege to work with Steve Israel, our outgoing chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, in recruiting a caliber class of candidates and making sure that we had the resources that we need to do the job.

And now we have the great privilege of being able to stand alongside, work with and for my good friend, **Ben Ray Lujan**. I cannot say enough about him. He truly is a leader. He has demonstrated that since day one that he came into the Congress. And I'm looking forward to the work that we're going to do together to do, as he's described, and that is put forward both an agenda for the American people and for working people that says, "We know who you are; we're invested in you; and we want you to be invested in us."

And I know that our soon-to-be chairman, **Ben Ray Lujan**, is doing to do that for us. And I look forward to supporting him in that effort.

And what can I say about my colleague, Rosa DeLauro? She is such a champion and has such energy. And I only hope I can match that energy on the Steering and Policy Committee.

PELOSI: You're not Italian, you see, and that's...

(CROSSTALK)

EDWARDS: That's right. I'm not. And so I have work to do, but I'm looking forward to doing it.

(LAUGHTER)

And, you know, I think that this is a really exciting day for our Democratic Caucus. Tomorrow will be more exciting when we cement it. But I think what you have standing before you is a leadership team that is interested in the future. And it's really committed every single bit of the way to making sure that working families understand that we are on their side; that we know that there is a struggle; that we know that they haven't had a raise in a very, very long time; that we know that every day they just want to get up and take care of themselves and their families, build a better life for their -- for their children.

And we have the responsibility of making sure that those dreams come true and that those opportunities are created, and that there are indeed ladders of opportunity for success for the American people. And I am looking forward to doing this.

So Rosa, I'm with you.

(LAUGHTER)

PELOSI: Thank you. Thank you very much, Congresswoman. Thank you all.

Tomorrow after our election, which will take place in the morning, our full leadership team will come forward to make our presentation and to answer your questions.

I just want to close by saying the following. Now, the Republicans have taken both Houses of the Congress of the United States. But when we did that in 2006 (inaudible) elect -- a Congress sworn in in 2007, we worked with President Bush on so many issues. We passed one of the biggest energy bills in the history of our country. We worked with him on a stimulus package. Rosa was very instrumental in helping as we did stimulus and the rebates, that they were refundable to low-income families.

Barney Frank said it was one of the most progressive pieces of legislation to come out of the Congress. We did that with President Bush. And of course, we worked with him on TARP when his own party abandoned him on that, but we were there. Just to name a few examples.

We opposed him on the war in Iraq and privatizing Social Security, but that did not have an influence on how we worked with him on other issues.

So I want the record to show that we did cooperate with President Bush, and I hope the record will soon show that the newly elected Republican Congress will work constructively with President Obama.

We -- we want to work with them to make progress for the American people. A couple of years ago it was building ladders of opportunity for everyone who wants to work hard and play by the rules to achieve the American dream, to reignite the American dream.

This past year, it was jump starting the middle class, creating good-paying jobs here in the United States by building infrastructure of our country, making college affordable, and When Women Succeed, American Succeeds with equal pay for equal work.

These are things that I think have a nonpartisan nature to them. They are supported by the American people. We have to communicate it in a stronger way. But hopefully we can do -- act upon all of that in a bipartisan way as go we go forward.

So I congratulate our leadership team. Part of the House Democratic leadership tomorrow will all be coming out of the caucus with the results of those elections and with an expanded opportunity for you to question our members then. But right now if you have questions -- yes?

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE) just managing expectations. Republicans have built their largest majority since at least the Truman administration, possibly even the Hoover administration if they can pick up one more seat from these outstanding races.

Where do you manage expectations, and is it a realistic goal to try to (inaudible) back a majority? **LUJAN**: Look, as Steve pointed out, as Chairman Israel pointed out, we -- we saw so many of the American people that didn't come out to vote this year.

As we're celebrating and remembering the 50th year of the Voting Rights Act and we're continuing to see Republicans try to chip away at that, I think it's important that we just go talk to more and more people.

And I think we can -- we can set those expectations high. Going into 2016, we're going to see more of the electorate involved, excited, ready to work, and get ready to get more people elected. And so I think that, again, working closely with Steve and with the team, we'll see those numbers as they roll out.

But you saw those very close elections this year where Republicans spent a record amount of money. I think we're going to see more Democrats get elected in 2016 and those numbers are going to surprise you.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE) some things the way that most Republicans appear to see this issue. How do you see that playing out in the near term? I know two years is a long way away here, but how do you see that playing out in the Latino community as this fight will probably emerge maybe even in just the next few days here (inaudible)?

LUJAN: Chad (ph), the Republicans have been selling comprehensive immigration reform for over two years now. They've had a chance to put a bill up to vote. Speaker Boehner has stalled that. If Republicans in the House and the Senate aren't happy with actions that the president will consider -- and we'll see what those look like going forward -- they -- they're in charge. They can put a bill forward.

And I certainly hope that we can come together and work that way. I don't believe this is going to poison the well. This should encourage everyone to work together, and I'm certainly hopeful that we'll see more of that.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE) and a lot of that seemed directly (inaudible) positions on leave for women who have (inaudible). Could you respond to some of that criticism (ph)?

PELOSI: Sure. First of all, let me say that we do have -- I was one of the ones who said to Congresswoman Duckworth, don't come back here. This is the most glorious experience of your life. The center of the universe will change for you when you have this precious new baby.

The rules of the caucus are the same as the rules of the House, no proxy voting, and would require changing rules of the caucus to -- as opposed to -- as different from the rules of the House. She understood that full well.

The fact is is that it's really important to be here, to be in caucus. It's more important to vote on the floor. If I were to make a fight, I'd vote to have a proxy to vote on the floor than in whatever's going on in the caucus.

But the fact is is that we don't know what's going on in the lives of many people. I think one of our members may be having an operation this week or that. You're going to establish a situation where we're going to determine who has a note from the doctor that's valid.

It's really a place we shouldn't go down, but it is not to be confused with not having family and medical leave. We wish her well. She's a heroine to our country. We're very excited about the baby. And in fact, knowing about the baby, I appointed Congresswoman Duckworth to the Benghazi committee. Only five appointments did I have. I wanted our strongest members there.

She informed me of her good news, and I said just take it as it comes. You know, to the extent that you can serve, we want you to be there. So I don't know why all this fuss was made about a vote in the caucus. I think if -- if the House wants to change its rules about proxies in general that applies to the floor and the caucus, that's -- that's another thing.

But we wish her well. She has all of our good wishes and prayers. And I had a very lovely conversation with her. But even again knowing that (inaudible) beautiful expectation very early on, I said we need your best -- our best thinking there. We need you to be there on the Benghazi committee.

I just want to ask **Ben Ray Lujan** if he would speak to his mom.

LUJAN: (SPEAKING IN SPANISH)

PELOSI: Thank you all.

END

LOAD-DATE: November 19, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 66535

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

JOURNAL-CODE: PTTW

Copyright 2014 ProQuest Information and Learning
All Rights Reserved
Copyright 2014 Roll Call, Inc.

Spanish Newswire Services

17 noviembre 2014 lunes 9:59 PM GMT

DEMÓCRATAS CONGRESO;
Pelosi nombra al hispano Luján presidente del Comité de Campaña Demócrata

BYLINE: rg/pa

LENGTH: 300 palabras

Washington, 17 nov (EFEUSA).- El congresista por Nuevo México **Ben Ray Luján** será el próximo presidente del Comité de Campaña Demócrata del Congreso (DCCC, en inglés) y el primer hispano en ocupar el puesto, anunció hoy la líder de la minoría en la Cámara de Representantes, Nancy Pelosi."Estoy orgullosa de anunciar que el próximo presidente del DCCC será **Ben Ray Luján**, cuya visión, energía y liderazgo traerá a los demócratas de la Cámara la victoria en 2016," dijo Pelosi en su cuenta de la red social Twitter.

Pese a la buena consideración que está cosechando el legislador de origen latino, ha resultado toda una sorpresa, porque varios miembros de la bancada habían sido mencionados como posibles sustitutos del presidente saliente, Steve Israel (Nueva York), pero no él.

Luján, de 42 años, estará al frente del brazo político del partido en un momento crítico para los demócratas tras la debacle demócrata en los comicios legislativos del pasado día 4, cuando los republicanos les arrebataron el Senado e hicieron aún más fuerte su mayoría en la Cámara Baja.

Pese a que muchos analistas consideran que la llegada de Hillary Clinton como más que posible candidata a la Presidencia será un revulsivo para los demócratas también en el Capitolio, lo cierto es que tendrán mucho trabajo para recuperar los 66 escaños que se han dejado por el camino desde 2010.

Aún así, el movimiento de la líder de la minoría sigue el patrón del de su par en el Senado, Harry Reid, quien acercándose también a la senadora Elizabeth Warren ha mostrado la intención de su bancada de dotar de más frescura al partido de cara a los próximos dos años.

Está previsto que Pelosi sea reelegida este martes como cabeza de su partido en la Cámara Baja para el próximo Congreso, cuya andadura comienza en enero próximo. EFEUSA

LOAD-DATE: November 25, 2014

LANGUAGE: SPANISH; ESPAÑOL

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Agencia de información

Copyright 2014 Efe News Services (U.S.) Inc.
All Rights Reserved

412 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

November 17, 2014 Monday 10:05 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: DPNM Congratulates NM Congressman Ben Ray Lujan as the Next Chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee!

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 114 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan**, who serves New Mexico's Third Congressional District, has been named Chair of the national Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC). House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi made the announcement Monday Afternoon in Washington, DC.

The Democratic Party of New Mexico congratulates Congressman **Lujan!**

Read more about Congressman **Lujan's** selection as DCCC Chair in the Washington Post. Click Here (http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-politics/wp/2014/11/17/**ben-ray-lujan**-chosen-as-next-dccc-chairman/).

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 24KuanRap-101118 30FurigayJof-4938015 30FurigayJof

LOAD-DATE: November 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

413 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

November 17, 2014 Monday

Pelosi Announces House Democratic Leadership Changes

LENGTH: 444 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the House of Representative Nancy Pelosi, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi released the following statement today regarding her recommendations for House Democratic Leadership positions:

"The Chairman of the Democratic Caucus has informed Members that we will meet tomorrow to organize the Caucus and elect the Leadership team for the 114th Congress.

"Should I receive the honor of serving as House Democratic Leader, I will make the following recommendations to my colleagues in the caucus: Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** as Chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, Congressman Steve Israel of New York to be Chair,

Policy and Communications, Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut as Steering Co-Chair and Congresswoman Donna Edwards of Maryland as Policy Co-Chair.

"Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** is a dynamic and forward-looking leader with the fresh energy and ideas House Democrats need for victory in 2016. Congressman **Luján** has the bold vision and determined leadership to deliver Democratic wins in difficult districts - and I am confident he will prove a tireless champion for our members and candidates across the country.

"As Chairman of the DCCC for the past four years, Congressman Steve Israel has consistently proved the depth of his wisdom and the strength of his strategic vision in making our case to the American people. In his new role as Chair, Policy and Communications, Congressman Israel will be an invaluable asset to our Caucus, working closely with the Steering and Policy Committee to develop our Caucus message, jumpstart the middle class and reignite the American dream.

"Rosa DeLauro's innovative and unrelenting leadership is essential to our Caucus. She is the insistent vision behind the When Women Succeed, America Succeeds agenda, and her work on behalf of students and working families is unparalleled. Congresswoman DeLauro is the lion of our caucus, and I look forward to continuing to work with her to move our country forward.

"Congresswoman Donna Edwards has been an energetic and impassioned voice within our Caucus ever since she came to Congress. As Chair of the Democratic Women's Working Group, she has been a forceful champion of America's women - continuing the work she began as co-founder and executive director of the National Network to End Domestic Violence. Congresswoman Edwards' deep grasp of policy and the priorities of middle class families will make her a great asset to our caucus in the role of Policy Co-Chair."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: November 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

414 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Washington Post Blogs
The Fix

November 17, 2014 Monday 10:09 PM EST

In a party full of urbanites, the new DCCC chairman comes from one of most rural Democratic districts

BYLINE: Philip Bump

LENGTH: 349 words

If the measure of political importance in the House is district size (which is at least part of the implicit argument every time you see a map like this), House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) picked one of the most powerful members of her caucus to lead the party's congressional campaign arm for the next two years.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-N.M.) is Pelosi's choice to run the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, succeeding Rep. Steve Israel (D-N.Y.). And **Lujan**, as of January, will represent the second-largest district still in Democratic hands.

Lujan's Santa Fe-based 3rd congressional district is just under 45,000 square miles, according to the Census Bureau. That puts it in fourth place for current Democratic representatives, behind Nevada's 4th (50,997 square miles), Arizona's 1st (55,000) and Texas's 23rd (58,000).

You'll notice that the Democrats lost two of those seats earlier this month (Nevada and Texas). That's indirectly related to their size; since House seats all (roughly) represent the same number of voters, that means that these four districts are among the least population-dense districts in the country. Which means they're more rural. Which means they're more likely to vote Republican.

The reverse is also true, to a lesser degree. There are 18 House seats currently held by Democrats that are smaller than the smallest House seat held by a Republican -- all in cities that are more likely to vote Democratic. And that smallest Republican district is a lot smaller than the next-smallest. The second-smallest Republican district is bigger than a quarter of all of the Democrats' districts. And, sure enough, the smallest was one of the most closely contested this year: New York's 11th district, held by the always-colorful Rep. Michael Grimm (R).

The biggest Republican ones are massive. In fifth place is New Mexico's 2nd, adjacent to **Lujan's** district -- and 25,000 square miles bigger. (That's 380 NY-11s, for scale.) The largest Republican district doesn't have a fancy name like "Alabama's 2nd" or "Colorado's 5th."

We usually just call it, "Alaska."

LOAD-DATE: November 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2014 Washingtonpost.Newsweek Interactive Company, LLC d/b/a Washington Post Digital
All Rights Reserved

Washington Post Blogs

November 17, 2014 Monday 8:51 PM EST

Ben Ray Lujan chosen as next DCCC chairman

BYLINE: Ed O'Keefe

LENGTH: 725 words

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) has selected Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-N.M.) to serve as the next chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, a plum assignment heading into a 2016 political cycle that is expected to be much more beneficial for Democrats.

Pelosi plans to make the decision official on Monday afternoon, but previewed her pick in an interview with The Washington Post, saying that **Lujan** "is really a focused operational person. He understands that getting out the vote is what this is and how we message to our base and how we message across the board to the persuadables and the rest."

"I'm choosing him because of his political astuteness, and he can manage all of this very well," she said during an interview in her office at the U.S. Capitol.

Pelosi is expected to be easily reelected as House minority leader when Democrats meet behind closed doors on Tuesday morning to begin their leadership elections for the next Congress. Her lieutenants, Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) and Rep. James Clyburn (D-S.C.) also are expected to win another term atop the caucus.

Lujan, 42, will be a fresh and much younger face among top House Democrats. **Lujan**, who will be the first Latino ever to hold the job of party campaign chairman, begins his fourth term in Congress in January. He is a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee and a vice chairman with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, leading the group's political action committee with a focus on helping more Latinos win seats in Congress.

The congressman's father, Ben **Lujan**, once served as speaker of the New Mexico House of Representatives and his cousin is Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (D-N.M.), another member of New Mexico's congressional delegation.

Pelosi also detailed plans Monday to fill out her leadership team. She will give outgoing DCCC chairman, Rep. Steve Israel (D-N.Y.), the newly created position of chairman of policy and communications -- essentially a leading messaging role for the caucus. Israel has led the DCCC through the last two political cycles, during which the party failed to retake the majority, losing at least eight seats this year.

Two loyal Pelosi allies, Reps. Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.) and Donna Edwards (D-Md.), will be tapped to serve as co-chairmen of the caucus's policy and steering committee. The influential roles give longtime Pelosi friend DeLauro and Edwards, who is considered a rising star and potentially future statewide candidate in Maryland, the job of determining which party members will serve on key committees next year.

Lujan is a dark-horse candidate to lead the DCCC, someone who's name hadn't been floated publicly in recent days. Other names mentioned included Rep. Joseph Kennedy III (D-Mass.), who asked that his name be withdrawn from consideration. Others included Rep. Jim Himes (D-Conn.), who served as the committee's finance chairman for the past two years, and Rep. Joaquin Castro (D-Tex.), a freshman member whose brother, Julian Castro, is serving as secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

Pelosi called Himes "a wonderful person" who did "better than anybody" in assuring that Democrats gave money to the DCCC for the election cycle. But she disputed suggestions that she had been considering Castro for the role.

"I read about it in the paper. Or not in the paper - but people were calling me saying 'I hear you're going to announce Joaquin.' I've never had a conversation with Joaquin about this, he's never told me he's interested," she said.

She said she spoke with and selected **Lujan** "in the last few days."

During the interview, Pelosi said that she has no plans to relinquish her leadership position until Democrats retake control of the House.

"I could have walked away, but we built something and then we want to take it to the next step," she said. She added that she's been steering Democrats on a "path" since the 2000 political cycle that helped them retake control in 2006 and build on their gains in 2008, though they've suffered setbacks in the years since.

"I thought I'd be long gone by now," she said, because "I thought we'd win the third term in the majority [in 2010] and I would have completed some of the work. I'm not here because I want to have the accoutrement of being leader. I'm here because we have a mission to accomplish for the American people."

LOAD-DATE: November 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2014 Washingtonpost.Newsweek Interactive Company, LLC d/b/a Washington Post Digital
All Rights Reserved

CNN.com

November 17, 2014 Monday 4:19 PM EST

Pelosi picks Lujan to helm DCCC

BYLINE: By Eric Bradner, CNN

SECTION: POLITICS

LENGTH: 155 words

DATELINE: Washington

House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi is tapping a fresh face -- 42-year-old Latino Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico -- to replace Rep. Steve Israel of New York at the helm of the party's campaign efforts.

Israel chaired the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee during the 2012 and 2014 elections but had said in the wake of this year's Republican victories that he wouldn't seek a third term in that role.

Lujan, a former state utility regulator who was first elected to Congress in 2008, is set to start his fourth term representing a congressional district that includes Santa Fe.

Pelosi tweeted the news of **Lujan's** selection Monday.

Lujan is one of the Democratic caucuses younger members, a group that has faced pressure to bring newer members to the leadership table. **Lujan** will face a tall task: After a drubbing in the 2014 midterms, Democrats have just 186 House seats to the GOP's 244, with five races still undecided.

LOAD-DATE: November 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Publication

Copyright 2014 Cable News Network
All Rights Reserved

417 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

November 16, 2014 Sunday

NM leaders split on Obama immigration action; Plan could protect millions from deportation

BYLINE: Copyright © 2014 Albuquerque Journal BY MICHAEL COLEMAN JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 1235 words

WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama's plan to bypass Congress and defer deportation for millions of immigrants who are in the country illegally has at least tentative support from Democrats in New Mexico's congressional delegation and vehement opposition from its lone Republican.

The White House has not publicly released details of Obama's controversial plan to use executive authority to address America's immigration challenges, but news outlets last week reported what they said are key elements of the plan.

Actions reportedly under consideration by the president, according to The Associated Press, include:

Extend protection from deportation to millions of immigrant parents and spouses of U.S. citizens and permanent residents, and expand a 2-year-old program that shields immigrants brought illegally to this country as children.

Could cover as many as 5 million people.

Offer the possibility of obtaining work permits to some.

A White House official told the Journal on Friday that Obama is still fine-tuning details of his plan and declined to cite key provisions, but the official confirmed that executive action on immigration is imminent.

"The president has not made a decision regarding the specific measures he will take to fix our broken immigration system," the official said. "As the president has said previously, he is committed to taking action before the end of the year."

During his first term, Obama maintained that he didn't have the authority to take extensive immigration policy action on his own. But over the past year, as it became clear that Congress was hopelessly deadlocked on the issue, the president and his advisers decided they did, in fact, have the authority to confer at least temporary legal status on some of those who are in the U.S. illegally. Republicans in Congress, furious about the president's pending proposal and now with control of both chambers of Congress, have vowed to try to block Obama's executive action, possibly through their control of spending bills.

New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez, a Republican, has also weighed in against Obama's executive action plan on immigration.

"This unilateral approach to a complex problem is not leadership," Martinez's spokesman, Enrique Carlos Knell, told the Journal last week.

"The president needs to work in earnest and in good faith with Congress to meaningfully address the immigration challenges our nation faces." Knell said. "Absent a bipartisan solution, long-term and sustainable solutions to this pressing issue will only be more difficult to reach. New Mexicans deserve better from this White House and this president."

Within New Mexico's congressional delegation, Reps. Steve Pearce, a Republican, and **Ben Ray Luján**, a Democrat, represent the far ends of opposition and support for the president's plan.

The delegation's other three Democrats' views fall somewhere in between, although in Journal interviews last week none of the three opposed outright the president's plan.

On Thursday, **Luján** attended a Capitol Hill press conference with about two-dozen other Democrats to drum up support for Obama's plan. Afterward, he told the Journal that if the Republican-led House won't pass immigration legislation already approved by the Senate then Obama should take unilateral action.

"We are collectively asking and encouraging President Obama to be bold and use the full extent of his executive authority to do what's right for millions of immigrants here in the United States," **Luján** said. "We were very clear that families can no longer wait for House Republicans to act."

Luján stressed that U.S. presidents have long used their executive powers to change immigration policy, so Obama would not be the first.

Pearce described the expected presidential action as unconstitutional, arguing that it is unfair to effectively grant legal status to lawbreakers and their children when others are seeking to legitimize their presence in the U.S. through established channels.

"I don't think he's got the constitutional right to do it," Pearce said. "It's a question of the constitutionality and a question of what is fair to the American people and to the actual immigrants. The question here is, No. 1, is it constitutional, and is it fair to the immigrants who are doing it properly and it is fair to American workers and taxpayers?"

Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., said House Republicans who oppose Obama's plan to take executive action could avert it by passing a Senate bill approved last year. That bill includes a so-called "path to citizenship" for about 12 million people now in the U.S. illegally, as well as significant improvements to the nation's border security apparatus.

"If the House won't act, I believe President Obama will be justified in taking executive action to fix our broken immigration system as much as he can under existing law," Udall said in an interview.

"I would support action that focused limited resources on securing the border and deporting criminals and those who are a threat to our country," Udall said. "I would also support a targeted action to provide temporary legal status for some people who have been living, working and raising families for many years in this country, for whom deportation would be a hardship and pose no threat to our communities."

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, a Democrat, said she is also frustrated that Congress hasn't been able to resolve the issue. She said she can "understand" why the president would want to take immigration action on his own but fretted that it would lead to more tension among Democrats and Republicans in Congress.

"This is a decades-old problem for us, and we want it to be addressed," **Lujan** Grisham said. "I understand (why the president is mulling executive action). I don't think it helps us get to comprehensive immigration reform, but it does something meaningful for the five million who are living in shadows because they don't have sufficient protections right now."

"I would prefer we don't have an executive action and that we do it in Congress, but I respect the president's position here," the congresswoman added.

Sen. Martin Heinrich, a Democrat, was also less than enthusiastic about the president's looming - and politically sensitive - executive action. Like Udall and others, he said congressional action would be preferable.

"I understand and share New Mexicans' frustration with the lack of progress in passing comprehensive immigration reform," he said. "I support the president using his existing legal authority to address this issue, but whatever steps he takes will not be a replacement for congressional action."

Heinrich also lamented that actions Obama takes without consent of Congress could be reversed by a subsequent president.

"Anything that the White House does will lack the permanence of law, so it's always been my preference that we do this legislatively," Heinrich said. "It would be a much more elegant solution if we could pass legislation, because it would have permanence."

Heinrich and all other Democrats in New Mexico's congressional delegation have voiced support for legislation that would allow about 12 million immigrants now here illegally to legally remain in the U.S. as long as they had no serious criminal background, paid a fine, allowed their income to be taxed and formally applied for citizenship.

Pearce opposes that proposal, advocating for a greatly expanded guest worker program instead.

LOAD-DATE: November 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: JOURNAL FILE Devinia Gutierrez and Brianna Herrera, from left, attend a vigil in Albuquerque in July urging fast-track relief for immigrants in the country illegally.
OBAMA: Fine-tuning proposal

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

November 15, 2014 Saturday

Fort Wingate bill referred back to committee

BYLINE: Kathy Helms navajo1@gallupindependent.com, DIN É BUREAU

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 6

LENGTH: 1001 words

DATELINE: WINDOW ROCK

WINDOW ROCK -- After hours of impassioned discussion, the Navajo Nation Council referred a resolution supporting the Fort Wingate Land Division back to the Resources and Development Committee for further research and discussion of Navajo claims regarding cultural resources.

Delegate Edmund Yazzie who has adamantly opposed the transfer, stated that Congress is using the land division as a carrot.

"You're using this to get what you want in the northern area. Just say that," Yazzie said, referring to the Navajo Exchange Legislative Initiative, or NELI project, which would consolidate most of the Bureau of Land Management lands in Eastern Navajo Agency and place them into trust.

"We can't give this land away," Yazzie said. "Our people were slaughtered and buried at Fort Wingate and we're going to have a Zuni Flag flying over it?"

He requested that they hear from the Department of Historic Preservation and the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission.

"The Council needs to hear the other side," he said.

Delegate Danny Simpson, sponsor of the resolution, presented information on the bill, along with Ron Maldonado, acting Historic Preservation officer, and Larry Rodgers, who has been heading the Eastern Navajo Land Commission and is now on special assignment as chief of staff to Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates.

No Navajo input

Simpson said the land division was negotiated by the Navajo Nation and the Zuni Tribe in summer 2013. Yazzie and former Speaker Johnny Naize attended the negotiations in Washington along with two representatives from the Zuni Tribe. The negotiations were facilitated by U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan** Jr. and Steve Pearce of New Mexico and Rep. Don Young of Alaska.

Out of those negotiations emerged House Resolution 3822, a joint legislation between **Lujan** and Pearce, Simpson said. **Lujan** later requested a legislation from the Navajo Nation stating that it was in support of the negotiations that took place.

"Since we prolonged to get a resolution from the Navajo Nation, there was another resolution that was introduced by Congressman Stephen Pearce, HR5438. Now, that legislation is moving pretty quickly," Simpson said.

Because HR3822 was a joint resolution, Navajo had a lot of input regarding the incorporation of new language, he said.

"Delegate Leonard Tsosie went to Churchrock to talk to people from Iyanbito and Churchrock communities, and he expressed, 'What do you want in this legislation that's going before Congress?'" Simpson said. "Some of the things that came out of that meeting are incorporated in this (Navajo Nation) resolution."

When Pearce was told that Navajo had recommendations they wanted to incorporate into his resolution, Pearce told them, "You guys have to meet with the Zuni Tribe first before I consider these recommendations for the Navajo Nation," Simpson said.

"If we pass this resolution here, with our recommendation from the Nation, Congressman **Lujan** is willing to incorporate our recommendation into his joint legislation. If we don't have any recommendations from the Navajo Nation, basically, Congressman Pearce's legislation will go forward without a recommendation from the Nation until we get consensus from the Zuni Tribe," Simpson said.

Cultural resources

Maldonado was asked to elaborate on a letter submitted by Historic Preservation's Tim Benally which stated that more study is needed of Navajo cultural resources at Fort Wingate.

"It was brought to my attention by members of the staff of Congressman **Lujan** and Congressman (Martin) Heinrich last week that a memo had gone out from the Historic Preservation Department in October calling into question the adequacy of a previous ethnographic study that was done on Fort Wingate," Maldonado said.

A correction memo was handed out to Council, stating that there has been a long history of ethnographic work being done at Fort Wingate.

"The work that has been done over the last 20 years has been really good work. It identified a number of resources," Maldonado said. "It places in the control of the Navajo Nation three-quarters of all the known sacred sites."

There are 826 known cultural resources, the majority of them - a little over 500 - are Navajo sites that include corrals, sweat lodges, hogans, etc., he said.

"Once the land is relinquished to the tribes ... before the Department of the Interior can give up the land, they will have to do a resource management plan, essentially, which calls for more studies to be done," Maldonado said. "So each tribe will get an opportunity again to actually go out and do more studies and talk to the communities to find out if there are any resources that have been missed."

Fair division

Rodgers said that when Pearce first proposed the land division resolution, it would have given all of Parcel 1, 4,500 acres, to Zuni.

"There were a couple of small parcels, 15 and 17, that would be given to Navajo. That's what sparked a great deal of debate, especially from the Navajo Nation viewpoint," he said. "That particular land division as proposed by Pearce initially was not fair to the Navajo Nation when you compare 4,500 acres versus about 700-800 acres that would be given to Navajo."

The Nation took it upon itself to make sure there was a fair division, Rodgers said, adding, "The Zunis fought quite hard to get a 50-50 settlement."

If the resolutions sponsored by **Lujan** and Pearce are passed the way they are currently, "It really does not favor Navajo," Rodgers said. "So what needs to happen is we really need good, strong support from this Council to provide the recommendations that are contained in your resolution that is here today."

On Sept. 19, the Fort Wingate Task Force passed a number of amendments it asked Council to include in Simpson's resolution. One of the amendments would ensure that the access road that comes onto the headquarters at the Army Depot is used as a dividing line.

"Because there is going to be distrust between the two tribes, it's good to have a solid line as a boundary," Rodgers said.

LOAD-DATE: November 20, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Farmington Daily Times (New Mexico)

November 14, 2014 Friday

Letter: Money tarnishes elections

SECTION: OPINION

LENGTH: 255 words

Editor:

Who really lost this election season?

Much post-election coverage has analyzed how and why candidates won or lost, but the biggest loser was the American public. A small cadre of large donors drowned out the voices of average citizens. In the Gubernatorial race it took only 6 large donors to outspend all 3,211 small donors of $250 or less and 74 percent of contributions came from individuals giving over $1,000.

In the wake of the Supreme Court's recent decisions undermining federal campaign finance rules, most notably Citizens United v FEC, New Mexico's elections have become increasingly flooded by large donations. In a democracy, the size of your wallet should not determine the volume of your voice; however the current system forces our elected officials to focus on a few large donors rather than the majority. It is not them at fault, but the system.

There are successful, proven models to empower small donors, so that their voices play a more central role in our democracy, such as providing tax credits and public matching funds for small donations. For example, in New York City's 2013 city council campaigns, small donors were responsible for 61 percent of participating candidates' contributions, when funds from a matching program are included.

I applaud our U.S. Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and **Ben Ray Luján** for taking action by supporting legislation to empower small donors and implore our local elected officials to take the lead right here in New Mexico.

SEAN FORAN

NMPIRG, Program Director

Albuquerque

LOAD-DATE: November 15, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Farmington Daily Times, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

420 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

November 13, 2014 Thursday

House chief clerk to step down from $119K position after 31 years

BYLINE: Steve Terrell, The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 661 words

Nov. 13--Stephen Arias of Santa Fe, chief clerk of the New Mexico House of Representatives for the past 31 years, confirmed Wednesday that he will step down from the $118,874-a-year post.

His planned departure is the latest in a series of pending changes in the legislative chamber since last week's general election, in which Republicans won control of the House for the first time in more than six decades.

Outgoing House Republican floor leader Don Bratton of Hobbs told Arias on Monday that the GOP Caucus "has somebody else in mind for clerk," Arias said. Attempts to learn the name of the person the Republicans have in mind were unsuccessful Wednesday.

Arias began his career with the Legislature in the mid-1960s. "That was when the Capitol was in the old building," he said, referring to what is now known as the Bataan Memorial Building, located across Don Gaspar Avenue from the current Capitol.

Arias said he's the third-longest-serving legislative clerk in the country.

He said he started out as a reading clerk, but his actual duties were far more varied than simply reading bills during a floor session. Among them were taking legislators' coats and hanging them in the coat room, which was in an old safe, Arias said.

Before the 1983 session, Arias said, he decided to run for chief clerk and was elected to that position by the majority caucus.

Arias recalled that his predecessor was Al Romero. "I had to convince Al to run for state auditor, so I could run for clerk," Arias said.

Arias recalled that in early January of 1983, while he was busy taking charge of the clerk's office, writing a proposed budget and hiring staff, he called Rep. Raymond Sanchez, who had just been nominated by the Democratic Caucus for House speaker. Arias just had one question: "Should I be doing this?" He told Sanchez that he had not yet been confirmed as clerk by the full House, and Sanchez hadn't been formally confirmed as speaker.

"Has anyone said anything?" Sanchez asked. Arias said no. "Well, just keep doing it until someone says something," Sanchez replied.

Later that month, both Sanchez and Arias were confirmed without a hitch.

But two years later, Sanchez was ousted as speaker by a coalition of conservative Democrats and Republicans. Arias, however, remained as clerk under new Speaker Gene Samberson. When Sanchez returned as speaker in 1987, Arias again remained as clerk. And after Sanchez was defeated for re-election in 2000, Arias continued serving under subsequent speakers Ben **Luján** of Nambé and Kenny Martinez of Grants.

Arias recalled that when Speaker **Luján's** son, **Ben Ray Luján**, was elected to Congress in 2008, he reminded the elder **Luján** of President John F. Kennedy's words about about passing the torch to a new generation. (Arias noted that both he and Speaker **Luján** had been involved in the Young Democrats group in the 1960s.) And around this time, Arias began thinking it might be time for him to also move on.

"I might not have run for clerk [in 2013] had it been anyone but Kenny Martinez," Arias said. He recalled that he'd worked in the House with Martinez's father, former Speaker Walter Martinez.

Kenny Martinez announced this week that he won't seek any leadership role when the House reorganizes in January.

According to the state Sunshine Portal, Arias' salary makes him and his counterpart in the Senate, Lenore Naranjo, the highest paid employees in the legislative branch.

Arias is responsible for supervising 13 classified employees, though currently there are five vacant positions in the office. The total budget for his office this year was more than $1.1 million.

"It's been a wonderful experience," Arias said. "It's been a great tour."

Contact Steve Terrell at sterrell@sfnewmexican.com Read his political blog at www.santafenewmexican.com/news/blogs/politics.

___ (c)2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: November 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20141113-SF-House-chief-clerk-to-step-down-from-119K-position-after-31-years-1113-20141113

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican

States News Service

November 11, 2014 Tuesday

LUJAN STATEMENT HONORING OUR VETERANS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 434 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today in celebration of Veterans Day.

"In communities across this great nation, we gather to honor the service and sacrifice of the brave men and women who have protected our country and the values and ideals that we hold dear. As we celebrate Veterans Day, we remember the heroism and bravery of all those who wore our nation's uniform.

"In New Mexico, we have a long history of service. From the Navajo Code Talkers and the soldiers who endured the Bataan Death March in World War II to Medal of Honor recipients Leroy Petry and Hiroshi Miyamura, New Mexicans have fought bravely in many conflicts. While the theater of battle may have changed, their brave service and commitment to our country has always remained the same.

"President Kennedy said, "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty.' Time and again our veterans have lived up to those words, enduring the hardships and making the sacrifices that have protected our nation and our values. And for that we owe them a debt of gratitude.

"This year will mark the 70th anniversary of the GI Bill that enabled veterans and military families to get a quality education and opened the door to the middle class for so many. It is an example of the

commitment our country made to those who served and it is a reminder of the importance of providing for our veterans when they return home.

"We must thank our veterans not just in words, but in deeds. To honor our promises we must ensure veterans and their families receive the benefits they have earned. While we have taken important steps to right the wrongs at VA facilities that failed to provide the care our veterans deserve, we must remain vigilant to ensure that no more veterans fall through the cracks. And we must provide opportunities to our returning veterans. Despite the leadership, skills, and training they possess, too many veterans struggle to find work. From job training to incentives to hire veterans, we must invest in the men and women who served with distinction and have what it takes to be the business owners, entrepreneurs, and leaders in our communities.

"To all our veterans, thank you for your service and your sacrifice. And to all the men and women still serving in our Armed Forces, thank you, and we pray for your safe return home."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: November 20, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

November 11, 2014 Tuesday 9:45 PM EST

Lujan Statement Honoring Our Veterans

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 443 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today in celebration of Veterans Day.

"In communities across this great nation, we gather to honor the service and sacrifice of the brave men and women who have protected our country and the values and ideals that we hold dear. As we celebrate Veterans Day, we remember the heroism and bravery of all those who wore our nation's uniform.

"In New Mexico, we have a long history of service. From the Navajo Code Talkers and the soldiers who endured the Bataan Death March in World War II to Medal of Honor recipients Leroy Petry and Hiroshi Miyamura, New Mexicans have fought bravely in many conflicts. While the theater of battle

may have changed, their brave service and commitment to our country has always remained the same.

"President Kennedy said, 'Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty.' Time and again our veterans have lived up to those words, enduring the hardships and making the sacrifices that have protected our nation and our values. And for that we owe them a debt of gratitude.

"This year will mark the 70th anniversary of the GI Bill that enabled veterans and military families to get a quality education and opened the door to the middle class for so many. It is an example of the commitment our country made to those who served and it is a reminder of the importance of providing for our veterans when they return home.

"We must thank our veterans not just in words, but in deeds. To honor our promises we must ensure veterans and their families receive the benefits they have earned. While we have taken important steps to right the wrongs at VA facilities that failed to provide the care our veterans deserve, we must remain vigilant to ensure that no more veterans fall through the cracks. And we must provide opportunities to our returning veterans. Despite the leadership, skills, and training they possess, too many veterans struggle to find work. From job training to incentives to hire veterans, we must invest in the men and women who served with distinction and have what it takes to be the business owners, entrepreneurs, and leaders in our communities.

"To all our veterans, thank you for your service and your sacrifice. And to all the men and women still serving in our Armed Forces, thank you, and we pray for your safe return home."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-141113-4932878 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: November 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Farmington Daily Times (New Mexico)

November 10, 2014 Monday

Column: Some families have politics in the gene pool

BYLINE: By Sherry Robinson, New Mexico News Services

SECTION: OPINION

LENGTH: 606 words

Political dynasties are a hot topic lately because of potential runs by a Bush or a Clinton. We have our share in New Mexico.

Take the two men competing for State Land Officer.

Incumbent Ray Powell Jr.'s father, a mechanical engineer, came to New Mexico in 1943 to work on the Manhattan Project and helped found Sandia National Laboratories. He retired in 1985, ran for governor and lost to Garrey Carruthers.

In 1963, when all state employees were political appointees, Gov. Jack Campbell assigned the senior Powell to develop and implement a state personnel system, which he did, with integrity and fairness. In 1988, Powell became state chairman of a Democratic Party fractured along geographical and ideological fault lines, which spawned coalition control of the Legislature. Under Powell's leadership, Democrats won majorities, and the coalitions ended.

When he died in 2010 at 90, columnist Jay Miller wrote, "New Mexico has lost one of its greatest public servants."

The younger Powell's opponent, Republican Aubrey L. Dunn, another junior, is the son of a legislative powerhouse.

Aubrey L. Dunn Sr., whose own father was a state senator in the 1940s, entered the Senate in 1964. As chairman of the Senate Education Committee, he pushed through the first public school equalization formula. For that, he was considered "a wide-eyed liberal," he once said. He became chairman of the Senate Finance Committee in 1973. He resigned from the Senate in 1979 and ran for governor but lost the Democratic primary to Toney Anaya. He died in 2012.

Dunn, a political reporter once wrote, "has the respect of most of those who get to know him or have to work with him whether they like him or not."

The Washington Post recently named the leading political dynasties in each state: in New Mexico, the **Lujans**, and in Arizona, the Udalls.

U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** is son of the late state Speaker of the House Ben **Lujan**. U.S. Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham's grandfather Eugene **Lujan** was the New Mexico Supreme Court's first Hispanic chief justice. Her uncle, Manuel **Lujan**, was a long-serving Republican congressman and U.S. Interior Secretary; Manuel's brother Ed was state Republican Party chairman; and their father was mayor of Santa Fe. Michelle and Ben Ray, both Democrats, are distantly related.

This year, the Udalls were much discussed nationally, as Democrats Tom and his cousin Mark fought to hold their Senate seats in New Mexico and Colorado. Tom is the son of former Interior Secretary Stewart Udall; Mark is the son of former congressman Mo Udall. In Arizona, the Udalls also count two mayors, four state legislators and two state Supreme Court justices.

And we have Walter K. Martinez, senior and junior, both state Speakers of the House.

The senior Martinez, born in Tierra Amarilla, moved to the uranium boomtown of Grants in the 1950s. He was elected to the state House in 1966 and served as speaker from 1971 to 1978. In 1981 he was the primary mover in creating Cibola County out of western Valencia County. He died in 1986.

Because Walter used to move his entire family to Santa Fe for the legislative session, young Ken Martinez spent a lot of time in the Roundhouse. He was elected to the House in 1998 and became speaker in 2013.

Walter Martinez "was not an ideologue. He operated by consensus and didn't dictate," said former UNM professor Noel Pugach. That's also a good description of Ken.

Sherry Robinson is a New Mexico journalist who began her career in 1976 and has served as assistant business editor and columnist with the Albuquerque Journal, editor of New Mexico Business Weekly and business editor of the Albuquerque Tribune.

LOAD-DATE: November 11, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Farmington Daily Times, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

424 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

November 6, 2014

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS $4.4 MILLION TO HELP NEW MEXICO SMALL BUSINESSES GROW;
Treasury Department Funds Support Economic Development; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 231 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted federal funding from the U.S. Treasury Department today that will support small businesses by increasing access to capital. More than $4.4 million is going to the New Mexico Economic Development Department and the New Mexico Finance Authority through the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI). With the latest announcement, New Mexico has received a total of $13,168,350 through SSBCI.

"Access to credit is critical to the small businesses that drive our economy, and these federal funds will contribute to our efforts to promote economic growth and create good jobs in our communities," Congressman **Lujan** said. "By allowing states that receive these funds to continually reinvest them in the small business community, SSBCI's impact will be multiplied over time."

States that have received SSBCI funds have reported that more than 95,000 jobs will be created or saved due to SSBCI-supported loans and investments. SSBCI funding is not repaid by participating states to the federal government, and instead helps even more small businesses by allowing states to use repaid loans and investments to fund further economic development through additional loans.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-highlights-44-million-to-help-new-mexico-small-businesses-grow/

LOAD-DATE: November 7, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMB

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

The New York Times

November 6, 2014 Thursday
Late Edition - Final

New Mexico

SECTION: Section P; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 15

LENGTH: 206 words

The Republican governor, Susana Martinez, is poised to play a significant role in national politics after winning re-election against her Democratic challenger, Attorney General Gary King. Ms. Martinez, who became the nation's first Latina governor in 2010, gained prominence when the Republicans gave her a prime-time platform at their 2012 convention. New Mexico, with an electorate that is estimated to be about 35 percent Hispanic, is still suffering the effects of the Great Recession. Its unemployment rate remains well above the national average.

Senator Tom Udall, a Democrat, beat back a challenge from Allen Weh, the former state Republican Party chairman. Mr. Udall has a well-known political lineage: His father, Stewart Udall, was a former secretary of the interior, and the long-serving Representative Mo Udall, who died in 1998, was his uncle. New Mexico's three incumbent congressional representatives -- Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and **Ben Ray Luján**, both Democrats, and Steve Pearce, a Republican -- faced nominal challenges and won easily.

Democrats faced further bad news here, as preliminary results showed them losing control of the State Legislature for the first time since President Dwight D. Eisenhower's victory in 1952.

URL:

LOAD-DATE: November 6, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: MAP
The Balance of Power in the West: States with a change in control of a legislative chamber or the governor's office are in bold. An outlined box or bar indicates a shift in power, showing which party gained the majority or won the governor's seat. (Source: National Conference of State Legislatures)

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The New York Times Company

States News Service

November 6, 2014 Thursday

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS $4.4 MILLION TO HELP NEW MEXICO SMALL BUSINESSES GROW

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 228 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Treasury Department Funds Support Economic Development

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted federal funding from the U.S. Treasury Department today that will support small businesses by increasing access to capital. More than $4.4 million is going to the New Mexico Economic Development Department and the New Mexico Finance Authority through the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI). With the latest announcement, New Mexico has received a total of $13,168,350 through SSBCI.

"Access to credit is critical to the small businesses that drive our economy, and these federal funds will contribute to our efforts to promote economic growth and create good jobs in our communities," Congressman **Lujan** said. "By allowing states that receive these funds to continually reinvest them in the small business community, SSBCI's impact will be multiplied over time."

States that have received SSBCI funds have reported that more than 95,000 jobs will be created or saved due to SSBCI-supported loans and investments. SSBCI funding is not repaid by participating states to the federal government, and instead helps even more small businesses by allowing states to use repaid loans and investments to fund further economic development through additional loans.

LOAD-DATE: November 20, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

November 6, 2014 Thursday 10:24 PM EST

Lujan Highlights $4.4 Million to Help New Mexico Small Businesses Grow

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 229 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted federal funding from the U.S. Treasury Department today that will support small businesses by increasing access to capital. More than $4.4 million is going to the New Mexico Economic Development Department and the New Mexico Finance Authority through the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI). With the latest announcement, New Mexico has received a total of $13,168,350 through SSBCI.

"Access to credit is critical to the small businesses that drive our economy, and these federal funds will contribute to our efforts to promote economic growth and create good jobs in our communities," Congressman **Lujan** said. "By allowing states that receive these funds to continually reinvest them in the small business community, SSBCI's impact will be multiplied over time."

States that have received SSBCI funds have reported that more than 95,000 jobs will be created or saved due to SSBCI-supported loans and investments. SSBCI funding is not repaid by participating states to the federal government, and instead helps even more small businesses by allowing states to use repaid loans and investments to fund further economic development through additional loans.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-141107-4927083 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: November 7, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

November 6, 2014 Thursday 10:06 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: NM Democrats Send Sen. Tom Udall, Congresswoman Michelle Lujan Grisham, Congressman Ben Ray Lujan Back to Congress

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 216 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Despite losing the race for Governor and Secretary of State, NM Democrats and Independents have sent Sen. Udall, Congresswoman **Lujan** Grisham and Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** back to Congress.

"Although the election results were not as we had hoped for, waEuros[e had some key victories which bucked the trend nationally,aEuros[winning four races as well as re-electing Senator Udall, Congresswoman **Lujan** Grisham and Congressman **Lujan**. The PRC will have a new Democratic member and a 4-1 Dem majority.

aEuros[WaEuros[e did ensure that the Attorney General, State Auditor, State Treasurer and Public Regulation Commission will remain in Democratic hands," stated DPNM Chairman Sam Bregman.

"Congratulations to all of our candidates that won as well as to our candidates that were unsuccessful in their individual races," added Bregman. "Thank you to all of the hundreds of volunteers that gave of their time, energy and finances to elect Democrats from the bottom to the top.

"Democrats will continue to move our state forward and ensure that jobs, education and health care are promoted so that all New Mexican families succeed and have a better future."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 24KuanRap-101107 30FurigayJof-4927037 30FurigayJof

LOAD-DATE: November 7, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

November 5, 2014 Wednesday

NM returns its full delegation to Congress; Incumbents easily fend off challengers

BYLINE: CHARLES D. BRUNT JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

SECTION: ELECTION 2014; Pg. A3

LENGTH: 924 words

New Mexico voters returned all four of the state's incumbent congressional candidates to Washington on Tuesday.

About an hour after the polls closed, KOAT-TV analyst and Journal pollster Brian Sanderoff declared all four winners of their respective races.

Incumbent Sen. Tom Udall had a 10 percent lead over Republican challenger Allen Weh - a narrower lead than earlier in the race. In the closing weeks, Weh sought to capitalize on voters' discontent with congressional gridlock and President Barack Obama's declining approval numbers.

At about midnight Tuesday, Udall had nearly 45,000 more votes than Weh, according to unofficial totals.

In New Mexico's 1st Congressional District, incumbent Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, an Albuquerque Democrat, was headed for a second term with a commanding lead over challenger Michael Frese.

In northern New Mexico's 3rd Congressional District, incumbent Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., held a 2-to-1 lead over Jefferson Byrd. It will be **Lujan's** fourth term in the House.

And in southern New Mexico, Rep. Steve Pearce, a Hobbs oil services business executive who is seeking a sixth term, easily outdistanced attorney Roxanne "Rocky" Lara, a Democrat from Carlsbad.

Udall vs. Weh

Udall, a Santa Fe Democrat seeking his second Senate term, is the senior member of New Mexico's congressional delegation. He dug deep into his sizable war chest in an effort to fend off Weh, a retired Marine Corps Reserve colonel and unapologetic conservative.

During his victory speech, Udall said, "As I travel our state, as I listen to New Mexicans, it's clear to me that there are great challenges and great opportunities. We have work to do, and we have work to do together."

He said he would "reach across the aisle to anybody to make a difference for New Mexico."

While serving in the U.S. House from 1999 to 2009, Udall - long popular with environmentalists and other left-leaning groups - consistently ranked among the more liberal members of that chamber. In his six years in the Senate, Udall has moderated his record and in 2013 was ranked the 32nd most liberal U.S. senator, out of 100, by the National Journal.

Weh said he was proud of his campaign, pointing to the fact that he started the race 22 points behind Udall.

"We offered people a clear choice," he said late Tuesday.

Weh, a former state Republican Party chairman, made an unsuccessful bid for governor in 2010, losing the primary to now-Gov. Susana Martinez.

1st Congressional District

Lujan Grisham was facing Republican challenger Michael Frese of Corrales, a scientist and owner of a small business that focuses on computer modeling experiments.

Shortly after the race was called in her favor, **Lujan** Grisham told supporters, "We took every voter seriously. We took nothing for granted. This is not a good climate for anyone in Congress and your first re-election is your worst."

She said she's hopeful that, with the Republican shift in Congress, there will be a new attitude in Washington that leads to a willingness on both sides to reach compromises and move the nation forward.

Frese, a relative newcomer to New Mexico politics, ran unsuccessfully for a seat on the Sandoval County Commission in 2012.

Lujan Grisham, a 12th-generation New Mexican who grew up in Los Alamos and Santa Fe, and now lives in Albuquerque, is a former Bernalillo County commissioner and state health department secretary.

2nd Congressional District

Pearce, a former state legislator and oil field services executive who describes himself as "unflinchingly conservative," won a commanding victory.

"I would like to thank my neighbors and the citizens of southern New Mexico for re-electing me to stand up for our values in Washington, D.C.," Pearce said Tuesday night. "I am eager to get back to work to tackle the many important challenges our state and country face," including government spending, immigration and increasing job opportunities for New Mexicans.

Pearce had held southern New Mexico's 2nd Congressional District seat for three consecutive terms, from 2003 through 2008, but then lost a bid for a statewide U.S. Senate seat. He regrouped and recaptured the House seat in 2010, and cruised to re-election in 2012.

Lara, who generally describes her political views as conservative on financial issues and liberal on social issues, campaigned unsuccessfully to serve as chairwoman of the New Mexico Democratic Party in 2013.

3rd Congressional District

Luján, a former New Mexico Public Regulation commissioner, faced Republican challenger Jefferson Byrd, a Harding County rancher who lost to **Luján** by 26 percentage points for the same seat in 2012.

Democrats outnumber Republicans by nearly 2 to 1 in that congressional district, which covers roughly the northern third of the state.

In a statement, **Luján** thanked his supporters, saying he was "humbled" by the trust they have put in him.

"... To solve the challenges that we face, we need to work together - from every level of government to the private sector," he said, adding that his priorities will continue to be jobs creation, supporting farmers and ranchers, promoting renewable resources and investing in education.

Luján's late father, Ben **Lujan**, was a Democratic speaker of the New Mexico House of Representatives.

U.S. Senate

Tom Udall (D) 268,564

Allen Weh (R) 217,133

1,311 of 1,487 precincts reporting; all results unofficial

U.S. House

DISTRICT 1 M. **Lujan** Grisham (D) 92,190

Michael Frese (R) 64,532

DISTRICT 2 Steve Pearce (R) 93,465

Roxanne Lara (D) 51,514

DISTRICT 3 **Ben Ray Luján** (D) 97,703

Jeff Byrd (R) 65,508

all results unofficial

LOAD-DATE: November 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: JIM THOMPSON/JOURNAL Sen. Tom Udall celebrates with his wife, Jill Cooper-Udall, after winning a second term in the Senate. Udall outdistanced Republican challenger Allen Weh by 10 percentage points in early, unofficial election returns.
ROBERTO E. ROSALES/JOURNAL U.S. Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham dances off the stage after making her victory speech Tuesday at the Doubletree Hotel in Downtown Albuquerque. **Lujan** Grisham easily outdistanced Republican challenger Michael Frese of Corrales to win a second term.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Associated Press State & Local

November 5, 2014 Wednesday 9:52 AM GMT

A race-by-race look at the New Mexico election

BYLINE: The Associated Press

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL

LENGTH: 816 words

New Mexico voters chose more than a governor on Tuesday. They elected a new attorney general and decided to send four incumbents back to Congress. Some other top-ticket races were still too close to call Wednesday morning. Here's a race-by-race look at this year's election:

U.S. SENATE

Democratic U.S. Sen. Tom Udall won his second term with a victory over challenger Republican Allen Weh. A longtime businessman and retired Marine colonel, Weh managed to trim Udall's lead in recent weeks, but it wasn't enough to unseat the first-term senator. Udall is a popular former attorney general and congressman. Weh is a former state Republican Party chairman who came in second behind Gov. Susana Martinez in the governor's primary four years ago.

U.S. HOUSE

All three incumbents for New Mexico's congressional seats won re-election. In the 1st Congressional District that covers most of Albuquerque, Democrat Michelle **Lujan** Grisham held off a challenge by Republican Mike Frese, a 66-year-old scientist and small business owner from Corrales. For the 3rd District seat, Democratic incumbent Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** beat Republican Jefferson Byrd of Tucumcari. In southern New Mexico, Rep. Steve Pearce fended off a feisty attack from Carlsbad attorney Roxanne "Rocky" Lara and national Democrats to keep his seat.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

State Auditor Hector Balderas, considered a rising star in the state Democratic Party, will be moving on to head up the state attorney general's office with a victory over Republican Susan Riedel, a former prosecutor and judge from Las Cruces. Balderas had stockpiled more money than any other statewide office candidates, except for Republican Gov. Susana Martinez.

LEGISLATURE

All 70 House seats were up for election this year, but there were only about three dozen contested races. Republicans were poised early Wednesday to potentially make history by riding the currents of national political discontent to their first legislative majority in 60 years. In early unofficial returns, the GOP was leading in enough races for a possible net gain of four seats in the state House. However, several contests remained very close. Democrats currently hold a 37-33 edge.

SECRETARY OF STATE

In one of the feistier races, Republican Secretary of State Dianna Duran won a second term by fending off a strong challenge from Democrat Maggie Toulouse Oliver. One of the major focuses of the race has been on voter ID. Duran hoped her push for new voter ID measures would put her over the top. Oliver said fraud is rare and requiring voters to have identification would just prevent certain residents from casting ballots.

LAND COMMISSIONER

New Mexico Land Commissioner Ray Powell is locked in a tight race with Republican challenger Aubrey Dunn. During Powell's tenure, the state Land Office has generated a record $2.3 billion for state accounts that pay for public schools, hospitals and other projects. Powell says he helped transform a "badly compromised and dysfunctional office" and has worked with oil and gas companies as well as renewable energy developers. But Dunn accuses him of "extreme environmentalism."

AUDITOR

New Mexico Sen. Timothy Keller has been elected state auditor. The Democrat defeated Republican lawyer Robert Aragon on Tuesday in a race that centered on how the auditor's office should monitor government waste. The Harvard Business School-educated Keller, currently the Senate majority whip, promised to uncover an estimated $900 million of unspent public money and redirect it to state programs. Aragon, a former Democrat and state lawmaker, had promised in his campaign ads to be the voters' "pit bull" in ferreting out corruption and fraud.

TREASURER

Democrat Tim Eichenberg defeated Republican Rick Lopez to replace state Treasurer James Lewis, who can't run again because of term limits. Eichenberg, a real estate agent and former state lawmaker, said the treasurer's office should invest more in New Mexico's infrastructure to help start construction projects and to create more jobs. He believes the state should acquire more federal lands that could then be leased to create a new revenue source for early childhood education.

PUBLIC REGULATION COMMISSION

The only contested seat on the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission is pitting a Republican incumbent against a former Democratic commissioner who was once the panel's chairman. Ben Hall is seeking re-election to his District 5 seat on the powerful commission that regulates public utilities, telecommunications and insurance companies. He is facing Democrat Sandy Jones.

BALLOT ISSUES

Voters in two of New Mexico's most populous counties appear to have endorsed non-binding referendums on decriminalizing marijuana. Unofficial election results showed voters in Santa Fe and Bernalillo counties approved both measures by wide margins. The counties, however, won't be obligated to follow voters' final decision.

LOAD-DATE: November 6, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

Associated Press State & Local

November 5, 2014 Wednesday 7:13 AM GMT

New Mexico delegation heading back to Washington

BYLINE: SUSAN MONTOYA BRYAN, Associated Press

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL; POLITICAL NEWS

LENGTH: 689 words

DATELINE: ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) - Democratic U.S. Sen. Tom Udall won a second term Tuesday despite attempts by Republican challenger Allen Weh to link the popular politician to public displeasure with President Barack Obama and his policies, including the health-care overhaul.

A former attorney general and congressman, Udall had a sizable campaign fund and was favored by pollsters early on as one of a handful of Senate members who had a 99 percent chance of retaining his seat.

Weh, an Albuquerque businessman and retired Marine colonel, put up some of his personal fortune to launch an aggressive campaign. He made up ground in Democratic-leaning areas with only weeks remaining in the election, but it wasn't enough.

"This is a big victory, and I believe New Mexicans felt that I was focused on New Mexico, was working hard for New Mexico - and I think that's why they returned me to the Senate," Udall said.

In New Mexico's three congressional races, there were no surprises as the incumbents were able to hold off their challengers to win re-election.

While New Mexico's representation in the U.S. House will remain consistent, Udall acknowledged Tuesday night that he will now be in the minority. Republicans claimed the Senate majority for the first time in eight years, riding Obama's unpopularity to victories in every part of the country.

"I think this may open some opportunities up for us. I'm willing to reach across the aisle with anybody to help New Mexico out and to help the country out," Udall said.

In southern New Mexico, Republican Steve Pearce fended off a feisty challenge from Democrat Roxanne "Rocky" Lara to keep his seat in the 2nd District.

Despite attacks by immigrant-rights' groups and others, Pearce has remained popular among constituents in the district, which includes some of the state's most productive oil and gas wells and a sliver of the international border.

Pearce, a Vietnam veteran and former state lawmaker, held the congressional seat from 2003 to 2009 before being elected again in 2011.

A barrage of television advertisements by Lara accused Pearce of supporting cuts that would affect senior citizens. While critical of big government, Pearce challenged the accusation.

Lara's effort to unseat Pearce had help from the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. She was among 10 first-time Hispanic candidates vying for the House.

"This campaign was never about one person or one idea. This campaign was about fighting for the values and priorities that will move southern New Mexico and our country forward," she said.

In the 1st District that covers most of Albuquerque, Democrat Michelle **Lujan** Grisham won re-election with a victory over Republican Mike Frese, a 66-year-old scientist and small business owner from Corrales.

Grisham said throughout the campaign that the economy and jobs should be the focus. She touted her efforts to help preserve dozens of jobs at Kirtland Air Force Base and millions of dollars in grants for projects in New Mexico.

She also went to bat for veterans after investigators uncovered large-scale improprieties in the way Veteran Affairs hospitals and clinics around the country scheduled patients for appointments.

For the 3rd District seat, Democrat incumbent Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** rolled to his fourth term with a win over Republican Jefferson Byrd of Tucumcari.

Lujan, vice chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, has said making New Mexico more competitive will be at the top of his list when he returns to Washington.

Byrd had criticized **Lujan**, saying promises he made to northern New Mexico residents have gone unfilled. He had pointed to the region's high unemployment rate, among other things.

Lujan said in a statement issued Tuesday night that people in New Mexico are like family.

"To solve the challenges that we face, we need to work together - from every level of government to the private sector," he said. "We all have a role to play and a responsibility to build a stronger New Mexico that lives up to the hopes and dreams of the people of our great state. And we can only be successful if we put our differences aside and come together as New Mexicans."

LOAD-DATE: November 6, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

Associated Press State & Local

November 5, 2014 Wednesday 3:44 AM GMT

New Mexico US Rep. Ben Ray Lujan wins re-election

SECTION: POLITICAL NEWS; STATE AND REGIONAL

LENGTH: 140 words

DATELINE: ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) - Democratic U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** has won a fourth term with a victory over Republican Jeff Byrd.

Lujan, vice chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, has said making New Mexico more competitive will be at the top of his list when he returns to Washington.

The congressman has also called for the National Nuclear Security Administration to be restructured to better balance defense programs with other research. His district includes Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Byrd had criticized **Lujan,** saying promises he made to northern New Mexico residents have gone unfilled.

In southern New Mexico, Republican U.S. Rep. Steve Pearce fended off a feisty attack from Democrat Roxanne "Rocky" Lara to keep his seat.

In the 1st District, Democrat Michelle **Lujan** Grisham has an early lead over Republican challenger Mike Frese.

LOAD-DATE: November 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

433 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

November 4, 2014 Tuesday

Candidates differ on Ebola travel bans; Both Canada and Australia have stopped distributing travel visas

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C1

LENGTH: 473 words

WASHINGTON - Members of the New Mexico congressional delegation - and their challengers in today's election - voiced different opinions on whether the United States should stop issuing visas to travelers from African countries battling Ebola.

Last week, Canada followed Australia's lead and stopped distributing travel visas, effective immediately, to people from three West African countries battling Ebola: Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., said he would support an Ebola-related ban on visas in the United States only if it were recommended by experts.

"I would support travel restrictions in the United States that are based on the recommendations of the top experts in infectious diseases, but I strongly believe that those decisions must be free from political interference and posturing," Udall told the Journal.

Allen Weh, Udall's Republican challenger, said he would support a travel ban similar to those imposed by Australia and Canada.

"I say let's err on the side of caution," Weh said. "There are too many unknowns, and nobody seems to have their arms around this thing. A temporary suspension of visas is not a bad thing."

Sen. Martin Heinrich, a New Mexico Democrat who is not up for re-election, said he is skeptical of such bans.

"Travel restrictions will not stop the spread of Ebola," Heinrich said. "Conversely, they will exacerbate the crisis in West Africa and hinder our ability to contain the virus by discouraging travelers from being forthcoming about their travel histories and potential exposure."

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., a former New Mexico health secretary, also voiced doubt.

"I am monitoring developments in West Africa, along with recommendations from the CDC and other public health experts who believe that travel bans could impede aid efforts and make it harder to trace individuals who enter the U.S.," she said.

Mike Frese, **Lujan** Grisham's Republican challenger, said he supports travel restrictions from the countries in question, as well as a temporary quarantine of health workers for U.S. medical personnel battling Ebola in Africa.

"We cannot afford to let Ebola get a foothold here, so we should impose some form of restrictions on travel, whether direct or indirect, from the impacted countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone," Frese said.

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., could not be reached for comment Monday. His Republican challenger, Jeff Byrd, said he would support a visa ban.

"While it is important to acknowledge the disruption to business and family relations, the general health and safety of the population is of higher importance, and therefore we support a travel ban for the general public traveling to these countries," Byrd said.

Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., could not be reached for comment Monday, nor could his Democratic challenger, Roxanne "Rocky" Lara.

LOAD-DATE: November 4, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Associated Press State & Local

November 4, 2014 Tuesday 8:41 AM GMT

A race-by-race look at the New Mexico election

BYLINE: The Associated Press

SECTION: POLITICAL NEWS

LENGTH: 915 words

New Mexico voters are choosing more than a governor this election. They're electing a new attorney general and deciding whether Democrats will retain control of a U.S. Senate seat and the statehouse. A race-by-race look at this year's election:

U.S. SENATE

Democratic U.S. Sen. Tom Udall is seeking his second term, and with a sizeable campaign fund, he has been working to fend off challenger Republican Allen Weh. A longtime businessman and retired Marine colonel, Weh managed to trim Udall's lead in recent weeks. Udall is a popular former attorney general and congressman. Weh is a former state Republican Party chairman who came in second behind Gov. Susana Martinez in the governor's primary four years ago.

U.S. HOUSE

All three incumbents for New Mexico's congressional seats are running for re-election. In the 1st Congressional District that covers most of Albuquerque, Democrat Michelle **Lujan** Grisham is being challenged in her bid for a second term by Republican Mike Frese, a 66-year-old scientist and small business owner from Corrales. For the 3rd Congressional District seat, Democratic three-term incumbent Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** is being challenged for a second time by Republican Jefferson Byrd of Tucumcari. In southern New Mexico, national Democrats have worked to help Carlsbad attorney Roxanne "Rocky" Laura in her bid to unseat 2nd District Rep. Steve Pearce, who held the seat from 2003 to 2009, and most recently since 2011.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

State auditor Hector Balderas, considered a rising star in the state Democratic Party, held a large campaign cash advantage over Republican Susan Riedel in the race for attorney general. Balderas stockpiled more money than any other statewide office candidates, except for Republican Gov. Susana Martinez. Balderas and Riedel are seeking the post being vacated by Gary King, who is attempting to unseat Martinez. Riedel is a former prosecutor and judge from Las Cruces.

LEGISLATURE

All 70 House seats are up for election this year, but there are only about three dozen contested races. Republicans are hoping they can pick up enough seats to take control of the House for the first time in 60 years. Democrats hold a 37-33 advantage in the House. Democrats have a 25-17 majority in the Senate, and senators don't run for election until 2016.

SECRETARY OF STATE

One of the feistier races is between Republican Secretary of State Dianna Duran and Democratic Bernalillo County Clerk Maggie Toulouse Oliver. One of the major focuses has been on voter ID. Duran, who is seeking to become the first Republican re-elected to the seat in decades, hopes her push for new voter ID measures puts her over the top. Citing fraud concerns, she said new laws were needed to preserve the integrity of the election process. Oliver, Bernalillo County's clerk, said fraud is rare and requiring voters to have identification would just prevent certain residents from casting ballots.

LAND COMMISSIONER

New Mexico Land Commissioner Ray Powell is locked in a tight race with Republican challenger Aubrey Dunn. During Powell's tenure, the state Land Office has generated a record $2.3 billion for state accounts that fund public schools, hospitals and other projects. Powell says he helped transform a "badly compromised and dysfunctional office" and has worked with oil and gas companies as well as renewable energy developers. But Dunn accuses him of "extreme environmentalism."

AUDITOR

Democrat state Sen. Tim Keller is squaring off against Republican lawyer Robert Aragon to replace State Auditor Hector Balderas. Unpaid tax bills, a barking dog and even "Breaking Bad" references have made their way into what is typically a sleepy race. The Harvard Business School-educated Keller, currently the Senate majority whip, is promising to uncover an estimated $900 million of unspent public money and redirect it to state programs. Aragon, a former Democrat and state lawmaker, has promised in his campaign ads to be the voters' "pit bull" in ferreting out corruption and fraud.

TREASURER

Democrat Tim Eichenberg is going against Republican Rick Lopez in a race to replace state Treasurer James Lewis, who can't run again because of term limits. Eichenberg, a real estate agent and former state lawmaker, said the state should acquire more federal lands that could then be leased to create a new revenue source for early childhood education at a time when advocates are demanding more funding for early childhood programs. Lopez, a former state and federal government employee, promised to oppose any proposal to increase the amount of money distributed annually from the Land Grant Permanent Fund to expand early childhood programs, something Eichenberg says he's also against.

PUBLIC REGULATION COMMISSION

The only contested seat on the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission is pitting a Republican incumbent against a former Democratic commissioner who was once the panel's chairman. Ben Hall is seeking re-election to his District 5 seat on the powerful commission that regulates public utilities, telecommunications and insurance companies. He is facing Democrat Sandy Jones.

BALLOT ISSUES

Ballot measures covering issues such as school elections and state investments are being decided, but a pair of non-binding referendums in two of the state's most populous counties may get the most attention. Santa Fe and Bernalillo counties are asking voters whether they support marijuana decriminalization efforts in what will be a sign of residents' take on the pot debate.

LOAD-DATE: November 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

435 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Daily Lobo: University of New Mexico

November 4, 2014 Tuesday

Voters Guide: New Mexico takes to the polls for Election Day

BYLINE: David Lynch

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1

LENGTH: 1007 words

Today is Election Day, and for those planning to vote, The Daily Lobo has compiled the latest updates on the major races. In addition, there are briefs of the state and county bond questions, as well as the advisory questions that will be on the ballot.

Governor race

The latest polling numbers compiled by The Albuquerque Journal show Gov. Susana Martinez, a Republican, with a fairly comfortable 15 percent lead on Democratic challenger Gary King.

Latinos, however, are swaying in King's favor, giving him a 50 to 42 percent lead in that demographic.

Martinez has said it is important to her that New Mexico expands its economy by looking at business out of state and inviting them in. King, meanwhile, said he would focus on New Mexico's small businesses for job creation.

Concerning education, King said he opposes standardized testing and advocates putting the responsibility in the teacher's hands. To the contrary, Martinez said teachers should be kept on a shorter leash and that they should be evaluated frequently.

John Sanchez, the current lieutenant governor, is Martinez's running mate, while Deb Haaland is the Democratic hopeful.

Federal races

The Senate race is a much closer one, with the latest data by the Journal showing a 7 percentage point advantage for Democratic incumbent Tom Udall over Republican challenger Allen Weh.

According to Weh's website, he supports less government regulation of businesses, being an entrepreneur himself. In addition, Weh said he advocates exploring New Mexico's natural resources without burdening taxpayers.

Udall said he's an advocate for diversifying transportation in the state, especially when it comes to high-speed railways. He also says he supports further securing the border and fairer immigration laws.

For the House of Representatives, Democrat Michelle **Lujan** Grisham runs for re-election against Republican Mike Frese in the First Congressional District; Republican incumbent Steve Pearce competes against Roxanne Lara in the Second District, covering southern New Mexico; and Democrat Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** runs against Jeff Byrd in northern New Mexico's Third Congressional District.

Statewide races

Other races for New Mexico positions include Republican incumbent Dianna Duran against Democrat Maggie Toulouse Oliver for secretary of state; Democrat Hector Balderas against Republican Susan Riedel for attorney general; Republican Robert Aragon against Democrat Tim Keller for state auditor; Democrat Tim Eichenberg against Republican Rick Lopez for state treasurer; Democrat Ray Powell against Republican Aubrey Dunn for land commissioner.

All 70 state House of Representative positions will be decided, and 34 are contested races.

State and County GO Bond Questions

General obligation bonds are ways for the government to raise money for public works that don't raise revenue. Most of the raised money would come via taxes. State bonds B and C are especially important to UNM.

State Bond Question A

If passed, $17 million will be spent on improving retirement homes across New Mexico. $742,000 will be allocated to facilities in Albuquerque.

State Bond Question B

If passed, $11 million will be spent on improvements to libraries in the state. $805,662 will go to libraries on UNM's main campus.

State Bond Question C

If passed, $141 million will be spent on various improvements at colleges throughout the state. UNM in particular would receive $39 million, which would go primarily towards renovating the Farris Engineering Building and the construction of a new health education building.

County Bond Question 1

If passed, $1.8 million will go towards updating library resources in Bernalillo County.

County Bond Question 2

If passed, $5.74 million will be spent on the construction and improvement of general public safety facilities, including a new 7,000 square foot animal shelter.

County Bond Question 3

If passed, $6.46 million will be spent on building new parks and recreation facilities, and improving old ones. The projects include a new otter exhibit at the Albuquerque BioPark, new baseball fields, and renovations to various community centers.

County Bond Question 4

If passed, $9.07 million will be spent on improving roads in Albuquerque. In addition, $500,000 from the bond will go toward the development of a new trail connecting the Bosque and Chris Chavez Trails.

County Bond Question 5

If passed, $4.5 million will be spent on storm drainage and sewage facilities.

Mill Levy Question

If passed, a property tax of 0.2 percent will be put in place to assist the Open Space program. The Open Space program prioritizes saving naturally and culturally significant areas in Albuquerque. The raised money would go toward furthering natural education in the county.

Advisory Question 1

Voters are being asked their opinion on whether or not they support the decriminalization of possessing one ounce or less of marijuana. Currently the penalty for a first offense is a $50 fine and up to two weeks in jail. The advisory question asks for the maximum penalty for possession of an ounce or less to be changed to a $25 ticket.

This is just an advisory question, meaning that voters are simply being asked their opinion. The vote by itself will not have the power to change the law, it will simply tell lawmakers the will of the people.

If a large number of voters are in favor of decriminalization, the Bernalillo County Commission will look into supporting efforts of decriminalization. If a large number vote not in favor, no immediate attention will be placed on the issue.

Advisory Question 2

Voters are being asked their opinion over whether a 1/8 percent sales tax should be put in place to boost efforts to provide more mental and behavioral health services in the area.

Like the first advisory question, voters are not approving or disapproving of any immediate action. The Bernalillo County Commission is getting an idea of whether they should pursue such action or not.

David Lynch is a freelance reporter at The Daily Lobo. He can be reached at news@dailylobo.com or on Twitter @RealDavidLynch.

LOAD-DATE: February 5, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

University Wire
Copyright 2014 UWIRE via U-Wire
All Rights Reserved

436 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

November 4, 2014 Tuesday

Some families have politics in gene pool

BYLINE: Sherry Robinson

SECTION: COLUMNS

LENGTH: 623 words

Political dynasties are a hot topic lately because of potential runs by a Bush or a Clinton. We have our share in New Mexico.

In this election cycle, we heard most often about the King family, but other candidates (at this writing we don't know who prevailed) grew up with politics in their Cheerios.

Take the two men competing for state land officer.

Incumbent Ray Powell Jr.'s father, a mechanical engineer, came to New Mexico in 1943 to work on the Manhattan Project and helped found Sandia National Laboratories. He retired in 1985, ran for governor and lost to Garrey Carruthers.

In 1963, when all state employees were political appointees, Gov. Jack Campbell assigned Powell to develop and implement a state personnel system, which he did, with integrity and fairness. In 1988, Powell became state chairman of a Democratic Party fractured along geographical and ideological fault lines, which spawned coalition control of the Legislature. Under Powell's leadership, Democrats won majorities, and the coalitions ended.

When he died in 2010 at 90, columnist Jay Miller wrote, "New Mexico has lost one of its greatest public servants."

Powell's opponent, Republican Aubrey L. Dunn, another junior, is the son of a legislative powerhouse.

Aubrey L. Dunn Sr., whose own father was a state senator in the 1940s, entered the Senate in 1964. As chairman of the Senate Education Committee, he pushed through the first public school equalization formula. For that, he was considered "a wide-eyed liberal," he once said. He became chairman of the Senate Finance Committee in 1973. He resigned from the Senate in 1979 and ran for governor but lost the Democratic primary to Toney Anaya. He died in 2012.

Dunn, a political reporter once wrote, "has the respect of most of those who get to know him or have to work with him -- whether they like him or not."

The Washington Post recently named the leading political dynasties in each state: in New Mexico, the **Lujáns**, and in Arizona, the Udalls.

U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** is son of the late state Speaker of the House Ben **Luján**. U.S. Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham's grandfather Eugene **Lujan** was the New Mexico Supreme Court's first Hispanic chief justice. Her uncle, Manuel **Luján**, was a long-serving Republican congressman and U.S. Interior Secretary; Manuel's brother Ed was state Republican Party chairman; and their father was mayor of Santa Fe. Michelle and Ben Ray, both Democrats, are distantly related.

This year, the Udalls were much discussed nationally, as Democrats Tom and his cousin Mark fought to hold their Senate seats in New Mexico and Colorado. Tom is the son of former Interior Secretary Stewart Udall; Mark is the son of former congressman Mo Udall. In Arizona, the Udalls also count two mayors, four state legislators and two state Supreme Court justices.

And we have Walter K. Martinez, senior and junior, both state Speakers of the House.

The senior Martinez, born in Tierra Amarilla, moved to the uranium boomtown of Grants in the 1950s. He was elected to the state House in 1966 and served as speaker from 1971 to 1978. He also led the Mama Lucy Gang, a group of liberal Democrats who met in a Las Vegas eatery of that name. In 1981, he was the primary mover in creating Cibola County out of western Valencia County. He died in 1986.

Because Walter used to move his entire family to Santa Fe for the legislative session, young Ken Martinez spent a lot of time in the Roundhouse. He was elected to the House in 1998 and became speaker in 2013.

Walter Martinez was "very likable, soft spoken, and mild mannered," said former University of New Mexico professor Noel Pugach. "He was not an ideologue. He operated by consensus and didn't dictate." That's also a good description of Ken.

LOAD-DATE: November 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

November 4, 2014 Tuesday

New Mexico voters to choose elected officials

BYLINE: Steve Terrell, The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: NATIONAL POLITICAL NEWS

LENGTH: 733 words

Nov. 04--After Tuesday, the constant bombardment of political campaign advertising will cease and make way for pre-Christmas sales pitches.

Voters will elect a governor -- Republican incumbent Susana Martinez or Democratic challenger Gary King -- as well as a U.S. senator -- incumbent Democrat Tom Udall or GOP candidate Allen Weh.

Martinez campaigned in Southern New Mexico on the eve of Tuesday's general election, with stops in Hatch, Sunland Park and Mesilla wrapping up a 17-city tour that began last week.

King visited senior citizen centers in Santa Fe before heading to the party stronghold of Espanola in Northern New Mexico and to Albuquerque for a stop at a labor union headquarters, where supporters operated a phone bank to call voters.

The Democrat received last-minute assistance from former President Bill Clinton, who recorded a message that King's campaign used in automated phone calls to voters. Clinton met King's father, the late Bruce King, in the late 1970s, when the elder King was New Mexico governor and Clinton was a state official in Arkansas.

All three of New Mexico's seats in the U.S. House of Representatives are on the ballot. In Santa Fe and the rest of Northern New Mexico, voters will chose between incumbent Democrat **Ben Ray Lujan** or Republican Jefferson Byrd. In the Albuquerque-based 1st Congressional District, incumbent Democrat Michelle **Lujan**Grisham is running against Republican Mike Frese. And in the Southern New Mexico District 2, incumbent Republican Steve Pearce faces Democratic challenger Rocky Lara.

All statewide elected offices are contested this year.

The two most hotly contested are the secretary of state's race, in which incumbent Republican Dianna Duran is running against Democratic opponent Maggie Toulouse Oliver, and the state land commissioner contest, which pits incumbent Democrat Ray Powell, Jr. against the GOP's Aubrey Dunn Jr.

Voters also will elect a state attorney general, a race in which Democrat Hector Balderas is running against Republican Susan Riedel; state auditor, where Democrat Tim Keller is running against

Republican Robert Aragon; and state treasurer, in which Democrat Tim Eichenberg faces Republican Rick Lopez.

Also up for election is the entire House of Representatives. Several constitutional amendments and bond issues also are on the ballot.

According to unofficial early and absentee voting results on the Secretary of State's website, 213,931 people voted at early voting stations in New Mexico this year. That's down slightly from the 215,113 early in-person votes cast statewide in 2010, when the last gubernatorial race took place.

But there was a big drop in absentee ballots this year compared with four years ago. In 2010, 88,848 people cast absentee ballots in New Mexico. As of Monday morning, 47,349 absentee ballots had been returned to county clerks across the state for this year's election. There are still 17,066 absentee ballots that were sent to voters but not yet returned. But even if every one of those ballots is returned, there would still be more than 24,000 fewer absentee ballots than there were in 2010.

Those with outstanding absentee ballots can return them to polling places today.

In Santa Fe County, 18,637 people voted early. That's down from 2010, when 21,137 people took advantage of early voting in the county. This could be seen as a bad sign for Democrats because Santa Fe is a heavily Democratic county. As for absentee ballots, 4,784 people have returned absentee ballots so far. As of Monday morning, 1,866 absentee ballots were still out.

New Mexico's largest county, Bernalillo, actually beat its 2010 early voting figure. In that county, which includes Albuquerque, 84,351 people voted early, which is 3,537 more than four years ago. By Monday morning, 19,856 absentee ballots had been returned in Bernalillo County, with 9,206 yet to be returned. In 2010, about a third of the total votes cast in New Mexico were in Bernalillo County.

In 2010, almost half the total votes cast in that election came from early and absentee ballots.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Contact Steve Terrell at sterrell@sfnewmexican.com Read his political blog at www.santafenewmexican.com/news/blogs/politics

___ (c)2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: November 4, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20141104-SF-New-Mexico-voters-to-choose-elected-officials-20141104

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

November 2, 2014 Sunday

RECKONING COMES FOR LONG NM BALLOT;
Voter turnout will likely be key in some close races, analysts say

BYLINE: DAN BOYD JOURNAL CAPITOL BUREAU

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 1778 words

SANTA FE - Gov. Susana Martinez has kept a big lead over Attorney General Gary King in the New Mexico governor contest, but some close races up and down the ballot could make for a suspenseful Tuesday night.

Incumbent U.S. Sen. Tom Udall, a Democrat, is trying to rebuff a bid from Republican Allen Weh in the top slot on the general election ballot. Udall had a seven-point lead in the final Journal Poll on the race in late October, after Weh had cut into the incumbent's even larger advantage early on.

With voters set to go to Election Day polls on Tuesday - more than 231,000 had already cast ballots via early and absentee voting by the end of Friday - political analysts say voter participation levels will likely be key to several outcomes.

"It really comes down to turnout to me," said Gabriel Sanchez, a University of New Mexico political science professor.

Longtime New Mexico political analyst Brian Sanderoff said turnout is generally lower in non-presidential election years - like this year's - because, among other reasons, many younger registered voters do not go to the polls.

That trend, along with a national "mood" that may favor Republicans, has largely put Democrats on the defensive in 2014, Sanderoff said.

Land Commissioner Ray Powell, a Democrat who has held the job for more years than anyone in state history, has faced a stiff challenge from Republican Aubrey Dunn.

And Republicans are vying for control of the state House of Representatives, where Democrats have held a majority for the past 60 years and now have a fragile 37-33 advantage.

At least one Democrat appeared to be in the driver's seat in a contest for statewide office, according to Journal polling: Hector Balderas led Republican Susan Riedel in the race for state attorney general.

In the secretary of state contest, a recent Journal Poll found Dianna Duran, the Republican incumbent, in a dead heat with Democratic challenger Maggie Toulouse Oliver.

Meanwhile, voters were set to decide open-seat contests for state auditor and treasurer, with Democrat Tim Keller squaring off against Republican Robert Aragon in the auditor's race and Rick Lopez, a Republican, running against Democrat Tim Eichenberg in the treasurer's race.

"This year is defined at least partially by the fact that a lot of these low-profile, down-ballot races are in play," Sanderoff said. "I don't recall a year in which the Republicans had more potential to gain in (those) races."

New Mexico voters, who started casting absentee ballots Oct. 7, face a lengthy list of other candidates and questions, including five proposed constitutional amendments and three state bond questions that would authorize $169 million in construction and building repairs. Additional candidates and question are lined up on ballots in New Mexico's 33 counties.

In Bernalillo County, for example, voters face "advisory" questions about marijuana decriminalization, and taxes for new mental and behavioral health programs in Bernalillo County.

On the trail

In the final days of the governor campaign, Martinez, the Republican incumbent, traveled the state on a 17-stop bus tour, taking pictures and signing autographs for supporters.

At a stop in Española, a traditional Democratic stronghold, Martinez was greeted with "Vamos con Susana" signs by backers who themselves often called her by her first name.

"She's been a good governor," said Medardo Sanchez, who traveled from his home near Tierra Amarilla for the event. "When she took office, the state was in shambles."

King, the Democratic nominee, former state legislator and two-term attorney general, sounded a still-confident tone at campaign events of his own, despite an Oct. 21-23 Journal Poll that found him trailing Martinez by a 53 percent to 38 percent margin.

At an Albuquerque senior center, King chatted with voters about campaign issues and the legacy of his famous father, the late three-term Gov. Bruce King.

That came after King made several stops in Indian country, including a speech to the Acoma Pueblo Tribal Council.

Martinez had significantly outspent and out-fundraised King, spending more than $2.4 million on her re-election bid during a three-week time period leading up to Election Day. King spent $363,245 during that same time period, mostly on TV and radio ads.

While Martinez was readying to embark on her bus tour, her re-election campaign was still taking no prisoners, sending out hard-hitting mailers after a long stretch of TV ads attacking King.

The incumbent governor got help from high-profile GOP figures like New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, who made two trips to New Mexico, and 2012 Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney, who also came to the state.

"The Martinez campaign strategy from day one was to keep the race from being seen as competitive," Sanderoff said.

King's bid to unseat Martinez has been complicated by internal tumult - he has had three different campaign managers since the June primary election - and a lack of support from deep-pocketed national Democratic groups.

King went more than a month during the build-up to the general election without airing a TV campaign ad and many of Martinez's attack spots went unanswered.

"Gary King was sort of out there on his own," Sanderoff said. "In a sense, he never got off the ground."

Congress races

The U.S. Senate race in New Mexico played out with little intercession from outside groups.

Third-party groups were a major factor this year in Senate races in other states where political analysts believed Republicans might win new seats and help the GOP regain control of the Senate.

But the race between Udall, seeking his first Senate reelection, and Weh, a business owner and retired Marine Reserve colonel, stepped up in the final week of the campaign after a Journal Poll showed Udall's lead had narrowed.

Both Weh and Udall were active in TV advertising attacks over the month of October. But the candidates did not meet face to face for their first debate until last week, with days to go before Election Day.

In the state's three congressional elections, incumbent U.S. Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and **Ben Ray Lujan**, both Democrats, appeared to hold advantages over opponents in cash and campaign organizations. **Lujan** Grisham was facing off against Republican Mike Frese in the Albuquerque-based 1st Congressional District, while GOP candidate Jeff Byrd was running against **Lujan** in the state's northernmost 3rd Congressional District.

In southern New Mexico's 2nd Congressional District, national Democratic support for challenger Roxanne "Rocky" Lara bolstered her bid against Republican incumbent Steve Pearce in a conservative-leaning district that Democrats had cast aside in past elections.

On the line

In statewide races, Republicans were hoping Martinez could lead them to a historic breakthrough in a state long dominated by Democrats.

The last time a Republican won election to the Governor's Office and more than one other GOP candidate was voted into a statewide, non-congressional seat was 1986.

In that year, Garrey Carruthers was elected governor, Hal Stratton was elected attorney general and Bill Humphries was elected commissioner of public lands.

Some pundits have said that Martinez, the nation's first Hispanic female governor, could have a "coattail" effect and boost vote levels for fellow GOP candidates, especially those listed near her on the ballot.

House Speaker Ken Martinez, D-Grants, said he doesn't subscribe to the theory.

"I'm not a believer in this supposed coattail effect," Martinez told the Journal. "It seems to me the New Mexico electorate is pretty smart about picking and choosing."

While New Mexico voters used to have the option of selecting all candidates from one party - a straight-party vote - Duran eliminated the decades-old option in 2012, saying it was not allowed by state law.

Legislature

In the battle for control of the state House, lawmakers from both political parties have identified roughly 10 races that will end up determining which party controls the chamber entering the 2015 legislative session.

Democrats currently hold a narrow 37-33 majority, with all 70 House seats up for election.

House Speaker Martinez, who spent time in recent weeks knocking on doors with Democratic candidates in a handful of key swing districts, said he's optimistic going into Election Day.

"I think we'll maintain the House," Martinez told the Journal. "We've been working to keep the Democratic majority since the last election."

He also downplayed the possibility of a 35-35 tie, which could result in a rare power-sharing agreement between the two parties.

"I doubt there will be a tie, just looking at the numbers," Martinez said. "But if there was a tie, we'd rise to the occasion on both sides of the aisle."

House Minority Whip Nate Gentry, R-Albuquerque, who has faced a barrage of hard-hitting attacks in his own race for re-election in House District 30, said he thinks Republicans can seize control for the first time since 1954 - when Dwight Eisenhower was president.

"I think we have a real shot here," said Gentry, who predicted several races could be determined by razor-thin margins.

Gentry said voter patterns this year strongly resemble 2010, a year in which Republicans gained eight House seats.

Democrats responded by picking up seats in the 2012 election but, as a result, are in the position of having to defend their gains this time around.

"There are more Democratic seats in play that are vulnerable this year," Sanderoff said.

Members of the state Senate, which is also Democrat-controlled, serve four-year terms and are not up for re-election this year.

Factors

In the 2010 general election, the most recent statewide, non-presidential election, a total of 607,700 New Mexicans voted - or roughly 52.7 percent of registered voters.

UNM professor Sanchez said he believes voter turnout this year will likely be down from 2010 levels, while also warning that some voters might not cast votes on all races, due to the ballot's length. That could end up impacting certain down-ballot races.

"This is a longer ballot than usual, especially in a non-presidential year," he said.

Meanwhile, the run-up to Election Day has seen a final flurry of attack ads, mailers and traditional door-to-door canvassing, and millions of dollars - much of it from out-of-state donors - have flowed into state races.

"I think a lot of people are characterizing this year's races as more mudslinging than usual, but I just think it's a sign of the times," Sanchez said.

Journal staff writer James

Monteleone contributed to this

report. Review all the candidates, issues, controversies and debates of Election 2014 in the Journal voter guide at ABQjournal.com.

LOAD-DATE: November 3, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: EDDIE MOORE/JOURNAL Gov. Susana Martinez holds Gabriel Montoya, 3, as his grandfather Gerald Gallegos and Isaac Gallegos, 15, stand by for a photo during a campaign stop at La Cocina restaurant in Española.
MARLA BROSE/JOURNAL New Mexico Attorney General Gary King, the Democratic candidate for governor, visits with seniors at the Barelas Senior Center on Friday in Albuquerque.

MARLA BROSE/JOURNAL Democratic gubernatorial candidate Gary King, the state attorney general, chats with Epi Gonzales, left, and Helen Garcia, right, at the Barelas Senior Center on Friday in Albuquerque.
EDDIE MOORE/JOURNAL From left, first gentleman Chuck Franco, Gov. Susana Martinez and Rick Lopez, the Republican candidate for state treasurer, visit with supporters during a campaign stop Friday at La Cocina restaurant in Española.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

November 2, 2014 Sunday

Journal recommendations for Tuesday general election

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. B2

LENGTH: 626 words

This is a recap of the Journal's recommendations for contested races in the Nov. 4 general election. The complete endorsement editorials are available in the Journal's Voter's Guide at ABQJournal.com.

U.S. Senate: Sen. Tom Udall, D U.S. House of Representatives House District 1: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D House District 2: Rep. Steve Pearce, R House District 3: Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D

Governor: Susana Martinez, R

Secretary of State: Dianna J. Duran, R Auditor: Timothy M. Keller, D Treasurer: Rick J. Lopez, R Attorney General: Hector Balderas, D Commissioner of Public Lands: Ray Bennett Powell, D Court of Appeals Judge: J. Miles Hanisee, R

Public Regulation Commissioner District 5: Sandy Jones, D

State House of Representatives District 14: Robert W. Chavez, R District 15: Sarah Maestas Barnes, R District 16: Antonio "Moe" Maestas, D District 20: James Mitchell Dines, R District 22: James E. Smith, R District 23: Paul A. Pacheco, R District 24: Conrad D. James, R District 25: Christine Trujillo, D District 26: Georgene Louis, D District 27: Lorenzo A. Larrañaga, R District 29: David Edward Adkins, R District 30: Nate Gentry, R

2nd Judicial District Court Division 3: Brett Loveless, R Division 5: Nancy J. Franchini, D Division 8: Cristina T. Jaramillo, R Division 9: Judith K. Nakamura, R Division 14: Marie Ward, D Division 27: Ned S. Fuller, R

Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court Division 4: Chris J. Schultz, R Division 8: John Durán, R Division 13: Michelle Castillo Dowler, R Division 14: Peg A. Holguin, R

Bernalillo County Assessor: George E. Torres, R Sheriff: Manuel Gonzales III, D Commission District 1: Debbie O'Malley, D Commission District 5: Wayne A. Johnson, R

Judicial Retention Supreme Court of New Mexico

Edward L. Chavez, yes

New Mexico Court of Appeals

Linda M. Vanzi, yes

Jim Wechsler, yes

Cynthia A. Fry, yes

2nd Judicial District Court, Bernalillo County

Division 1: William E. Parnall, yes Division 2: Stan Whitaker, yes Division 4: Beatrice J. Brickhouse, yes Division 6: Briana H. Zamora, yes Division 7: John J. Romero Jr., yes Division 10: Christina P. Argyres, yes Division 11: Gerard J. Lavelle, yes Division 12: Clay Pace Campbell, yes Division 13: Valerie A. Huling, yes Division 15: Alan M. Malott, yes Division 16: Carl J. Butkus, yes Division 17: Nan G. Nash, yes Division 18: Denise Barela-Shepherd, yes Division 19: Benjamin Chavez, yes Division 20: Jacqueline Dolores Flores, yes Division 21: Alisa Ann Hadfield, yes Division 22: Deborah Davis Walker, yes Division 23: Shannon Bacon, yes Division 25: Elizabeth Whitefield, yes Division 26: Charles W. Brown, yes

Metropolitan Court, Bernalillo County Division 1: Victor E. Valdez, yes Division 2: Kevin L. Fitzwater, yes Division 5: Frank A. Sedillo, yes Division 6: Maria I. Dominguez, yes Division 9: Yvette K. Gonzales, yes Division 10: Edward L. Benavidez, yes Division 11: Sandra Engel, yes Division 12: Daniel E. Ramczyk, yes Division 15: Sharon D. Walton, yes Division 17: Henry A. Alaniz, yes Division 18: Rosie Lazcano Allred, yes Division 19: Linda S. Rogers, yes

State Constitutional Amendments Amendment 1: Combine school, nonpartisan elections, Yes Amendment 2: Student regent at NNMC, Yes Amendment 3: Judicial candidate filings, Yes Amendment 4: Urban counties, No Amendment 5: Land Grant Permanent Fund, Yes

State Bonds Bond Question A: Senior centers, Yes Bond Question B: Libraries, Yes Bond Question C: Higher education, Yes

Bernalillo County Bonds Bond Question 1: Libraries, Yes Bond Question 2: Public Safety, Yes Bond Question 3: Parks and Recreation, Yes Bond Question 4: Roads, Yes Bond Question 5: Storm and Wastewater, Yes

Mill Levy for Open Space: No

Advisory Questions 1. Gross receipts tax for mental health, No 2. Decriminalizing marijuana, No

LOAD-DATE: November 3, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

November 2, 2014 Sunday

In election's last stretch, Democrats reach out to northern Hispanics

BYLINE: Steve Terrell, The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 1001 words

Nov. 02--LAS VEGAS, N.M. -- It was the last Saturday before the 2014 general election, and the 150 or so Democrats who had gathered in the cavernous hall adjoining Charlie's Spic and Span Bakery and Cafe were enthusiastic. They came to eat green chile stew and posole at the popular restaurant and to cheer their own candidates, who heaped praise on one another and gleefully bashed the Republicans.

Some speakers also made appeals to Hispanic solidarity, which normally helps Democrats in Northern New Mexico but shows serious signs of softening in the current election, especially in the bitterly fought gubernatorial race between incumbent Republican Gov. Susana Martinez and Democrat Gary King, who has served as attorney general for nearly eight years.

Nearly all the Democrats' statewide ticket was there, including U.S. Sen. Tom Udall, who is facing Republican Allen Weh.

San Miguel Democratic Party Chairman Martin Suazo, who introduced the speakers, touched on one big problem New Mexico Democrats are facing this year. In several races, Democrats with Anglo surnames are up against Hispanic Republicans. "They want you to know they're Hispanic, but they don't want you to know they're Republican," Suazo said.

Whether or not that's true, the GOP is drawing more Hispanic support than usual this year. An Albuquerque Journal poll last week showed Martinez taking 40 percent of the Hispanic vote in her race against King. And some believe incumbent Republican Secretary of State Dianna Duran's Hispanic name is helping her against her Democratic opponent, Maggie Toulouse Oliver.

Shoring up the northern Hispanic vote probably is a big reason the Democrats spent the crucial last Saturday of the campaign in Las Vegas and Mora, where a similar event was planned later Saturday.

U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, who gave the most rousing speech of the day, used ethnic pride as a rallying cry during his time on stage. He didn't even mention his own opponent, Republican rancher Jeff Byrd, whom he easily defeated two years ago. Instead, **Luján** concentrated on Martinez. He brought up a 2010 conversation that was caught on tape and released earlier this year in a blistering article about Martinez in Mother Jones magazine. In that tape, Matt Kennicott, then a campaign aide and now a spokesman for the Human Services Department, said **Luján's** late father, former state House Speaker Ben **Luján**, was eloquent in Spanish, but when he spoke English, he sounded "like a ... retard."

After telling how his mother, Carmen **Luján**, had cried when that story broke, **Luján** said, "We don't let people make fun of the way we talk."

When some audience members booed the word "retard," **Luján** said. "Don't boo. Vote."

There was no doubt that the audience was charged up. Enthusiasm was on full display. As was some obvious wishful thinking.

"There is a momentum," said state Democratic Party Chairman Sam Bregman, wearing a big, black cowboy hat. "I don't care how much more money Gov. Martinez spends attacking Gary King. He's going to win on Tuesday!"

Despite the polls and the national pundits who have declared Martinez a safe bet to win re-election over King, Bregman's statement prompted wild applause. Even before Bregman's speech, a Las Vegas Democratic Party volunteer told a reporter he'd been helping with the party's phone bank effort, and "80 percent of the people I've called say they're voting for Gary," the man said. That would be a feat even in San Miguel County, in which Democrats outnumber Republicans 71 percent to 13 percent.

The general election battle for governor has seemed cruelly lopsided since right after the June primary. Martinez, whose campaign already had amassed millions, and the national Republican Governor's Association immediately began running attack ads against King. Though the national group's ads ceased after a few weeks, Martinez's campaign, under the direction of her political consultant, Jay McCleskey, has been relentless, bringing up decades-old votes from King's legislative career and criticisizing his performance as attorney general.

Not only was King unable to effectively fight back on the air because of his anemic fundraising, his campaign also was full of organizational problems. He went through three campaign managers and has been functioning without one since mid-September.

Some Democrats have worried that other candidates also could be affected by a blowout in the governor's race. Toulouse Oliver has been running neck and neck with Duran in the secretary of state's race. And incumbent state Land Commissioner Ray Powell Jr. is facing a tough challenge from rancher and Republican Aubrey Dunn Jr., who has been running scathing TV ads against Powell for about a month. Powell only recently began running ads of his own. Asked why he'd taken so long, Powell said Saturday it was due to a lack of campaign money. Then he joked, "I finally went to the plasma center enough times to get the money."

Besides the races mentioned above, voters also will vote on state attorney general, a race in which Democrat Hector Balderas is running against Republican Susan Riedel; state auditor (Democrat Tim Keller vs. Republican Robert Aragon); and state treasurer (Democrat Tim Eisenberg vs. Republican Rick Lopez).

Also up for election is the entire House of Representatives. Several constitutional amendments and bond issues also are on the ballot.

Saturday was the last day of early voting. According to figures on the secretary of state's website, as of Saturday morning, 186,959 people had cast ballots at early voting centers, while 43,826 absentee ballots had been received so far. In 2010, the last year in which there was a gubernatorial race, there were 215,113 early in-person votes cast, which was almost half the total votes cast in that election. In 2010, 88,848 people cast absentee ballots in the state.

___ (c)2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: November 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20141102-SF-In-election-s-last-stretch-Democrats-reach-out-to-northern-Hispanics-1102-20141102

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican

States News Service

October 30, 2014 Thursday

UDALL, HEINRICH, LUJAN URGE DOE TO MAXIMIZE LOCAL SUBCONTRACTING

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 932 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Letter to DOE Office of Environmental Management requests continued community engagement during transition of cleanup efforts

Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Lujan** sent a letter to the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Environmental Management (EM) strongly encouraging them to maintain requirements from the existing National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) contract that support local community engagement as oversight of legacy environmental cleanup work at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) transitions from NNSA to EM. In the letter to acting assistant secretary for environmental management, James "Mark" Whitney, the lawmakers highlighted the critical importance of LANL's subcontracting with local businesses to employment and economic development in Northern New Mexico, and asked that EM maintains each of NNSA's specific contracting requirements that helps maximize economic opportunities for local workers and businesses.

In late September, the Department of Energy announced that Energy Secretary Moniz had directed EM and NNSA to develop a plan to transition legacy environmental cleanup work from NNSA to EM to better align the focus and accountability of cleanup work. The current management and operating contract for LANL includes a number of specific subcontracting provisions and requirements that ensure support for local employment, companies, and communities.

"As [the Department of Energy] takes over management of legacy environmental cleanup work, we ask you to maintain each of NNSA's specific contracting requirements for local community engagement," the lawmakers continued. "Ensuring that we keep local businesses and experienced workers fully involved as the cleanup effort continues is critical to supporting the economy of Northern New Mexico."

The lawmakers outlined specific contracting provisions in the current contract that support the local community and regional economic development. Examples include a requirement that all businesses with subcontracts greater than $5 million are required to include a regional community development plan, the 5 percent pricing preference for subcontractors with a Northern New Mexico presence and

the recommendation that contractors suggest how they will participate in community engagement activities in their bids. In addition to maintaining each of these provisions, the lawmakers asked EM to include community engagement as an evaluation criterion for any contract proposals for managing EM work at the Los Alamos site.

The full text of the letter is available below and HERE.

October 30, 2014

Mr. James M. "Mark" Whitney

Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management

Department of Energy

1000 Independence Ave SW

Washington, District of Columbia 20585-0113

Dear Mr. Whitney:

In light of the Secretary Moniz's recent announcement that legacy environmental cleanup work at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) will soon be overseen by DOE's Office of Environmental Management (EM), we write to strongly encourage EM to maintain all regional requirements from NNSA's existing prime contract that help maximize economic opportunities for local workers and businesses.

Northern New Mexico communities depend heavily on LANL for employment and regional economic development through the many subcontracts awarded to local companies. These local subcontractors provide critical support to the lab in a broad variety of areas, including environmental management. LANL's subcontracting with local businesses helps to sustain an important technical workforce pool in Northern New Mexico. Importantly, more than 40% of LANL's local major subcontractors are involved in EM's environmental restoration work. Given the deep interdependence of DOE and the region, we ask you to give careful thought in this transition to maintaining all existing contracts previously awarded by LANS to small businesses in the region that support the cleanup effort.

Under NNSA's current management and operating (MandO) contract for LANL there are a number of specific subcontracting provisions and requirements that ensure support for local employment, companies, and communities. For example, all businesses with subcontracts greater than $5 million are required to include a regional community development plan. The contract also requires that procurement provide a five percent pricing preference for subcontractors who have a Northern New Mexico presence. These provisions also apply to subcontracts placed through the Supply Chain Management Center. These unique provisions have incentivized many environmental restoration companies to invest in Northern New Mexico communities.

Finally, the original request for proposal for LANL's MandO contract required bidders to suggest in their bids how they will participate in community engagement activities. We ask that EM also include community engagement as an evaluation criterion for any prime contract proposals for managing EM work at the Los Alamos site.

As EM takes over management of legacy environmental cleanup work, we ask you to maintain each of NNSA's specific contracting requirements for local community engagement. Ensuring that we keep local businesses and experienced workers fully involved as the cleanup effort continues is critical to supporting the economy of Northern New Mexico.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tom Udall

United States Senator

Martin Heinrich

United States Senator

Ben Ray Lujan

United States Representative

LOAD-DATE: November 20, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

US Official News

October 30, 2014 Thursday

New Mexico Delegation Welcomes Disaster Declaration for September Floods

LENGTH: 588 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Martin Heinrich, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representatives Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced that President Obama has issued a major disaster declaration for the state of New Mexico for the severe storms and flooding that occurred between Sept. 15 and Sept. 26.

The disaster declaration provides the counties of Colfax, Eddy, Lea, Lincoln, Otero, San Miguel, Santa Fe and Sierra with access to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) public assistance to repair damaged infrastructure, and provides statewide hazard mitigation assistance. The severe September storms and flooding significantly damaged roads, bridges, low-water crossings and other infrastructure in many New Mexico communities. The funding correlated with the disaster declaration will help with recovery efforts including debris removal, emergency protective measures, and repairs to roads, bridges and water utility facilities.

Last week, the lawmakers jointly urged the president to respond swiftly to the state of New Mexico's request for disaster assistance. According to the state's letter requesting the major disaster declaration, the total severe storm damage for the September floods has been assessed at $10.2 million, with damage to roads and bridges accounting for more than 70 percent of the total.

"The severe September storms and resulting flooding took a harsh toll on the roads, bridges and infrastructure of many of our communities, and the federal assistance from this disaster declaration will help expedite recovery efforts throughout the state," Udall said. "I am pleased with this quick response to our request and I will continue to work to ensure that the federal government supports affected New Mexico communities with the resources needed to rebuild."

"This disaster declaration is welcome news, and I'm pleased our communities in Colfax, Eddy, Lea, Lincoln, Otero, San Miguel, Santa Fe, and Sierra Counties will receive much-needed federal aid to recover from September's intense storms and severe floods," Heinrich said. "Last month's extreme weather conditions damaged roads, bridges, and other critical infrastructure New Mexicans rely on. Federal assistance to help restore our communities is a critical step toward the recovery effort."

"Our calls for action continue to be quickly answered, allowing us to bring much-needed assistance to the New Mexicans affected by the September storms," Pearce said. "I remain committed to working with the rest of the delegation and federal agencies to provide needed relief to our communities in continued need of assistance. We can and will rebuild for a stronger tomorrow. It is an obligation that must be fulfilled."

"The federal assistance available as a result of this disaster declaration will help the recovery effort in communities throughout New Mexico that were impacted by the September storms," **Luján** said. "The Obama administration's prompt response to our call for assistance will ensure that these much-needed resources will contribute to the rebuilding process."

"I appreciate FEMA's decision to make assistance available to the broad swath of New Mexico communities affected by flooding," **Lujan** Grisham said. "However, I urge the agency to reconsider the request for assistance to the metro area in Bernalillo County."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: October 31, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Associated Press State & Local

October 29, 2014 Wednesday 7:05 PM GMT

National mood flavors NM congressional races

BYLINE: SUSAN MONTOYA BRYAN, Associated Press

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL; POLITICAL NEWS

LENGTH: 533 words

DATELINE: ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) - The battle for New Mexico's U.S. Senate seat is intensifying as Election Day approaches, and incumbent Democrat Tom Udall and Republican challenger Allen Weh are scrambling to secure the votes of those who remain undecided.

The distance between Udall and Weh is shrinking as the retired Marine colonel's campaign works to capitalizes on general frustration with the Obama administration and the lack of progress in Washington on a host of issues.

An Albuquerque Journal poll released Monday (http://bit.ly/1nKrsAQ) showed 50 percent of likely voters backing Udall to 43 percent for Weh, with 8 percent undecided. Just a month earlier, Udall had a 13-point advantage.

Pollster Brian Sanderoff said Weh was able to slightly improve his support among Democrat voters while adding to his Republican base. Udall has been able to maintain his lead thanks to stronger support from independent voters.

"The race narrowed as people began hearing Allen Weh's conservative message, but getting to the point that the race could turn around, that would be a real uphill battle for Allen Weh," Sanderoff said.

Weh will have a chance to spread his message Thursday evening when he squares off against Udall in their first televised debate. Weh has been critical of the incumbent for not agreeing to debate earlier in the election cycle.

Weh's campaign ads have linked Udall to the Obama administration's often criticized efforts to overhaul health care. The latest television ad states that a vote to send the first-term senator back to Washington is a vote for President Barack Obama.

After accusing Weh of favoring cuts to social programs, Udall's campaign has shifted focus in the remaining week. In an effort to appeal to female voters, his latest ad touts his work on laws aimed at curbing domestic violence.

Udall, a former attorney general and congressman, has a sizeable campaign fund and has used the tightening of the race to make a plea for more money this week. Weh, an Albuquerque business owner, has put up some of his personal fortune to run an aggressive challenge.

New Mexico's three congressional seats are also up for grabs.

In southern New Mexico, 3rd District Rep. Steve Pearce has been fending off attacks from the national Democratic Congressional Committee and Democrat Roxanne Lara, a Carlsbad lawyer who is trying to unseat him.

Pearce held the seat from 2003 to 2009, and most recently since 2011. The district covers a wide swath of southern New Mexico, from a sliver of the U.S.-Mexico border to the state's most productive oilfields.

Pearce, a vocal critic of the Obama administration and what he has described as the overreach of the federal government when it comes to Western water and land rights, had a significant campaign cash advantage over Lara heading into the final weeks.

In the 1st Congressional District that covers most of Albuquerque, Democrat Michelle **Lujan** Grisham is being challenged in her bid for a second term by Republican Mike Frese, a 66-year-old scientist and small business owner from Corrales. For the 3rd Congressional District seat, Democrat three-term incumbent Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** is being challenged by Republican Jefferson Byrd of Tucumcari.

LOAD-DATE: October 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

444 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

October 29, 2014 Wednesday 1:50 AM EST

LCV Action Fund Endorses Congressman Ben Ray Lujan for Re-Election

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 540 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The League of Conservation Voters issued the following news release:

The League of Conservation Voters (LCV) Action Fund, which works to elect candidates who will implement sound environmental policies, announced today its endorsement of **Ben Ray Lujan** for re-election to Congress (NM-3). Congressman **Lujan** is a thoughtful environmental advocate who is devoted to growing America's clean energy economy and protecting our nation's important public lands.

"Congressman **Lujan** has put enormous effort into developing our clean energy economy; his initiative will help reduce our nation's reliance on fossil fuels," said LCV Action Fund President Gene Karpinski. "He's a compelling advocate for our nation's public lands, and Americans can trust that our country's beloved landscapes are in capable hands."

"Again and again Congressman **Lujan** has made strong decisions on behalf of New Mexico and our environment," said Demis Foster, Executive Director of Conservation Voters New Mexico. "His commitment to preserving New Mexico's remarkable natural settings ensures that our land will continue to play an important role in the culture and heritage of our communities."

"New Mexico is blessed with majestic lands and precious resources that are vital to our economy and our culture," Congressman **Lujan** said. "With abundant solar and wind energy, New Mexico has the

potential to be a leader in the clean energy economy, and I will continue my efforts to promote renewable energy that is good for our economy and our environment."

Congressman **Lujan** is a leader on clean energy issues. He has introduced and co-authored multiple bills that would expand clean energy deployment, invest in research and development, create job training programs, and modernize our energy infrastructure. Congressman **Lujan** has also shown his leadership on clean energy and addressing climate change as a member of the Safe Climate Caucus and as the chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus' Task Force on Green Economy and Renewable Energy.

Congressman **Lujan** is also a strong advocate for conservation of our public lands and natural resources. He introduced legislation to establish new National Conservation Areas and wilderness areas across New Mexico and legislation to promote various types of energy research at national parks. He has supported and offered amendments on legislation to plan for and reduce the impacts of invasive species and wildfires.

Congressman **Lujan's** voting record has earned him an impressive lifetime score of 96% score on LCV's National Environmental Scorecard. The non-partisan Scorecard is the nationally accepted yardstick used to rate members of Congress on environmental and clean energy issues. Based on key environmental votes in the House and Senate, it is often used by the media to quickly describe a Member's record. For more information, visit http://scorecard.lcv.org.

Ben Ray Lujan is featured on LCV Action Fund's GiveGreen website (https://www.givegreen.com/candidate/**ben-ray-lujan/**), the only bundling website devoted exclusively to raising money for environmental champions and candidates.

Contact: Jessica Knight, 202/454-4590, jessica@lcv.org

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 24KuanRap-101030 30FurigayJof-4918486 30FurigayJof

LOAD-DATE: October 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

445 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Farmington Daily Times (New Mexico)

October 28, 2014 Tuesday

ELECTION 2014: Byrd hopes to unseat Luján, who is seeking re-election for U.S. representative in District 3

BYLINE: By Dan Schwartz The Daily Times

SECTION: NEWS

LENGTH: 470 words

FARMINGTON In the U.S. representative District 3 race, an incumbent is running for re-election, his opponent is trying to win the seat again and a write-in candidate thinks poorly of them both.

Ben Ray Luján, 42, was elected to the seat in 2009, and the Democrat is proud of the work he's done in his first term, he said. This includes shining more attention on Los Alamos and Sandia national laboratories and working with colleagues to commercialize those labs' projects, he said.

Jefferson Byrd, a 43-year-old Republican, ran against **Luján** in 2012, and he knows he can win this race because nothing has changed since **Luján** took office, he said. The state is losing jobs, the federal government is snatching private property and more animals are being listed as endangered species, he said.

Thomas Hook, 49, also a Republican, is a write-in candidate. He's running for the seat because **Luján** and "the Democrats" have failed New Mexico, he said. They "rammed" the Affordable Care Act down the throats of New Mexicans and "punted" the immigration issue, ignoring many illegal immigrants' rights as citizens, he said. He added that he's disappointed in Byrd, too.

The economy is the top concern for **Luján**. New Mexico ranked 15th in the nation for job creation a few years ago, but now it's now 49th, he said. Texas, Arizona and Colorado are attracting more jobs than New Mexico, he said.

Access to education for their children from preschool to college has New Mexico parents worried, he said, and poverty is a big issue for many families.

When asked how he'd fix some of those issues, **Luján** referenced a mantra of his father's: "Before you can tackle a problem, you first have to admit there is one," he said.

"When New Mexico's ranking came out over the last three years, we didn't hear a lot of this talked about," he said.

Byrd said access to water is another serious problem for the state, but it probably ranks behind the issue of federal agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management and the Environmental Protection Agency hindering state and local governments, and corporate operations.

Veterans are also being dropped through the cracks in the system, he said. Some weren't getting timely care from the Veterans Administration, and others' documents were illegally shredded, he said.

He said he'd solve those problems by bringing attention to them and filing the "right paperwork. That's actually the easy part. How we're going to push back on the bureaucracies," he said, will be the hard part.

Hook said securing the U.S.-Mexico border is important. But illegal immigrants should be made legal residents so they can vote, he said. If elected, he said, he'd try to pump water from the Gulf of Mexico into New Mexico, build desalination plants to purify the water and legalize marijuana, growing it copiously to create jobs.

LOAD-DATE: October 29, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: **Lujan**
Byrd
Hood

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Farmington Daily Times, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

446 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

October 28, 2014 Tuesday

New Mexico Delegation Welcomes Expansion of President's Disaster Declaration for Summer Floods

LENGTH: 586 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Martin Heinrich, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representatives Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced that President Obama has expanded a major disaster for the state of New Mexico for the severe storms and flooding from July 27 - August 5 to include Sandoval, Otero and Lincoln counties, as well as the Pueblo of Santa Clara.

On October 6, the president declared a major disaster, which meant that federal aid is available to help state, tribal, and local recovery efforts. The original declaration made assistance available on a cost-sharing basis for damage to public infrastructure in Guadalupe, Rio Arriba, and San Miguel counties and the Pueblo of Acoma. Friday's amendment expands this eligibility to Sandoval, Otero, and Lincoln counties, as well as the Pueblo of Santa Clara. Federal funding will also be made available on a cost-sharing basis to assist with hazard mitigation statewide. Additional designations may be made at a later date if requested by the state and warranted by the results of further damage assessments.

New Mexico's lawmakers on Oct. 2 jointly urged the president to respond quickly to the request for disaster assistance for the state of New Mexico. The severe summer storms and flooding damaged roads, bridges, a dam structure, and other infrastructure. According to Governor Susana Martinez's letter requesting the major disaster declaration, damages resulting from these storms have currently been assessed at $3.93 million.

"This expanded federal assistance is welcome news for residents of Sandoval, Lincoln and Otero counties, as well as Santa Clara Pueblo, who all sustained severe damage to roads, bridges, dams and other structures," Udall said. "I will be closely monitoring the recovery efforts and will keep pushing to ensure the federal government fulfills its obligations to help with restoration in New Mexico's communities."

"The President's addition of Lincoln, Otero, and Sandoval Counties, and the Santa Clara Pueblo, to this month's disaster declaration is welcome news," Heinrich said. "Federal disaster assistance will provide much-needed help for New Mexico communities to rebuild after intense storms and severe floods damaged roads and critical infrastructure over the summer. This is a great step in the recovery effort."

"Our calls for action are being quickly answered, allowing us to bring much-needed assistance to the New Mexicans affected by the September storms," Pearce said. "I remain committed to working with the rest of the Delegation and federal agencies to provide needed relief to our communities in continued need of assistance. We can and will rebuild for a stronger tomorrow. It is an obligation that must be fulfilled."

"Expanding the disaster declaration to include these additional communities is vital to their efforts to rebuild in the wake of the storm and the damage it caused," **Luján** said. "This federal assistance will help address the need to repair critical infrastructure in impacted areas across New Mexico."

"Many smaller, rural communities are especially vulnerable to natural disasters and they depend on this federal assistance," **Lujan** Grisham said. "I appreciate the expanded declaration from the President and I'm prepared to continue to work with these communities as they recover."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: October 28, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

October 28, 2014 Tuesday

New Mexico: New Mexico Delegation Requests Prompt Action on Major Disaster Declaration for September Floods

LENGTH: 354 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

TOm Udall Senator for New Mexico has issued the following news release:

WASHINGTON - Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representatives Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham sent a letter to President Obama, requesting prompt action on the state of New Mexico's recent request for a major disaster declaration to assist

with recovery efforts following severe storms and flooding caused by Hurricane Odile in late September.

Between Sept. 15 and Sept. 25, parts of New Mexico including Colfax, Eddy, Lea, Otero, San Miguel, Santa Fe and Sierra counties endured severe storms and flooding that significantly damaged roads, bridges, low-water crossings and other infrastructure. Yesterday, Oct. 22, the state requested the federal government declare a major disaster, provide the correlated public assistance for counties that suffered extensive damage, and provide statewide hazard mitigation assistance. The associated funding would help with recovery efforts including debris removal, emergency protective measures, and repairs to roads, bridges and water control facilities.

"In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from flooding during the time period of September 15 through September 25, 2014, we request your expedited attention to Governor Martinez's request on behalf of the State for a major disaster designation and the correlated public assistance," the lawmakers wrote. "We remain committed to providing the necessary assistance to you and the governor in expediting New Mexico's recovery efforts and ensuring an effective response from this extreme weather event."

According to Governor Martinez's letter requesting the major disaster declaration, the total severe storm damage has been assessed at $10.2 million, with damage to roads and bridges accounting for more than 70 percent of the total. Other damage includes extensive debris, disruption of oil and gas development, agricultural loss, and water and wastewater infrastructure.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: October 29, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

448 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

October 28, 2014 Tuesday

New Mexico: Udall, Heinrich, Luján Announce $8.5 Million for Sipapu Ski Resort, Santa Fe Charter School

LENGTH: 581 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

TOm Udall Senator for New Mexico has issued the following news release:

WASHINGTON - Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Luján** announced that Sipapu Recreational Development in Vadito and the Academy for Technology and the Classics Foundation in Santa Fe will each receive more than $4.2 million in guaranteed loans to advance their operations. Sipapu Recreational Development will receive $4.235 million to improve its ski resort operations, including funding to purchase equipment and machinery, provide working capital and to pay off existing debt. The Academy for Technology and the Classics Foundation will receive $4.3 million to pay off bond debt on the Academy for Technology and the Classics Charter School's property and facility.

"These funds are important to help rural businesses in New Mexico thrive and generate economic development in our communities," Udall said. "The Sipapu ski resort creates jobs and attracts tourists to northern New Mexico, and these funds will help to ensure the resort continues to draw visitors and revenue to the area. The Academy for Technology and the Classics Charter School is helping to prepare Santa Fe students with the skills to succeed in college, and provide them with the technological skills needed in today's work force. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I will continue to push for funding to help New Mexico businesses to grow, and to expand educational opportunities for our state's next generation of leaders."

"These Rural Development funds will help Sipapu ski resort and the Academy for Technology and the Classics improve their operations," said Heinrich. "Places like Sipapu in northern New Mexico attract visitors from across the country and contribute to our state's $6.1 billion outdoor recreation economy. I'm also pleased with the investment to support STEM education, so that students will continue to receive technology skills that will prepare them to compete in today's economy."

"Rural Development funds provide important resources to our communities and contribute to economic development that is needed in rural New Mexico," **Luján** said. "These projects will help contribute to efforts to build a stronger economy in northern New Mexico by promoting a local business in Taos County and the tourism industry that is an important part of the economy. They will also help enhance the Academy for Technology and the Classics Charter School's ability to serve its students and ensure they receive a good education."

The Sipapu Ski and Summer Resort was founded in 1952 in the Sangre de Cristo Mountain region, and has more than 40 ski trails. The family-friendly resort offers terrain catering to skiers and snowboarders of all ability levels, and claims itself home to the longest ski season in the state.

Established in 2000, the Academy for Technology and the Classics enrolls approximately 365 students in grades 7-12, and seeks to provide a classical and technology-based approach to education in a public school setting.

The loans were made available through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program. The program provides loans to improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities by bolstering existing private credit structures and guaranteeing the quality of loans.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: October 29, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 26, 2014

New Mexico Delegation Welcomes Expansion of President's Disaster Declaration for Summer Floods; Lawmakers had urged 'prompt action' to help state recover from widespread storm damage; Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 582 words

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representatives Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Lujan**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced that President Obama has expanded a major disaster for the state of New Mexico for the severe storms and flooding from July 27 - August 5 to include Sandoval, Otero and Lincoln counties, as well as the Pueblo of Santa Clara.

On October 6, the president declared a major disaster, which meant that federal aid is available to help state, tribal, and local recovery efforts. The original declaration made assistance available on a cost-sharing basis for damage to public infrastructure in Guadalupe, Rio Arriba, and San Miguel counties and the Pueblo of Acoma. Friday's amendment expands this eligibility to Sandoval, Otero, and Lincoln counties, as well as the Pueblo of Santa Clara. Federal funding will also be made available on a cost-sharing basis to assist with hazard mitigation statewide. Additional designations may be made at a later date if requested by the state and warranted by the results of further damage assessments.

New Mexico's lawmakers on Oct. 2 jointly urged the president to respond quickly to the request for disaster assistance for the state of New Mexico. The severe summer storms and flooding damaged roads, bridges, a dam structure, and other infrastructure. According to Governor Susana Martinez's letter requesting the major disaster declaration, damages resulting from these storms have currently been assessed at $3.93 million.

"This expanded federal assistance is welcome news for residents of Sandoval, Lincoln and Otero counties, as well as Santa Clara Pueblo, who all sustained severe damage to roads, bridges, dams and other structures," Udall said. "I will be closely monitoring the recovery efforts and will keep pushing to ensure the federal government fulfills its obligations to help with restoration in New Mexico's communities."

"The President's addition of Lincoln, Otero, and Sandoval Counties, and the Santa Clara Pueblo, to this month's disaster declaration is welcome news," Heinrich said. "Federal disaster assistance will provide much-needed help for New Mexico communities to rebuild after intense storms and severe floods damaged roads and critical infrastructure over the summer. This is a great step in the recovery effort."

"Our calls for action are being quickly answered, allowing us to bring much-needed assistance to the New Mexicans affected by the September storms," Pearce said. "I remain committed to working with the rest of the Delegation and federal agencies to provide needed relief to our communities in continued need of assistance. We can and will rebuild for a stronger tomorrow. It is an obligation that must be fulfilled."

"Expanding the disaster declaration to include these additional communities is vital to their efforts to rebuild in the wake of the storm and the damage it caused," **Lujan** said. "This federal assistance will help address the need to repair critical infrastructure in impacted areas across New Mexico."

"Many smaller, rural communities are especially vulnerable to natural disasters and they depend on this federal assistance," **Lujan** Grisham said. "I appreciate the expanded declaration from the President and I'm prepared to continue to work with these communities as they recover."

Read this original document at: http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/press-releases/new-mexico-delegation-welcomes-expansion-of-presidents-disaster-declaration-for-summer-floods

LOAD-DATE: October 28, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSMA

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Las Vegas Optic (New Mexico)

October 26, 2014 Sunday

Martinez for governor

BYLINE: Optic Editorial Board

SECTION: EDITORIALS

LENGTH: 654 words

Roughly 70 percent of registered voters in San Miguel County are Democrats. Add to that statistic the fact that San Miguel County doesn't even come close to having the population of counties like Bernalillo, Sandoval, Doña Ana or Santa Fe, and you might expect that a Republican governor wouldn't give a second thought to the issues we're dealing with.

Fortunately for Las Vegas and San Miguel County, Gov. Susana Martinez and her administration have paid attention to our issues. What's more, Gov. Martinez has become one of our biggest advocates in Santa Fe when it comes to our city's pressing water infrastructure needs. Her strong support is one of the reasons that Las Vegas' top water project, the enlargement of Bradner Reservoir, is now fully funded.

The significance of this project for our community is huge. It will triple our current water storage capacity, allowing us to store a year's worth of water. That extra storage will be vital for our community in times of extended drought or in the event that a catastrophic fire breaks out in the Gallinas Watershed, where Las Vegas gets about 90 percent of its drinking water. And it will help our community with its economic development efforts.

Gov. Martinez understands those realities because she has taken the time to come to Las Vegas and tour our reservoirs and to speak to the city workers on the front lines who are dealing with these issues.

We believe Gov. Martinez has done more to help Las Vegas get a handle on its water problem than any governor before her, and for that reason, we urge voters to re-elect her to a second term.

Las Vegas isn't the only community that has benefited when it comes to water projects. This past legislative session the governor asked the Legislature to set aside more than $100 million for critically important water projects across the state. While she didn't get all of the funding she requested, she did get a significant chunk.

We also like the fact that Martinez has pushed state lawmakers to spend the state's capital outlay dollars wisely. She has repeatedly asked lawmakers to fully fund projects so that they can be completed as soon as possible.

Finally, we agree with her stance that more needs to be done to ensure that New Mexico students are getting the best education possible.

Regular readers of this editorial page know that we haven't always agreed with the governor. Her appointment of Carl Foster to the Highlands University Board of Regents earlier this year was misguided, given that he had a pending lawsuit against the university. Her administration's handling of the behavioral health audit was troubling. And the teacher evaluation system implemented by her Public Education Department is flawed and needs to be fixed.

But the reality is that her opponent, Gary King, has also made some serious missteps as attorney general -- most notably his office's bungling of cases involving former secretary of state Rebecca Vigil-Giron and the Smiley Gallegos housing authority matter -- and we're not convinced he would do a better job as governor.

o o o

Sen. Tom Udall and Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** are also up for re-election. Like Martinez, both Udall and **Luján**, along with Sen. Martin Heinrich, have helped the city with the funding for the Bradner Reservoir project.

They did so by lobbying the EPA to grant a waiver so that the city could tap into $20 million in funding for the project from the United States Environmental Protection Agency Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund program. Under EPA rules, dams typically aren't funded with that money.

As a result of our congressional delegation's efforts, the city ended up with a $3 million grant and is in the process of closing on a $17 million low-interest loan.

This is just one example of how Udall and **Luján**, both Democrats, have been responsive to the needs of our community.

We urge voters to re-elect Sen. Udall and Congressman **Luján**.

LOAD-DATE: October 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Las Vegas Optic, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

October 24, 2014 Friday

3rd Congressional Dist. candidates debate

BYLINE: JAMES MONTELEONE JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C2

LENGTH: 362 words

A televised 3rd Congressional District debate Thursday on New Mexico PBS stations highlighted differing views from Democratic Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** and Republican challenger Jeff Byrd, with issues ranging from the role of the federal government to climate change.

Luján is seeking his fourth term in the U.S. House, representing the northern New Mexico congressional district. Byrd, a Harding County rancher, is challenging **Luján** for the seat a second time.

In the hourlong debate, Byrd said the federal government is overstepping its bounds and needs to be reined in. He said over-regulation by federal agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency, the Bureau of Land Management and the Army Corps of Engineers has caused significant job losses.

"We have to change the direction here in northern New Mexico, we have to put pressure on the agencies that are killing jobs, and we have to allow the state to make the decisions that are best for the people that live here," Byrd said.

Luján emphasized the value of federal programs in lending a hand in New Mexico, such as providing subsidies to farmers and ranchers in addition to ongoing federal support for the state's national labs and military bases.

To better fund such programs, **Luján** said he would back pay-as-you-go federal spending plans requiring Congress to fully fund programs when implemented.

"What I'm suggesting is you go find targeted cuts or revenues to be able to pay for those programs," **Luján** said.

The candidates were also split on climate change issues.

Luján called for prompt federal action to address warming global temperatures that he said are caused by human activity. Asked where the federal government would get the money to address climate change issues, **Luján** said, "It's a matter of priorities."

Byrd said data on climate change is inconclusive. He said the government should take more time to ensure data is accurate before any action is taken. He said Congress' efforts would be better focused on addressing economic issues.

"The reality is it (the climate change debate) doesn't improve New Mexico," Byrd said. "This discussion is not going to move jobs forward. We need to be talking about jobs."

LOAD-DATE: October 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: **LÚJAN**
BYRD

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

CQ Weekly

October 24, 2014 Friday

Cheryl Jaeger, Shane Doucet, And Andrew Jones Nichole Francis ReynoldsEdgar RodriguezLinda Jordan Willard

LENGTH: 1071 words

After five lobbyists left Williams and Jensen in April to start their own K Street enterprise, the law and lobbying firm was on the hunt for new colleagues, and this fall it scooped up a bipartisan trio including Cheryl Jaeger, a top health care aide to former House Majority Leader Eric Cantor, a Virginia Republican.

The two new Democrats at the firm are Shane Doucet, most recently a lobbyist with Locke Lord Strategies and a onetime aide to Rep. Chris John of Louisiana, who left the House after an unsuccessful Senate race in 2004, and Andrew Jones, who left his gig as legislative director and counsel to Chief Deputy Democratic Whip **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico to join the firm.

"Cheryl's leadership on health care strategy, Shane's experience working with the administration and the Hill on issues ranging from energy to health care to pensions and Andy's knowledge of how to forge bipartisan consensus on issues is a huge asset to clients," says Susan Hirschmann, a Williams and Jensen partner. "We had a lot of conversations and talked to a lot of people, and quite honestly we're just so proud they decided to join our firm."

Jaeger, 39, found herself unexpectedly in the job market when Cantor lost his primary in June and then resigned his congressional seat in the summer.

"I'd been on the Hill for 15 years, in House leadership for the past nine years, so I really had to make a decision: stay on the Hill or did I want to challenge myself," Jaeger says. "I decided to get out of my comfort zone and see what impact I could make on these policy issues just from a different angle."

Doucet says he got to know numerous people at Williams and Jensen by sharing clients and working on common legislative battles. He's bringing with him a roster of clients that includes the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association and El Paso Electric.

"A real passion for me is health care, health and wellness, which is something I worked on intimately on the Affordable Care Act," says Doucet, 41.

Jones, whose boss on the Hill, **Lujan**, is vice chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, says "there was a feeling" that **Lujan's** office was well established, "so I thought it was time to look for new challenges."

"I'm still working on the same issues that you see up on the Hill but from a different perspective," Jones, 34, adds.

-- Kate Ackley

Nichole Francis Reynolds

MasterCard has hired former congressional aide Nichole Francis Reynolds as director of federal affairs, pursuing the credit card company's interests in such issues as data security, taxes, trade, emerging payment technology and consumer protection. Previously, Francis Reynolds was chief of staff for Alabama Democrat Rep. Terri A. Sewell.

"MasterCard," Francis Reynolds says, "connects consumers, financial institutions and merchants and will allow me to use my legislative and legal experiences to focus on cutting edge financial services, homeland security and consumer protection issues."

In the time Francis Reynolds worked for Sewell, the lawmaker became the chief deputy Democratic whip and an active member of the Financial Services Committee, getting funding for sewer, water and tornado recovery projects in her district. She also sponsored a bill awarding Congressional Gold Medals for the four little girls killed in the 1963 church bombing in Birmingham, Ala.

From 2008 to 2010, Francis Reynolds was chief of staff for Ohio Rep. Betty Sutton, who lost her re-election race in 2012.

She has been an associate at two law firms: Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz and Baker Hostetler. At both firms, Francis Reynolds says she worked with lobbyists and learned the importance of advocacy "whether on behalf of a corporation, nonprofit, university or local government."

She spent nearly two years as district director Rep. Harold Ford Jr., a Tennessee Democrat who left the House in 2006 to run unsuccessfully for the Senate. She later worked on John Kerry's 2004 presidential campaign and was counsel to the House Homeland Security subcommittee on emergency communications, preparedness and response.

MasterCard is implementing chip technology for payments next year, which will help minimize security breaches. Francis Reynolds says she will be educating policy makers about this changeover and how it will affect consumers. "It will also protect our government and our nation," she says.

-- Alex Gangitano

Edgar Rodriguez

Former Navy corpsman Edgar Rodriguez is using his military experience to lobby on behalf of the Association of the United States Navy as director of legislation and government relations.

After five years in the service, Rodriguez, 32, decided to pursue a career on Capitol Hill starting as an intern for the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Rep. Adam Smith, D-Wash., before being hired as a legislative correspondent for Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin, D-Md., in 2012. He was later promoted to legislative aide on defense, veterans' affairs, health care and intelligence.

"I met a lot of great staffers on the Hill but very few of them are veterans and even a smaller amount are enlisted veterans," he says, "so with that, I do feel that my perspective does bring something valuable."

At the association, Rodriguez, is replacing Anthony Wallis, who left for a risk analyst position at ABS Consulting.

-- Kaitlyn Ridel

Linda Jordan Willard

Although the route from Capitol Hill and K Street is well-trodden, not many lobbyists have a stint in France on their resumes in between. Former congressional aide Linda Jordan Willard joined the TCH Group this month after living in Lyon for years while her husband ran a biotech company there.

"I love to cook and I love markets, so I had a ball," says the new senior policy adviser and counsel, adding that she's now fluent in French.

Though she did some consulting and translating work with Interpol while abroad, the new gig with TCH will allow her to draw on her work on Capitol Hill.

She got her start in the office of fellow Texan and then-Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, a Republican. Jordan Willard, 45, also handled energy and environmental matters as a counsel on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

Despite the difficult partisan environment, she says she has colleagues from both sides of the aisle. "I think there's always room to get stuff done," she says. "I'm idealistic that way."

-- Kate Ackley

Source: CQ Weekly
©2014 Congressional Quarterly Inc. All Rights Reserved.

LOAD-DATE: October 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: NEWSLETTERS

Copyright 2014 CQ-Roll Call, Inc. All Rights Reserved

453 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Roswell Daily Record (New Mexico)

October 24, 2014 Friday

NM delegation requests relief for September floods

BYLINE: Rdr

SECTION: LOCAL NEWS

LENGTH: 259 words

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham sent a letter to President Obama Thursday, requesting prompt action on the state of New Mexico's recent request for a major disaster declaration to assist with recovery efforts following severe storms and flooding caused by Hurricane Odile in late September.

Between Sept. 15 and 25, parts of New Mexico including Colfax, Eddy, Lea, Otero, San Miguel, Santa Fe and Sierra counties endured severe storms and flooding that significantly damaged roads, bridges, low-water crossings and other infrastructure.

On Wednesday, the state requested the federal government declare a major disaster, provide the correlated public assistance for counties that suffered extensive damage, and provide statewide hazard mitigation assistance. The associated funding would help with recovery efforts including debris removal, emergency protective measures, and repairs to roads, bridges and water control facilities.

"In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from flooding during the time period of Sept. 15 through Sept. 25, 2014, we request your expedited attention to Gov. Martinez's request on behalf of the state for a major disaster designation and the correlated public assistance," the lawmakers wrote. "We remain committed to providing the necessary assistance to you and the governor in expediting New Mexico's recovery efforts and ensuring an effective response from this extreme weather event."

Comments are closed.

LOAD-DATE: November 7, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: no-image1-537x350

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Roswell Daily Record
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

US Official News

October 24, 2014 Friday

New Mexico Delegation Requests Prompt Action on Major Disaster Declaration for September Floods

LENGTH: 654 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Martin Heinrich, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representatives Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham sent a letter to President Obama, requesting prompt action on the state of New Mexico's recent request for a major disaster declaration to assist with recovery efforts following severe storms and flooding caused by Hurricane Odile in late September.

Between Sept. 15 and Sept. 25, parts of New Mexico including Colfax, Eddy, Lea, Otero, San Miguel, Santa Fe and Sierra counties endured severe storms and flooding that significantly damaged roads, bridges, low-water crossings and other infrastructure. Yesterday, Oct. 22, the state requested the federal government declare a major disaster, provide the correlated public assistance for counties that suffered extensive damage, and provide statewide hazard mitigation assistance. The associated funding would help with recovery efforts including debris removal, emergency protective measures, and repairs to roads, bridges and water control facilities.

"In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from flooding during the time period of September 15 through September 25, 2014, we request your expedited attention to Governor Martinez's request on behalf of the State for a major disaster designation and the correlated public assistance," the lawmakers wrote. "We remain committed to providing the necessary assistance to you and the governor in expediting New Mexico's recovery efforts and ensuring an effective response from this extreme weather event."

According to Governor Martinez's letter requesting the major disaster declaration, the total severe storm damage has been assessed at $10.2 million, with damage to roads and bridges accounting for more than 70 percent of the total. Other damage includes extensive debris, disruption of oil and gas development, agricultural loss, and water and wastewater infrastructure.

October 23, 2014

The Honorable Barack Obama

President of the United States of America

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW

Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

We appreciate your responsiveness to the State of New Mexico as our communities have sought federal disaster assistance for drought, fire, and extreme weather events that have threatened public safety and property. We again respectfully request that you take prompt action on the State of New Mexico's recent request for major disaster declaration as a result of severe storms and flooding caused by Hurricane Odile from September 15 through September 25, 2014.

The state's request dated October 22, 2014, assesses the severe storm damages at $10.2 million, or $4.96 per capita. The greatest damage was to roads and bridges, accounting for 70% of the total. Other damage includes extensive debris, disruption of oil and gas development, agricultural loss, and water and wastewater infrastructure damage. Additionally, we continue to mourn the loss of two individuals who drowned as a result of this extreme weather event.

In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from flooding during the time period of September 15 through September 25, 2014, we request your expedited attention to Governor Martinez's request on behalf of the State for a major disaster designation and the correlated public assistance, specifically categories A through G for the counties of Colfax, Eddy, Lea, Otero, San Miguel, Santa Fe, and Sierra. We additionally support the state's request for Hazard Mitigation assistance statewide. We remain committed to providing the necessary assistance to you and the

governor in expediting New Mexico's recovery efforts and ensuring an effective response from this extreme weather event.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: October 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

October 24, 2014 Friday

Udall, Heinrich, Luján Announce $8.5 Million for Sipapu Ski Resort, Santa Fe Charter School

LENGTH: 583 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Martin Heinrich, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Luján** announced that Sipapu Recreational Development in Vadito and the Academy for Technology and the Classics Foundation in Santa Fe will each receive more than $4.2 million in guaranteed loans to advance their operations. Sipapu Recreational Development will receive $4.235 million to improve its ski resort operations, including funding to purchase equipment and machinery, provide working capital and to pay off existing debt. The Academy for Technology and the Classics Foundation will receive $4.3 million to pay off bond debt on the Academy for Technology and the Classics Charter School's property and facility.

"These funds are important to help rural businesses in New Mexico thrive and generate economic development in our communities," Udall said. "The Sipapu ski resort creates jobs and attracts tourists to northern New Mexico, and these funds will help to ensure the resort continues to draw visitors and revenue to the area. The Academy for Technology and the Classics Charter School is helping to prepare Santa Fe students with the skills to succeed in college, and provide them with the technological skills needed in today's work force. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I will continue to push for funding to help New Mexico businesses to grow, and to expand educational opportunities for our state's next generation of leaders."

"These Rural Development funds will help Sipapu ski resort and the Academy for Technology and the Classics improve their operations," said Heinrich. "Places like Sipapu in northern New Mexico attract

visitors from across the country and contribute to our state's $6.1 billion outdoor recreation economy. I'm also pleased with the investment to support STEM education, so that students will continue to receive technology skills that will prepare them to compete in today's economy."

"Rural Development funds provide important resources to our communities and contribute to economic development that is needed in rural New Mexico," **Luján** said. "These projects will help contribute to efforts to build a stronger economy in northern New Mexico by promoting a local business in Taos County and the tourism industry that is an important part of the economy. They will also help enhance the Academy for Technology and the Classics Charter School's ability to serve its students and ensure they receive a good education."

The Sipapu Ski and Summer Resort was founded in 1952 in the Sangre de Cristo Mountain region, and has more than 40 ski trails. The family-friendly resort offers terrain catering to skiers and snowboarders of all ability levels, and claims itself home to the longest ski season in the state.

Established in 2000, the Academy for Technology and the Classics enrolls approximately 365 students in grades 7-12, and seeks to provide a classical and technology-based approach to education in a public school setting.

The loans were made available through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program. The program provides loans to improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities by bolstering existing private credit structures and guaranteeing the quality of loans.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: October 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 23, 2014

New Mexico Delegation Requests Prompt Action on Major Disaster Declaration for September Floods; 'Expedited attention' sought to speed recovery efforts following extreme weather; Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 684 words

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representatives Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Lujan**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham sent a letter to President Obama, requesting prompt action on the state of New Mexico's recent request for a major disaster declaration to assist with recovery efforts following severe storms and flooding caused by Hurricane Odile in late September.

Between Sept. 15 and Sept. 25, parts of New Mexico including Colfax, Eddy, Lea, Otero, San Miguel, Santa Fe and Sierra counties endured severe storms and flooding that significantly damaged roads, bridges, low-water crossings and other infrastructure. Yesterday, Oct. 22, the state requested the federal government declare a major disaster, provide the correlated public assistance for counties that suffered extensive damage, and provide statewide hazard mitigation assistance. The associated funding would help with recovery efforts including debris removal, emergency protective measures, and repairs to roads, bridges and water control facilities.

"In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from flooding during the time period of September 15 through September 25, 2014, we request your expedited attention to Governor Martinez's request on behalf of the State for a major disaster designation and the correlated public assistance," the lawmakers wrote. "We remain committed to providing the necessary assistance to you and the governor in expediting New Mexico's recovery efforts and ensuring an effective response from this extreme weather event."

According to Governor Martinez's letter requesting the major disaster declaration, the total severe storm damage has been assessed at $10.2 million, with damage to roads and bridges accounting for more than 70 percent of the total. Other damage includes extensive debris, disruption of oil and gas development, agricultural loss, and water and wastewater infrastructure.

October 23, 2014

The Honorable Barack Obama

President of the United States of America

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW

Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

We appreciate your responsiveness to the State of New Mexico as our communities have sought federal disaster assistance for drought, fire, and extreme weather events that have threatened public safety and property. We again respectfully request that you take prompt action on the State of New Mexico's recent request for major disaster declaration as a result of severe storms and flooding caused by Hurricane Odile from September 15 through September 25, 2014.

The state's request dated October 22, 2014, assesses the severe storm damages at $10.2 million, or $4.96 per capita. The greatest damage was to roads and bridges, accounting for 70% of the total. Other damage includes extensive debris, disruption of oil and gas development, agricultural loss, and water and wastewater infrastructure damage. Additionally, we continue to mourn the loss of two individuals who drowned as a result of this extreme weather event.

In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from flooding during the time period of September 15 through September 25, 2014, we request your expedited attention to Governor Martinez's request on behalf of the State for a major disaster designation and the correlated public assistance, specifically categories A through G for the counties of Colfax, Eddy, Lea, Otero, San Miguel, Santa Fe, and Sierra. We additionally support the state's request for Hazard Mitigation assistance statewide. We remain committed to providing the necessary assistance to you and the

governor in expediting New Mexico's recovery efforts and ensuring an effective response from this extreme weather event.

Sincerely,

Tom Udall

United States Senator

Martin Heinrich

United States Senator

Steve Pearce

United States Representative

Ben Ray Lujan

United States Representative

Michelle **Lujan** Grisham

United States Representative

Read this original document at: http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/press-releases/new-mexico-delegation-requests-prompt-action-on-major-disaster-declaration-for-september-floods

LOAD-DATE: October 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSMA

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

October 23, 2014 Thursday

DELEGATION RELEASE: NEW MEXICO DELEGATION REQUESTS PROMPT ACTION ON MAJOR DISASTER DECLARATION FOR SEPTEMBER FLOODS "EXPEDITED ATTENTION' SOUGHT TO SPEED RECOVERY EFFORTS FOLLOWING EXTREME WEATHER

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 678 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham:

Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representatives Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Lujan**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham sent a letter to President Obama, requesting prompt action on the state of New Mexico's recent request for a major disaster declaration to assist with recovery efforts following severe storms and flooding caused by Hurricane Odile in late September.

Between Sept. 15 and Sept. 25, parts of New Mexico including Colfax, Eddy, Lea, Otero, San Miguel, Santa Fe and Sierra counties endured severe storms and flooding that significantly damaged roads, bridges, low-water crossings and other infrastructure. Yesterday, Oct. 22, the state requested the federal government declare a major disaster, provide the correlated public assistance for counties that suffered extensive damage, and provide statewide hazard mitigation assistance. The associated funding would help with recovery efforts including debris removal, emergency protective measures, and repairs to roads, bridges and water control facilities.

"In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from flooding during the time period of September 15 through September 25, 2014, we request your expedited attention to Governor Martinez's request on behalf of the State for a major disaster designation and the correlated public assistance," the lawmakers wrote. "We remain committed to providing the necessary assistance to you and the governor in expediting New Mexico's recovery efforts and ensuring an effective response from this extreme weather event."

According to Governor Martinez's letter requesting the major disaster declaration, the total severe storm damage has been assessed at $10.2 million, with damage to roads and bridges accounting for more than 70 percent of the total. Other damage includes extensive debris, disruption of oil and gas development, agricultural loss, and water and wastewater infrastructure.

The full text of the letter is available below and HERE.

###

October 23, 2014

The Honorable Barack Obama

President of the United States of America

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW

Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

We appreciate your responsiveness to the State of New Mexico as our communities have sought federal disaster assistance for drought, fire, and extreme weather events that have threatened public safety and property. We again respectfully request that you take prompt action on the State of New Mexico's recent request for major disaster declaration as a result of severe storms and flooding caused by Hurricane Odile from September 15 through September 25, 2014.

The state's request dated October 22, 2014, assesses the severe storm damages at $10.2 million, or $4.96 per capita. The greatest damage was to roads and bridges, accounting for 70% of the total. Other damage includes extensive debris, disruption of oil and gas development, agricultural loss, and

water and wastewater infrastructure damage. Additionally, we continue to mourn the loss of two individuals who drowned as a result of this extreme weather event.

In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from flooding during the time period of September 15 through September 25, 2014, we request your expedited attention to Governor Martinez's request on behalf of the State for a major disaster designation and the correlated public assistance, specifically categories A through G for the counties of Colfax, Eddy, Lea, Otero, San Miguel, Santa Fe, and Sierra. We additionally support the state's request for Hazard Mitigation assistance statewide. We remain committed to providing the necessary assistance to you and the governor in expediting New Mexico's recovery efforts and ensuring an effective response from this extreme weather event.

Sincerely,

Tom Udall

United States Senator

Martin Heinrich

United States Senator

Steve Pearce

United States Representative

Ben Ray Lujan

United States Representative

Michelle **Lujan** Grisham

United States Representative

LOAD-DATE: October 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

October 23, 2014 Thursday 4:12 AM EST

New Mexico in Focus Hosts District 1 Candidates

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 369 words

DATELINE: ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

The University of New Mexico issued the following news release:

This week on New Mexico in Focus, correspondent Gwyneth Doland continues the series of one-on-one interviews with candidates competing in November's general election. NMiF welcomes New Mexico congressional District 1 Representative Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and republican challenger Mike Frese.

The program airs Friday nights at 7 p.m. on channel 5.1 and appears online on the NMiF website shortly thereafter. The show rebroadcasts Saturday at 5 p.m. on channel 9.1. and again on Sunday at 7 a.m. on channel 5.1.

Gene Grant and The Line opinion panel analyze the congressional District 1 interviews and discuss the congressional District 3 debate between democratic incumbent **Ben Ray Lujan**, and republican challenger Jefferson Byrd, airing this week on KNME-TV and New Mexico public media.

This week, co-hosting duties are turned over to political psychologist and women's issues expert Martha Burk for a special segment on women and the 2014 election. On tap will be economic issues, including the minimum wage, poverty and the pay gap, and the effects of the Affordable Care Act on benefits.

Guests

* Mike Frese, republican congressional district 1 candidate, challenger

* Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, democratic congressional district 1 candidate, incumbent

Line Panelists

* Laura Sanchez-Rivet, Attorney, Sanchez Legal Solutions

Guest Panelists:

* Merritt Allen, principal and executive director, Vox Optima, LLC

* Stephanie Maez, CEO, Center for Civic Policy

* Carla Sonntag, founder and president, New Mexico Business Coalition

Correspondent

* Gwyneth Doland

Special Guest:

* Martha Burk, political psychologist and women's issues expert, author of "Your Voice, Your Vote: A Savvy Woman's Guide to Power, Politics, and the Change We Need."

Host/Commentator

* Gene Grant

Get updates, watch, and follow NMiF on PBS on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and more.

The co-producers of New Mexico in Focus are Megan Kamerick and Floyd E. Vasquez Jr. and Associate Producer Kathy Wimmer. Funding for this program was provided in part by the McCune Foundation Communications Fund and Santa Fe Community Foundation.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TagarumaMar-141024-4912325 30TagarumaMar

LOAD-DATE: October 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

459 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

October 20, 2014 Monday

Dist. 3 voters should return Ben Ray Luján to Congress

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. A6

LENGTH: 346 words

Incumbent U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** is seeking his fourth term in Congress and has put job creation and making New Mexico more economically competitive at the top of his to-do list if re-elected on Nov. 4.

Luján, a Democrat who was elected to the 3rd Congressional District seat in 2008, has grown in this position and represents the people of his northern New Mexico district and its cultural values well.

Prior to going to Washington, **Luján**, the son of the late New Mexico Speaker of the House Ben **Luján**, served on the state Public Regulation Commission, was a deputy state treasurer and a state Department of Cultural Affairs administrator. He has a bachelor's degree in business administration from New Mexico Highlands University.

Luján says it's important to develop relationships with members of both parties and to be open to different ideas. His efforts range from working to create business opportunities through public-private agreements with Los Alamos National Laboratory to more local issues such as securing money for acequias and promoting local agriculture.

He is a co-founder of the Technology Transfer Caucus and as a member of Communications and Technology Subcommittee is working to expand broadband access in rural communities. He also is a member of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee which provides oversight of the Department of Energy and the national laboratories. He has proposed that the National Nuclear Security Administration be restructured to better balance nuclear weapons work and nuclear defense-related research and development.

Luján is vice chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and supports comprehensive immigration reform and a path to citizenship. He supports renewable energy and introduced legislation to protect the Sabinoso Wilderness and for the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument, which the president designated last year.

Luján wants to continue to be a voice for New Mexico families in Congress. The Journal recommends 3rd Congressional District voters return **Ben Ray Luján** to Washington, D.C., to do just that.

LOAD-DATE: October 20, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

460 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

October 20, 2014 Monday 11:01 PM EST

ANA-PAC Endorses Ben Ray Lujan in New Mexico House Race

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 396 words

DATELINE: SILVER SPRING, Md.

The American Nurses Association issued the following news release:

The American Nurses Association (ANA)'s Political Action Committee (ANA-PAC) (http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/Policy-Advocacy/ANAPAC) today endorsed Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-NM-3) in his bid to continue serving constituents in New Mexico's third district. Each election cycle, ANA-PAC endorses candidates who have demonstrated strong support for nursing and health care issues and will best serve the interests of nurses and their patients.

Born and raised in New Mexico, Rep. **Lujan** has been a champion for nurses and supported legislation in Congress on home health, safe staffing and Nursing Workforce Development Programs. Additionally, Rep. **Lujan** worked to improve health care as a member of the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission by investigating practices of the health insurance industry. The investigation led to the development of legislation that expanded access to insurance and closed loopholes the industry had been using to unfairly deny medical claims and void policies.

"Congressman **Lujan** has been very supportive of the role nurses play in the health care delivery system in New Mexico," said Deborah J. Walker, MSN, RN, executive director of the New Mexico Nurses Association (http://www.nmna.org/). "We applaud his support of health care reform and feel he is the type of leader who will help ensure nurses' voices are heard on Capitol Hill."

ANA-PAC (http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/Policy-Advocacy/ANAPAC) makes endorsement decisions based on candidate interviews, communication with ANA's constituent and

state nurses associations, campaign information, and the candidate's voting record on ANA's priority issues.

ANA encourages nurses to volunteer for political campaigns of their choice, Democrat, Republican, Independent or another political party. Volunteering on a campaign provides opportunities to advance some of nursing's core issues, including safe nurse staffing, safe patient handling and mobility, ensuring that advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) can practice to the full extent of their license and education, and securing access to safe, quality health care for all.

[Category: Nursing]

Contact: Jemarion Jones, 301/628-5198, jemarion.jones@ana.org

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage10PkS-141021-30TacordaCheng-4906091 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: October 21, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 17, 2014

HEINRICH, LUJAN PRESENT GOOGLE ECITY AWARD TO LOS ALAMOS;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 344 words

LOS ALAMOS, N.M. (Oct.17, 2014) -- Today, at a public event at the Los Alamos Co+op Market, U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Lujan** presented the Los Alamos business community with the 2014 Google eCity Award. They were joined by representatives from Google, as well as members of the Los Alamos Commerce and Development Corporation, the Los Alamos Chamber of Commerce, and local officials.

"The Los Alamos business community has proven that its reach extends well beyond the store front. By utilizing the power of the Internet, small businesses in Los Alamos are reaching more customers, creating jobs, and growing the local economy," Heinrich said. "This award recognizes the entrepreneurial spirit New Mexico is known for and encourages business communities across our state to increase their online presence. I congratulate Los Alamos on this tremendous achievement."

"Congratulations to the Los Alamos business community for winning Google's eCity award. This recognition is a testament to the business savvy and entrepreneurial spirit of the hard-working small businessmen and women in Los Alamos, as well as the local organizations that provide support and guidance for the business community," **Lujan** said. "I commend Los Alamos businesses for their efforts to harness the power of the Internet - from social media to websites, blogs, and more - and using its potential to build stronger businesses, a stronger economy, and a stronger community. This award also serves as a reminder of the importance that the Internet plays in our economy and the need to promote broadband expansion in communities around New Mexico."

Google and Ipsos, an independent research firm, analyzed a variety of factors to determine which cities would receive a Google eCity Award. Winning cities had businesses that exhibited a strong online presence in multiple areas including social media, website, blogs, and mobile accessibility.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/heinrich-**lujan**-present-google-ecity-award-to-los-alamos/

LOAD-DATE: October 20, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMA

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

462 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 17, 2014

PHOTO: Heinrich, Lujan Present Google eCity Award to Los Alamos;
Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 383 words

PHOTO: (from left) Los Alamos Commerce and Development Chairman Bill Wadt, Sen. Heinrich, Los Alamos Cooperative Market General Manager Steve Watts, and U.S.
Represenatative **Ben Ray Lujan** at 2014 Google eCity Award event in Los Alamos.

LOS ALAMOS, N.M. -- Today, at a public event at the Los Alamos Co+op Market, U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Lujan** presented the Los Alamos business community with the 2014 Google eCity Award. They were joined by representatives from Google, as well as members of the Los Alamos Commerce and Development Corporation, the Los Alamos Chamber of Commerce, and local officials.

"The Los Alamos business community has proven that its reach extends well beyond the store front. By utilizing the power of the Internet, small businesses in Los Alamos are reaching more customers, creating jobs, and growing the local economy," Heinrich said. "This award recognizes the entrepreneurial spirit New Mexico is known for and encourages business communities across our state to increase their online presence. I congratulate Los Alamos on this tremendous achievement."

"Congratulations to the Los Alamos business community for winning Google's eCity award. This recognition is a testament to the business savvy and entrepreneurial spirit of the hard-working small businessmen and women in Los Alamos, as well as the local organizations that provide support and guidance for the business community," **Lujan** said. "I commend Los Alamos businesses for their efforts to harness the power of the Internet - from social media to websites, blogs, and more - and using its potential to build stronger businesses, a stronger economy, and a stronger community. This award also serves as a reminder of the importance that the Internet plays in our economy and the need to promote broadband expansion in communities around New Mexico."

Google and Ipsos, an independent research firm, analyzed a variety of factors to determine which cities would receive a Google eCity Award. Winning cities had businesses that exhibited a strong online presence in multiple areas including social media, website, blogs, and mobile accessibility.

Read this original document at: http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/press-releases/photo-heinrich-**lujan**-present-google-ecity-award-to-los-alamos-

LOAD-DATE: October 20, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSMA

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

October 17, 2014 Friday 8:52 PM EST

Heinrich, Lujan Present Google eCity Award to Los Alamos

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 364 words

DATELINE: LOS ALAMOS, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Today, at a public event at the Los Alamos Co+op Market, U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Lujan** presented the Los Alamos business community with the 2014 Google eCity Award (http://ct.symplicity.com/t/hnh/2725e24fe91e523021dff36f191fe661/1920219011/realurl=http:/www.google.com/economicimpact/ecities.html#NM). They were joined by

representatives from Google, as well as members of the Los Alamos Commerce & Development Corporation, the Los Alamos Chamber of Commerce, and local officials.

"The Los Alamos business community has proven that its reach extends well beyond the store front. By utilizing the power of the Internet, small businesses in Los Alamos are reaching more customers, creating jobs, and growing the local economy," Heinrich said. "This award recognizes the entrepreneurial spirit New Mexico is known for and encourages business communities across our state to increase their online presence. I congratulate Los Alamos on this tremendous achievement."

"Congratulations to the Los Alamos business community for winning Google's eCity award. This recognition is a testament to the business savvy and entrepreneurial spirit of the hard-working small businessmen and women in Los Alamos, as well as the local organizations that provide support and guidance for the business community," **Lujan** said. "I commend Los Alamos businesses for their efforts to harness the power of the Internet - from social media to websites, blogs, and more - and using its potential to build stronger businesses, a stronger economy, and a stronger community. This award also serves as a reminder of the importance that the Internet plays in our economy and the need to promote broadband expansion in communities around New Mexico."

Google and Ipsos, an independent research firm, analyzed a variety of factors to determine which cities would receive a Google eCity Award. Winning cities had businesses that exhibited a strong online presence in multiple areas including social media, website, blogs, and mobile accessibility.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-141018-4903763 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: October 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

October 17, 2014 Friday 4:18 AM EST

New Mexico Dems: Congressman Ben Ray Lujan Endorses Harrison Todacheene in NM House Race

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 239 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** has announced his formal endorsement of Harrison Todacheene for the New Mexico House in district 4. Air Force veteran Harrison Todacheene has spent over 40 years serving his Shiprock community as a member of IBEW, a Project Manager for the Navajo Nation and Commander of the Shiprock Veterans Organization.

"I'm proud to announce that I'm supporting Harrison Todacheene for State Representative in district 4," **Lujan** said. "Harrison has served his community in northwest New Mexico for over 40 years and will continue to be a champion for district 4 in the Legislature."

Todacheene, a former Project Manager for the Navajo Nation from Shiprock is the Democratic nominee running for the seat.

"I'm running because I've committed my life to serving this community," Todacheene said. "I grew up here and I'm running to make sure my grandchildren can make a life here in district 4."

Todacheene has pledged to be a voice for veterans and elders in the New Mexico Legislature. He currently serves as Commander of the Shiprock Veterans Association. He is known for his ability to bring new funds and projects into his district. Most recently he played a key role in the construction of the San Juan Multigenerational Center and the Chaco River affordable housing units in Shiprock.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30FurigayJof 141018-4905111 30FurigayJof

LOAD-DATE: October 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

October 17, 2014 Friday 2:42 AM EST

Heinrich, Lujan Present Google eCity Award to Los Alamos

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 352 words

DATELINE: LOS ALAMOS, N.M.

The office of Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., issued the following news release:

Today, at a public event at the Los Alamos Co+op Market, U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Lujan** presented the Los Alamos business community with the 2014 Google eCity Award. They were joined by representatives from Google, as well as members of the Los

Alamos Commerce & Development Corporation, the Los Alamos Chamber of Commerce, and local officials.http://www.google.com/economicimpact/ecities.html#NM

"The Los Alamos business community has proven that its reach extends well beyond the store front. By utilizing the power of the Internet, small businesses in Los Alamos are reaching more customers, creating jobs, and growing the local economy," Heinrich said. "This award recognizes the entrepreneurial spirit New Mexico is known for and encourages business communities across our state to increase their online presence. I congratulate Los Alamos on this tremendous achievement."

"Congratulations to the Los Alamos business community for winning Google's eCity award. This recognition is a testament to the business savvy and entrepreneurial spirit of the hard-working small businessmen and women in Los Alamos, as well as the local organizations that provide support and guidance for the business community," **Lujan** said. "I commend Los Alamos businesses for their efforts to harness the power of the Internet - from social media to websites, blogs, and more - and using its potential to build stronger businesses, a stronger economy, and a stronger community. This award also serves as a reminder of the importance that the Internet plays in our economy and the need to promote broadband expansion in communities around New Mexico."

Google and Ipsos, an independent research firm, analyzed a variety of factors to determine which cities would receive a Google eCity Award. Winning cities had businesses that exhibited a strong online presence in multiple areas including social media, website, blogs, and mobile accessibility.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TacordaCheng-141018-4904786 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: October 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

October 17, 2014 Friday

PHOTO: Heinrich, Luján Present Google eCity Award to Los Alamos

LENGTH: 353 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Martin Heinrich, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Today, at a public event at the Los Alamos Co+op Market, U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Luján** presented the Los Alamos business community with the 2014 Google eCity Award. They were joined by representatives from Google, as well as members of the Los Alamos Commerce & Development Corporation, the Los Alamos Chamber of Commerce, and local officials.

"The Los Alamos business community has proven that its reach extends well beyond the store front. By utilizing the power of the Internet, small businesses in Los Alamos are reaching more customers, creating jobs, and growing the local economy," Heinrich said. "This award recognizes the entrepreneurial spirit New Mexico is known for and encourages business communities across our state to increase their online presence. I congratulate Los Alamos on this tremendous achievement."

"Congratulations to the Los Alamos business community for winning Google's eCity award. This recognition is a testament to the business savvy and entrepreneurial spirit of the hard-working small businessmen and women in Los Alamos, as well as the local organizations that provide support and guidance for the business community," **Luján** said. "I commend Los Alamos businesses for their efforts to harness the power of the Internet - from social media to websites, blogs, and more - and using its potential to build stronger businesses, a stronger economy, and a stronger community. This award also serves as a reminder of the importance that the Internet plays in our economy and the need to promote broadband expansion in communities around New Mexico."

Google and Ipsos, an independent research firm, analyzed a variety of factors to determine which cities would receive a Google eCity Award. Winning cities had businesses that exhibited a strong online presence in multiple areas including social media, website, blogs, and mobile accessibility.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: October 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

467 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

October 16, 2014 Thursday

Forum fuels quarrel in congressional race

BYLINE: DEBORAH BAKER JOURNAL CAPITOL BUREAU

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C1

LENGTH: 444 words

SANTA FE - Democratic U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** scolded his Republican challenger, Jefferson Byrd, on Wednesday for walking out on a League of Women Voters forum in Santa Fe the previous evening.

Luján brought it up during a televised debate between the two candidates in New Mexico's 3rd Congressional District that dealt largely with their view of the role of the federal government.

Byrd left the league's candidate forum after reading an opening statement complaining that questions from the audience would be screened. He said he wanted an "unfiltered exchange."

He said the league had refused his requests to have questions asked directly, to provide him the political affiliations of the screeners, or to allow campaign staff to be part of the screening process.

"Last night, Jeff Byrd, when you had a chance to be able to face the voters, you ran out on them. You left that important forum," **Luján** told his opponent.

The congressman contrasted it with what he said was his own accessibility to constituents in hundreds of town halls and other events throughout the district, which covers roughly the northern half of the state.

Byrd, who ranches near Tucumcari, is making his second run at unseating **Luján** in the heavily Democratic district that first elected **Luján** in 2008.

During Wednesday's debate hosted by KOB-TV, the Republican nominee said his platform is based on "faith, family, finances and fuel." The latter references were to the federal deficit and pushing the development of "all sources of fuel."

Byrd blamed too much regulation, along with overreach by federal agencies, for the decline in mining and other businesses and for job losses in the district.

The GOP nominee said he wants to do away with federal agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Education and return more power to the states.

"I believe in a more pragmatic approach," of objecting when federal agencies overreach, **Luján** said.

And he said Byrd's support for the privatization of Social Security and Medicare would hurt New Mexicans.

"We cannot keep kicking the can down the road and expect future generations to worry about it," Byrd said of Social Security funding.

The candidates agreed on the significance of Los Alamos National Laboratory and the need to protect its funding.

But **Luján** said Byrd's proposal for a "penny plan" - cutting 1 cent of every dollar of federal spending - would mean mandatory, across-the-board cuts that could hurt LANL.

Asked about legalizing recreational marijuana use, as neighboring Colorado has done, Byrd said he is opposed, while **Luján** said New Mexicans should "watch closely" the developments in Colorado and Washington.

LOAD-DATE: October 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: **LUJÁN:** Scolds Byrd for leaving forum
BYRD: Didn't get "unfiltered exchange"

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

468 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

October 15, 2014 Wednesday

House candidates square off in variety of issues

BYLINE: Arin McKenna

SECTION: TODAY'S NEWS

LENGTH: 1207 words

The differences were stark between Democrat Ben R. (Ray) **Luján**, who is running for reelection for the U.S. House of Representatives District 3, and his Republican opponent Jefferson L. Byrd at the League of Women Voters of Los Alamos candidate forum last week.

These are key points from the candidate's responses to questions. See "Fact-checking the candidates" for some research into the candidates' competing claims.

What action should Congress take regarding social security?

Luján opposes the privatization of social security, as well as raising the age for retirement or reducing benefits.

"The way we strengthen social security is we strengthen the economy. We bring more people in, we get more people working and contributing to the program," **Luján** said. "It's solvent. We just celebrated 75 years, and with all of us working together we'll celebrate 75 more."

Byrd countered, "According to the CBO (Congressional Budget Office), social security is going to fail...We all have to take actions now before that occurs."

Did either candidate support a higher minimum wage?

Byrd does not. He advocated instead for "protecting employers" and creating mining and drilling jobs.

"What I do support is increasing the number of high paying jobs...Minimum wage jobs are what get people into the workforce, and we need to make sure that there is a distinction there." Byrd said.

According to Byrd, only four percent of the population is on minimum wage and only 100,000 of those rely on that to survive.

Luján supports an increase, citing a letter signed by 600 economists and seven Nobel Prize winners which supports minimum wage legislation in Congress. "Increasing the minimum wage is important, and telling 147,000 people in New Mexico, 19 percent of New Mexico's workforce, that they don't deserve a raise...,"**Luján** said. "We can support New Mexico moving toward creating more opportunities with high wage jobs as well."

What role and to what extent do the candidates think the EPA has harmed everything surrounding high paying jobs?

Byrd stated that his goal was to eliminate the EPA and let state agencies regulate environmental issues.

"It's clear that the EPA is having an impact on businesses here in Northern New Mexico, and it's through regulation and it needs to be reigned in," Byrd said.

Luján talked about the impacts of acid rain on agricultural lands, especially in New Mexico, before regulation by the EPA.

"Eliminating the EPA would do away with all those efforts and protections," **Luján** said.

Luján also noted that he had pushed back against unreasonable EPA regulations, such as placing water tanks and acequias in the same category as the Mississippi River.

Because government-spending cuts have already impacted the laboratory, what would the candidates do to advocate for the lab?

Both candidates said they supported lab funding.

Luján stated that he voted against the Budget Control Act and sequestration, which had significant impacts on LANL. He also noted that he worked to secure additional cleanup funds and supported an Defense Authorization Act amendment that expands the lab's mission and reduces NNSA interference.

Byrd supports the lab's role in national defense and making sure the armed forces "are the best, most well equipped fighting army ever."

How would the candidates cut or reduce debt?

Byrd claimed that the federal debt had doubled in the last six years. He advocated for cutting one penny per dollar from the budget to pay down the debt. He also wants to eliminate baseline budgeting, which is used to project future funding requirements.

Luján called Byrd's one-cent plan "another sequestration plan" that would reduce funding for LANL.

Luján advocated a return to the PAYGO system used to balance the budgets under the Clinton administration. He noted that Congress adopted a pay-as-you-go initiative in 2010, but claimed that the House had eliminated that in 2011.

People in Congress will not compromise. How do the candidates think they are going to change that?

Luján pointed to his participation in efforts such as the Tech Transfer Caucus, the National Laboratories Caucus, the Congressional Rural Caucus and the Energy Caucus.

"We may not be able to agree on 80 percent, but we can find 20 percent that we can work on, and that's how we can get things done," **Luján** said.

Byrd stated, "The reality is, we have to make a distinction between compromise and capitulation. There are some things that are not worth capitulating, and the loss of jobs here in New Mexico is something we don't want to see."

Do the candidates support legislation to insure that women will have equal pay for equal work?

Byrd stated that "I absolutely support equal pay for equal work."

Luján cited his support for the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and the Fair Pay Act of 2013, which is stalled in Congress.

"In 2014 this shouldn't be debated, it shouldn't be stalled, it should be done. And there's no reason why Congress should be delaying this any more," **Luján** said.

Affordable Care Act: There is a claim that citizens can not keep their doctor or health plan. What would the candidates do to correct thus problem?

According to **Luján**, many of the plans being cancelled are inferior plans that do not meet the stricter standards for coverage, and that alternate plans are available to people. He also cited the benefits of the ACA: no denial of coverage due to preexisting conditions, women no longer paying higher premiums than men and no lifetime caps.

Byrd claimed that families are paying $3,000 more a year for health insurance and that 4.7 million people have lost their insurance. He contended that tort reform, medical savings accounts and allowing interstate commerce for insurance providers should have been implemented instead of the ACA.

What, if anything, do the candidates think the federal government should be doing to cut down on the scientifically expected effects of climate change or to mitigate the difficulties we will face?

Byrd claimed the earth was still in an ice age, citing evidence that ice at the poles has increased in the last two years.

"Is there climate change? Sure. We have four seasons every year. Sometimes it gets wet, sometimes it gets dry, some years are colder than others. But is that directly attributed to man? That science has not been settled," Byrd said.

Luján praised LANL for its research on such things as rising sea levels. He also stated that what is happening in New Mexico, such as recent fires and impeded forest recovery afterwards, is "something we should be terrified about."

"When 97 percent of scientists across the country say that this is what the data reads, we should try to accept modeling associated with what it means and what they're trying to tell us," **Luján** said.

Luján's response was interrupted by two of Byrd's supporters. One walked out across the front of the auditorium declaring "I've had just about enough." The other loudly stated an expletive. The two candidates, meanwhile, were scheduled to meet Tuesday night in Santa Fe for a forum sponsored by the League of Women Voters. According to the Santa Fe New Mexican, Byrd himself walked out of the forum after giving his opening remarks. Byrd stated that he did not like the rules of the forum.

LOAD-DATE: October 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: There were plenty of differences in the answers as **Ben Ray Luján** and Jefferson Byrd (pictured) took part in a candidate forum at Fuller Lodge last week. **Luján** is running for reelection for the House of Representatives District 3 seat. **Ben Ray Lujan**

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

October 14, 2014 Tuesday

Bill seeks oversight of private colleges; King among 14 AGs endorsing measure

BYLINE: MIKE BUSH JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C1

LENGTH: 512 words

A move by some congressional Democrats to strengthen oversight of private, for-profit colleges and universities got a boost this month when it was endorsed by 14 state attorneys general, including New Mexico's Gary King.

However, none of the state's five-member congressional delegation, including the two Democratic senators, has signed on.

Senate Bill 2204 was introduced in April by Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois and has since picked up four co-sponsors - all Democrats. An identical bill, HR 4391, was introduced at the same time in the House of Representatives by Maryland's Elijah Cummings.

The legislation is called the Proprietary Education Oversight Coordination Improvement Act. With the House controlled by Republicans, chances of passage are doubtful. However, the letter of endorsement from the 14 attorneys general gave supporters added hope.

"The bill is both timely and necessary as each of our offices have encountered far too many former and current for-profit school students who have been harmed by the dishonest and unethical practices of some for-profit institutions," the letter stated.

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., who represents northern New Mexico, said, "I will take a close look at the full impact this legislation would have. ... I appreciate the views of the Attorneys General, including Gary King, on this issue."

Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., and Steve Pearce, R-N.M., did not respond to requests for comment.

The legislation would establish an interagency committee that would provide Congress with annual reports on for-profit colleges.

The panel also would be required to create a "For-Profit Warning List for Parents and Students" of schools that would include such phrasing as: engaged in illegal activities the previous year as determined by a state or federal court; entered into a settlement resulting in a monetary payment; had a higher education program withdrawn or suspended; "sufficient evidence of widespread or systemic unfair, deceptive, abusive, unethical, fraudulent, or predatory practices, policies, or procedures that threaten the academic success, financial security, or general best interest of students," according to a summary by the Congressional Research Library, a nonpartisan division of the Library of Congress.

The bills would also encourage information sharing among federal agencies and between federal and state offices.

In a statement, Durbin's office said for-profit colleges receive 20 percent of federal student loan funding but enroll 10 percent of all college students. Some Democrats have complained that for-profit colleges disproportionately take federal funds without providing students with valuable workforce skills.

David Urias, an Albuquerque attorney whose firm represents several former ITT Technical Institute nursing students in a lawsuit against the private school, said the legislation, as he understands it, is "something that is long overdue."

Sens. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., and Tom Udall, D-N.M., released statements indicating concern about the issue but not addressing the bill specifically.

LOAD-DATE: October 14, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

470 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

October 11, 2014 Saturday

Luján and rival Byrd face House race Round 2

BYLINE: Daniel J. Chacón, The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: NATIONAL POLITICAL NEWS

LENGTH: 1165 words

Oct. 11--The race in New Mexico's 3rd Congressional District is a rematch from two years ago between incumbent Democrat **Ben Ray Lujan** and Republican challenger Jeff Byrd.

Lujan, of Nambe, is seeking a fourth term to represent Northern New Mexico in Congress. He said he has extensively traveled the district, which includes all or part of 16 counties and takes eight and a half hours to drive across, and he has worked on scores of constituent issues that don't make the news.

"You just do your best to represent everyone and be available," said **Lujan**, 42, the son of the late Ben **Lujan**, who was speaker of the New Mexico House of Representatives.

"Not everyone always agrees with your votes, but you're there to represent the entire district," he said. "My dad always told me, 'You need to make sure that you're able to come and explain your votes to your community, whether people agree with them or not.' "

Byrd, 43, a rancher from Tucumcari and a former environmental engineer, says **Lujan** does not deserve to be re-elected.

Byrd said the northern part of New Mexico is suffering with **Lujan** and his "progressive policies." Meantime, other parts of the state are flourishing, he said.

As an example, Byrd said mines in the Southern New Mexico congressional district are hiring. But a molybdenum mine in Questa closed this year, "sending New Mexicans back to a status of dependency on the government," Byrd said.

His approach to representing the district would be different from **Lujan's**, he said.

"I do not care nearly as much as the incumbent about partisan politics," Byrd said. "I want this district to focus on solutions to problems."

Lujan says he has been working on issues affecting New Mexico and has the record to prove it, from veterans' issues to acequias.

The 3rd Congressional District race this year also includes Republican Thomas Hook of Portales, who is running as a write-in. Hook is no fan of **Lujan**.

"He has failed all of us and needs to go," Hook wrote on his campaign website.

Despite the criticism from his opponents and others, **Lujan** is again considered by most to be a safe bet for re-election in the heavily Democratic district. He took 62 percent of the vote two years ago against Byrd.

Of New Mexico's three elections for the U.S. House of Representatives, most eyes are on the 2nd Congressional District race between incumbent Steve Pearce, a Republican from Hobbs, and Democratic challenger Roxanne "Rocky" Lara, an attorney from Carlsbad.

They have clogged television airwaves in recent weeks with hundreds of thousands of dollars in campaign ads. Pearce has more than $600,000 in TV ads scheduled through Nov. 4. He has spent more money on TV ads than any other political candidates in New Mexico during this election cycle except Republican Gov. Susana Martinez and Democratic U.S. Sen. Tom Udall.

"There's a reason why Congressman Pearce is spending the amounts that he is," **Lujan** said. "It's another one of those close, tight races in New Mexico."

Lujan said the election between Pearce and Lara has received a lot of attention nationally and could come down to the wire, though the incumbent is well established.

Pearce has been in Congress for all but two years since 2003. He gave up his House seat in 2008 to run for the U.S. Senate, a race that Pearce lost to Udall. Pearce won back his House seat in 2010.

The other U.S. House race is for the Albuquerque-based 1st Congressional District, which includes a sliver of Santa Fe County. It pits incumbent Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, a Democrat who was born in Los Alamos and raised in Santa Fe, against Republican challenger Michael Frese, a small-business owner from Corrales.

In the 3rd Congressional District race, **Lujan** not only has name recognition, in part because of his late father, but he has a big financial advantage. He has raised nearly $940,000 this election cycle and has about $581,500 cash on hand, according to filings with the Federal Election Commission.

Byrd has raised about $27,500 and has just over $9,100 cash on hand, according to campaign filings.

The Almanac of American Politics states that **Lujan** "is known as a hard worker who has diligently ascended in his party's ranks."

"**Lujan** has a liberal voting record, but he has not been as far to the left as Udall," the book states. "He sided with northern New Mexico ranchers in 2011 in their fight against the U.S. Forest Service over reducing cattle-grazing allotments within the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests, a position that dismayed state environmental groups. He joined the Congressional Progressive Caucus, but unlike some of its members, largely has steered clear of partisan rhetoric and concentrated on state-specific matters."

The Washington Post's U.S. Congress Votes Database shows that **Lujan** rarely breaks with his party, having voted with Democrats 93 percent of the time in his current term, the same as in 2012 but down from 99 percent during his first term.

Before seeking elected office, **Lujan** worked as chief financial officer at the state Department of Cultural Affairs and as deputy state treasurer.

His first foray into politics came in 2004 when he was elected to the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission. During his tenure, the commission developed regulations requiring utilities to get 20 percent of their energy from renewable sources, such as wind and solar, by 2020.

Lujan was also on the commission when it approved a rate increase for Public Service Company of New Mexico. The commission authorized rate increases totaling $34 million, about half of what the company was seeking.

Lujan made a bid for the U.S. House of Representatives when Udall gave up the seat to run for the Senate.

In a six-way House primary, **Lujan** won convincingly. He then took the general election with 54 percent of the vote. Since then, he has won handily in his re-election bids.

Byrd, as the underdog, is sticking to a simple campaign message: "We must change who we send to Washington in order to change the results," he said.

Lujan also wants to change some results. He said job creation is at the top of people's minds. Four years ago, New Mexico ranked 15th nationally in job creation, but the state is 49th today, he said.

"New Mexico has always been strong because the state has always worked as a family when it comes to our elected officials. ... It seems that we've fallen apart, sadly," he said.

Without naming names, **Lujan** made a pointed criticism of Gov. Martinez in that regard.

"When the film industry was attacked four years ago and there was actually a repeal of incentives, New Mexico lost a lot of job opportunities and the building of more sound studios, which would've led to more job creation. That's not good for the state. We need to do better there."

Contact Daniel J. Chacon at 986-3089 or dchacon@sfnewmexican.com Follow him on Twitter at @danieljchacon.

___ (c)2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: October 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20141011-SF-**Luján**-and-rival-Byrd-face-House-race-Round-2-20141011

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican

Congressional Press Releases

October 9, 2014 Thursday

UDALL, HEINRICH: CITY OF ROSWELL TO RECEIVE $450,000 TO HELP EXPAND AIR TRAVEL SERVICE TO PHOENIX

BYLINE: TOM UDALL, SENATOR, SENATE

SECTION: PRESS RELEASE

LENGTH: 392 words

For Immediate Release

Udall, Heinrich: City of Roswell to Receive $450,000 to Help Expand Air Travel Service to Phoenix

October 9, 2014

WASHINGTON - Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich announced $450,000 for the City of Roswell to support the community's efforts to begin nonstop air travel service from the Roswell Industrial Air Center Airport to the Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport.

The grant, funded through the U.S. Department of Transportation's Small Community Air Service Development Program, will help add service between Roswell and Phoenix, which will provide passengers more timely connections to the west coast, and help to fuel economic growth in Southeast New Mexico. In July, Udall and Heinrich, along with U.S. Representatives Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, sent a letter to the associate director of the Small Community Air Service Development Program, expressing their support for the City of Roswell's application for the grant.

"Adding air travel service between Roswell and Phoenix will not only help make travel more convenient for both New Mexico residents and visitors, but will also help create jobs and spur economic development throughout Southeast New Mexico," Udall said. "Access to all parts of our state is essential to fostering economic growth in rural communities, and I will continue to push for critical investments in New Mexico's air travel infrastructure."

"Transportation options and accessibility are key factors in attracting and keeping business in New Mexico. The new service that will be available in Roswell will make the region more marketable for all of those who would like to start or expand their businesses in southeastern New Mexico," Heinrich said. "Investments in an efficient and strong transportation system will help move New Mexico forward, spur job creation, and support our local economy."

As of July, 78 percent of Roswell area travelers drove to other airports to begin their travel, which increased the time and cost of travel from the area. Currently, passengers wishing to fly to the west coast from Roswell to must fly 400 miles east to the Dallas/Ft. Worth International Airport before

flying to the west. Expanded service will eliminate this inefficiency, providing New Mexicans and visitors with a better and more timely air travel experience.

LOAD-DATE: October 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Other

Copyright 2014 Congressional Quarterly, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

US Official News

October 8, 2014 Wednesday

New Mexico Delegation Welcomes President's Disaster Declaration for Summer Floods

LENGTH: 583 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Tom Udall, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representatives Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced that President Obama has declared a major disaster for the state of New Mexico for the severe storms and flooding from July 27 - August 5.

The declaration means the president has ordered federal aid to help state, tribal, and local recovery efforts. The first round of assistance will be available on a cost-sharing basis for damage to public infrastructure in Guadalupe, Rio Arriba, and San Miguel counties and the Pueblo of Acoma. Assistance for Bernalillo, Sandoval, and Otero counties is still being evaluated, and federal funding will also be made available on a cost-sharing basis to assist with hazard mitigation statewide.

New Mexico's lawmakers on Oct. 2 jointly urged the president to respond quickly to the request for disaster assistance for the state of New Mexico. The severe summer storms and flooding damaged roads, bridges, a dam structure, and other infrastructure. According to Governor Susana Martinez's letter requesting the major disaster declaration, damages resulting from these storms have currently been assessed at $3.93 million. The greatest overall damage occurred at the Acoma Pueblo, where access to the backcountry was cut off for residents and users.

"For our communities that sustained severe damage to roads, bridges, dams and other structures, the federal assistance that comes with this disaster declaration will go a long way in recovery efforts," Udall said. "I am also monitoring the recovery efforts from September floods in Eddy County and other parts of Southeastern New Mexico, and will continue working to ensure the federal government fulfills its obligations to help with restoration in New Mexico's communities."

"I'm pleased the President responded to our request to take prompt action on the State's application for a disaster declaration. This means much-needed federal aid will now go to New Mexico communities recovering from the severe storms and devastating floods over the summer that damaged roads, bridges, and other critical infrastructure," Heinrich said. "My office will continue to offer support and I will keep working to ensure the affected areas of our state receive the federal assistance they need in order to rebuild."

"This disaster declaration and assistance will allow our hardest-hit communities to recover from the devastating impact of these storms," Pearce said. "Southern counties are continuing to deal with the aftermath of road closures and infrastructure repair. I will work to ensure counties receive the federal assistance they need to move forward and rebuild."

"As a result of the President's declaration, communities that have been hit hard will have resources that are critical to the recovery from damage caused by severe storms and flooding," **Luján** said. "This prompt action comes as communities are pulling together to rebuild and will help them take steps to prepare and protect against future flooding."

"I appreciate the action by FEMA to pledge assistance to the hardest-hit communities, including the Pueblo of Acoma," **Lujan** Grisham said. "I am hopeful for a quick decision to extend federal assistance for flood damage in Bernalillo and other counties affected by this storm."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: October 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

October 7, 2014 Tuesday

New Mexico Delegation Welcomes Selection of Photonics Manufacturing For Next Department Of Defense Innovation Institute Competition

LENGTH: 838 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Tom Udall, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representatives Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham welcomed an announcement by the White House to award more than $200 million in public and private investment to create an Integrated Photonics Manufacturing Institute, led by the Department of Defense (DoD), and the second of four new institute competitions to be launched this year. This selection comes just four months after the delegation wrote a letter to Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel expressing their strong support for the Department of Defense's manufacturing innovation institute competition, and requesting that the DoD choose the development of an advanced photonics manufacturing hub in the United States as their next manufacturing institute.

"I have been pushing the Department of Defense to focus special attention on developing a photonics manufacturing hub, and this announcement is great opportunity for New Mexico," Udall said. "Advanced photonics technologies are already spurring innovation in such diverse areas as medical imaging, national security, and robotics. New Mexico's extensive expertise among its business, military and scientific communities puts our state in a prime position to compete for this opportunity and create high quality manufacturing jobs."

"This is welcome news. New Mexico is uniquely positioned to house the nation's first advanced photonics manufacturing hub. With our private companies, universities, national labs, research facilities, and immeasurable talent and expertise in optics and photonics technologies, New Mexico is--without a doubt--a natural fit," Heinrich said. In July, Heinrich introduced an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Act in support of establishing a DoD photonics hub. "Photonics technologies developed in New Mexico are used in our scientific, medical, and intelligence communities - giving headway for advanced research in robotics, biometric security, and the defense industry. Establishing a regional photonics hub in New Mexico will bridge the gap between applied research and product development and lead our nation's effort to attract investment and develop this technology. I am committed to help bring this opportunity to New Mexico."

"New Mexico has continuously shown it is at the forefront of research and development of advanced and emerging technologies," Pearce said. "Secretary Hagel's announcement is great news for New Mexicans all across the state, as it provides New Mexico a tremendous opportunity to continue its leadership in technological development. The investment into New Mexico facilities and businesses this partnership provides, will increase resources and allow our state to maintain a competitive stance in industry. I look forward to working closely with the Department of Defense in the near future to develop and secure the photonics manufacturing hub. Working together, I am confident that New Mexico will remain a leader in developing technology."

"New Mexico offers a wealth of resources, ranging from our national labs and universities to our innovative private companies and entrepreneurs, which make it uniquely situated to lead in photonics manufacturing," **Luján** said. "Already, New Mexico is contributing to developments in this important field that play an essential role in robotics, medical imaging, biometric security, and more. Further investments in these efforts will enhance our region's and nation's ability to maintain a competitive edge in such critical sectors."

"There's a lot of election-year debate about the role of the federal government in job creation," **Lujan** Grisham said. "This type of federal investment in photonics technologies developed in New Mexico is a perfect example of the public-private partnerships we should be aggressively pursuing in order to move our economy forward."

The Integrated Photonics Manufacturing Institute is expected to comprise the largest federal investment to date, reflecting the complexity of this technology, its importance to national security, and its revolutionary potential.

The Administration launched an initiative in 2013 to create a network of manufacturing innovation institutes across the country, which would serve as regional hubs to bridge the gap between applied research and product development. By bringing together companies, universities, and federal agencies, the nation can invest in the production of key technologies, such as advanced photonics, and encourage investment and production in the United States.

Udall and **Lujan** Grisham are cosponsors of the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act to establish a more extensive network of centers for manufacturing innovation. The legislation passed the House in September and is pending consideration by the Senate.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: October 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

October 6, 2014 Monday

White House announcement raises hopes for New Mexico

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 359 words

New Mexico's federal representatives said they were very pleased with an announcement by the White House that it will direct more than $200 million to the creation an Integrated Photonics Manufacturing Institute.

The project, which will be led by the Department of Defense, is the second of four such institutes to be launched this year.

The announcement follows the sending of a letter signed by the delegation - Sen. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham to Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, urging him to choose the development of an advanced photonics manufacturing hub in the United States as their next manufacturing institute.

"I have been pushing the Department of Defense to focus special attention on developing a photonics manufacturing hub, and this announcement is great opportunity for New Mexico," Udall said in a statement. "Advanced photonics technologies are already spurring innovation in such diverse areas as medical imaging, national security, and robotics. New Mexico's extensive expertise among its business, military and scientific communities puts our state in a prime position to compete for this opportunity and create high quality manufacturing jobs."

"New Mexico has continuously shown it is at the forefront of research and development of advanced and emerging technologies," Pearce said. "Secretary Hagel's announcement is great news for New Mexicans all across the state, as it provides New Mexico a tremendous opportunity to continue its

leadership in technological development. The investment into New Mexico facilities and businesses this partnership provides, will increase resources and allow our state to maintain a competitive stance in industry.

The Integrated Photonics Manufacturing Institute is expected to comprise the largest federal investment to date, according to a statement issued by the delegation.

Want Albuquerque news in your inbox? Click here to sign up for our email newsletters.

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: October 6, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

475 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Associated Press State & Local

October 4, 2014 Saturday 7:01 PM GMT

New Mexico Dems hail photonics funding

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL

LENGTH: 148 words

DATELINE: ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) - New Mexico's Democratic congressional delegation is applauding an announcement that more than $200 million will be invested in a new federal integrated photonics facility led by the U.S. Department of Defense.

U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham said Saturday they welcomed plans for a photonics manufacturing hub in the U.S. and the second of four new institute competitions.

The delegation wrote Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel in June underlining their support for the department to create a network of manufacturing innovation institutes across the country.

They say New Mexico's extensive expertise makes it a natural location for additional national investment in research and manufacturing of optics and photonics technologies.

Photonics technologies are used in robotics and other fields.

LOAD-DATE: October 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

476 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

October 4, 2014 Saturday

New Mexico Delegation Requests Expedited Major Disaster Declaration for Summer Floods

LENGTH: 395 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Martin Heinrich, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representatives Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham sent a letter to President Obama, urging him to take prompt action on the State of New Mexico's recent request for a major disaster declaration to assist with damage that occurred throughout the state during storms and flooding in July and August.

Between July 27 and August 5, parts of New Mexico including Bernalillo, Guadalupe, Otero, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, and San Miguel counties, and the Pueblos of Acoma and Santo Domingo experienced severe storms and flooding that damaged roads, bridges, a dam structure, and other infrastructure. The state has requested the federal government approve a major disaster declaration request and provide the correlated public assistance to help with recovery efforts and repairs, which would include funding for debris removal; emergency protective measures; and repairs to damaged roads and bridges, water control facilities, buildings and equipment, utilities, and parks and recreation facilities.

According to Governor Susana Martinez's letter requesting the major disaster declaration, dated September 29, 2014, damages resulting from these storms have currently been assessed at $3.93 million. The greatest overall damage occurred at the Acoma Pueblo, where access to the backcountry was cut off for residents and users.

"In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from flooding during the time period of July 27 through August 5, 2014, we request your expedited attention to Governor Martinez's request for a major disaster designation and the correlated public assistance," the lawmakers wrote. "We remain committed to providing the necessary assistance to you and the governor in expediting New Mexico's recovery efforts and ensuring an effective response from this extreme weather event."

Extreme weather conditions last month also caused significant damage in Southeastern New Mexico as well. The lawmakers will continue to support recovery efforts for areas of the state impacted by more recent storms and flooding, upon submission of disaster declaration requests.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: October 31, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

October 3, 2014 Friday

Quick disaster relief action urged; NM delegation sends Obama letter

BYLINE: JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C2

LENGTH: 266 words

New Mexico's congressional delegation has sent a letter to President Barack Obama urging quick action on the state's recent request for a major disaster declaration to help tackle the damages that occurred throughout the state during storms and flooding in July and August.

The letter was signed by U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, both Democrats, and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M.

Parts of New Mexico, including Bernalillo, Guadalupe, Otero, Rio Arriba, Sandoval and San Miguel counties and the Pueblos of Acoma and Santo Domingo - between July 27 and Aug. 5 - experienced severe storms and flooding that damaged roads, bridges, a dam structure and other infrastructure.

New Mexico asked for public assistance, including: funding for debris removal; emergency protective measures; and repairs to damaged roads and bridges, water control facilities, buildings and equipment, utilities and parks and recreation facilities, the delegation said in a news release.

Gov. Susana Martinez's letter requesting the declaration, dated Sept. 29, said the damages resulting from these storms have currently been assessed at $3.93 million.

The greatest overall damage occurred at the Acoma Pueblo, where access to the backcountry was cut off for residents and users.

Extreme weather conditions last month also caused significant damage in southeastern New Mexico. The lawmakers said they will continue to support recovery efforts for areas of the state impacted by more recent storms and flooding, upon submission of disaster declaration requests.

LOAD-DATE: October 3, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

478 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 2, 2014

New Mexico Delegation Requests Expedited Major Disaster Declaration for Summer Floods; 'Prompt action' urged to help state recover from severe storm damage; Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 737 words

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representatives Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Lujan**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham sent a letter to President Obama, urging him to take prompt action on the State of New Mexico's recent request for a major disaster declaration to assist with damage that occurred throughout the state during storms and flooding in July and August.

Between July 27 and August 5, parts of New Mexico including Bernalillo, Guadalupe, Otero, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, and San Miguel counties, and the Pueblos of Acoma and Santo Domingo experienced severe storms and flooding that damaged roads, bridges, a dam structure, and other infrastructure. The state has requested the federal government approve a major disaster declaration request and provide the correlated public assistance to help with recovery efforts and repairs, which would include funding for debris removal; emergency protective measures; and repairs to damaged roads and bridges, water control facilities, buildings and equipment, utilities, and parks and recreation facilities.

According to Governor Susana Martinez's letter requesting the major disaster declaration, dated September 29, 2014, damages resulting from these storms have currently been assessed at $3.93 million. The greatest overall damage occurred at the Acoma Pueblo, where access to the backcountry was cut off for residents and users.

"In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from flooding during the time period of July 27 through August 5, 2014, we request your expedited attention to Governor Martinez's request for a major disaster designation and the correlated public assistance," the lawmakers wrote. "We

remain committed to providing the necessary assistance to you and the governor in expediting New Mexico's recovery efforts and ensuring an effective response from this extreme weather event."

Extreme weather conditions last month also caused significant damage in Southeastern New Mexico as well. The lawmakers will continue to support recovery efforts for areas of the state impacted by more recent storms and flooding, upon submission of disaster declaration requests.

The full text of the letter is available below and HERE http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/download/letter-to-president-obama-requesting-expedited-major-disaster-declaration-for-summer-floods.

October 2, 2014

The Honorable Barack Obama

President of the United States of America

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW

Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

We appreciate your past responsiveness to the State of New Mexico when our communities have sought federal disaster assistance as drought, fire, and extreme weather have threatened public safety and property. We again respectfully request that you take prompt action on the State of New Mexico's recent request for major disaster declaration as a result of severe storms and flooding that occurred July 27 through August 5, 2014.

As Governor Martinez indicated in her letter of September 29, 2014, damages resulting from severe storms have been assessed at $3.93 million, or $1.91 per capita. The bulk of damage was to roads and bridges throughout the state, but other infrastructure and natural resources were also heavily damaged. The greatest overall damage occurred at the Acoma Pueblo, where access to the backcountry was cut off for residents and users. Additionally, Santo Domingo Pueblo and the counties of Rio Arriba, San Miguel, Otero, and Guadalupe experienced severe damage to roads and other infrastructure.

In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from flooding during the time period of July 27 through August 5, 2014, we request your expedited attention to Governor Martinez's request for a major disaster designation and the correlated public assistance, specifically categories A through G. We remain committed to providing the necessary assistance to you and the governor in expediting New Mexico's recovery efforts and ensuring an effective response from this extreme weather event.

Sincerely,

Tom Udall

United States Senator

Martin Heinrich

United States Senator

Steve Pearce

United States Representative

Ben Ray Lujan

United States Representative

Michelle **Lujan** Grisham

United States Representative

Read this original document at: http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/press-releases/new-mexico-delegation-requests-expedited-major-disaster-declaration-for-summer-floods

LOAD-DATE: October 3, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSMA

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

October 2, 2014 Thursday

Cancer survivor lobbies congressional leaders

BYLINE: Elizabeth HardinBurrola Independent correspondent

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 703 words

DATELINE: GALLUP

GALLUP -- Joyce Graves, a local cancer survivor, has spent the past 20 years as a volunteer assisting and supporting area residents battling cancer.

Last month, however, Graves switched gears and focused her energy on New Mexico's members of Congress who have the power to help fund that battle.

Graves traveled to Washington to attend the annual American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network Leadership Summit Sept. 14-17. As part of the summit, Graves and hundreds of other volunteers from across the country -- along with staff members of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, known as ACS CAN -- lobbied lawmakers to protect cancer research and prevention funding, endorse legislation that supports patients' quality of life, and ensure colon cancer screenings are affordable for senior citizens.

"It was empowering to me to know I can do something like that," Graves, a retired Gallup teacher, said of the experience in an interview Wednesday.

Federal funding

ACS CAN is the nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate organization of the American Cancer Society. It works to encourage lawmakers, candidates and government officials to support laws and policies that will make cancer prevention and research a national priority.

Graves attended the summit with three other volunteers and two ACS CAN staffers from New Mexico. During their time in the nation's capital, they met with staffers from the offices of Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, Sen. Martin Heinrich and Sen. Tom Udall.

The lawmakers were urged to increase funding for cancer research at the National Cancer Institute and for prevention programs at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. According to ACS CAN, freezes and cuts in federal funding have jeopardized continued progress in the prevention, detection and treatment of cancer.

Graves said those funding cuts have happened during a time when many cancer research projects have been on the edge of important breakthroughs.

"This is not the time to back off ...," Graves said. "We're talking saving lives here -- we've just got to do that."

Legislative support

Graves said lawmakers were also asked to support three specific pieces of legislation. The "Patient Centered Quality Care for Life Act" (HR1666) and the "Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act" (HR1339 & S641) propose the expansion of palliative care, which is specialized medical care that focuses on care coordination and relief from pain, stress and other symptoms of treatment for life-threatening diseases.

The "Removing Barriers to Colorectal Cancer Screening Act" (HR1070 and S2348) would correct a provision in the Affordable Care Act. Currently, senior citizens relying on Medicare receive unexpected charges after having a colonoscopy in which a polyp is discovered. According to ACS CAN, this wasn't the intent of the health care law, and it is serious screening disincentive.

Grisham had already signed as a co-sponsor for all three bills, and **Lujan** had signed on the first two. Heinrich is a Senate co-sponsor of the "Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act."

Lending a voice

Volunteering with ACS CAN has presented Graves with new challenges. Graves said she knew it was important to talk to government leaders about cancer issues, but until her involvement with the advocacy organization she didn't really feel like she was a "political person."

"'Joyce, you don't have to be a political person,'" Graves recalled ACS CAN staff partner Cynthia Serna telling her. "'This is a way to let your voice be heard.'"

Graves said anyone who cares about cancer prevention and research should consider joining ASC CAN and lending their voice to the fight against the disease. They can sign up to receive email alerts about important legislation, and the organization provides information about writing government officials. Membership is $10.

"It's an easy way to make legislative differences," Graves said, adding she has learned that more personalized emails and letters tend to be more effective.

"I'm not a scientific person. I can't find a cure ... but I can get some research money for those who can," Graves said.

Information: Joyce Graves, 505-863-3075 or www.acscan.org

LOAD-DATE: October 4, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: Volunteer Clara Enriquez peeks in as Joyce Graves, right, shows new volunteer John Mraz around during his training at the New Mexico Cancer Center in Gallup Tuesday. Cable Hoover/Independent

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

States News Service

October 2, 2014 Thursday

DELEGATION RELEASE: NEW MEXICO DELEGATION REQUESTS EXPEDITED MAJOR DISASTER DECLARATION FOR SUMMER FLOODS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 701 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham:

Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representatives Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Lujan**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham sent a letter to President Obama, urging him to take prompt action on the State of New Mexico's recent request for a major disaster declaration to assist with damage that occurred throughout the state during storms and flooding in July and August.

Between July 27 and August 5, parts of New Mexico including Bernalillo, Guadalupe, Otero, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, and San Miguel counties, and the Pueblos of Acoma and Santo Domingo experienced severe storms and flooding that damaged roads, bridges, a dam structure, and other infrastructure. The state has requested the federal government approve a major disaster declaration request and provide the correlated public assistance to help with recovery efforts and repairs, which would include funding for debris removal; emergency protective measures; and repairs to damaged roads and bridges, water control facilities, buildings and equipment, utilities, and parks and recreation facilities.

According to Governor Susana Martinez's letter requesting the major disaster declaration, dated September 29, 2014, damages resulting from these storms have currently been assessed at $3.93

million. The greatest overall damage occurred at the Acoma Pueblo, where access to the backcountry was cut off for residents and users.

"In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from flooding during the time period of July 27 through August 5, 2014, we request your expedited attention to Governor Martinez's request for a major disaster designation and the correlated public assistance," the lawmakers wrote. "We remain committed to providing the necessary assistance to you and the governor in expediting New Mexico's recovery efforts and ensuring an effective response from this extreme weather event."

Extreme weather conditions last month also caused significant damage in Southeastern New Mexico as well. The lawmakers will continue to support recovery efforts for areas of the state impacted by more recent storms and flooding, upon submission of disaster declaration requests.

The full text of the letter is available below and HERE.

###

October 2, 2014

The Honorable Barack Obama

President of the United States of America

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW

Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

We appreciate your past responsiveness to the State of New Mexico when our communities have sought federal disaster assistance as drought, fire, and extreme weather have threatened public safety and property. We again respectfully request that you take prompt action on the State of New Mexico's recent request for major disaster declaration as a result of severe storms and flooding that occurred July 27 through August 5, 2014.

As Governor Martinez indicated in her letter of September 29, 2014, damages resulting from severe storms have been assessed at $3.93 million, or $1.91 per capita. The bulk of damage was to roads and bridges throughout the state, but other infrastructure and natural resources were also heavily damaged. The greatest overall damage occurred at the Acoma Pueblo, where access to the backcountry was cut off for residents and users. Additionally, Santo Domingo Pueblo and the counties of Rio Arriba, San Miguel, Otero, and Guadalupe experienced severe damage to roads and other infrastructure.

In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from flooding during the time period of July 27 through August 5, 2014, we request your expedited attention to Governor Martinez's request for a major disaster designation and the correlated public assistance, specifically categories A through G. We remain committed to providing the necessary assistance to you and the governor in expediting New Mexico's recovery efforts and ensuring an effective response from this extreme weather event.

Sincerely,

Tom Udall

United States Senator

Martin Heinrich

United States Senator

Steve Pearce

United States Representative

Ben Ray Lujan

United States Representative

Michelle **Lujan** Grisham

United States Representative

LOAD-DATE: October 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

October 1, 2014 Wednesday 11:02 PM EST

President Obama Signs Tribal General Welfare Act into Law

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 386 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The Navajo Nation Washington Office, a federally-recognized Native American tribe, issued the following news release:

On Sept. 26, President Barack Obama signed HR 3043, the Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act (http://navajonationwashingtonoffice.createsend1.com/t/r-l-mkuiild-l-s/), into law.

The Navajo Nation supported the act through council resolution and strongly advocated for its passage.

The passage of the act was an extraordinary demonstration of bipartisan support in the 113th U.S. Congress. It was sponsored in the House by Rep. Devin Nunes, R-Calif.

It was co-sponsored by 61 House members including Reps. Paul Gosar, R-Ariz., Raul Grijalva, D-Ariz., Ann Kirkpatrick, D-Ariz., **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., and David Schweikert, R-Ariz.

The measure was sponsored in the Senate by Sens. Jerry Moran, R-Kan., and Heidi Heitkamp, D-N.D., and was co-sponsored by Sens. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., and Tom Udall, D-N.M.

The act supports tribal self-determination and sovereignty. In recent times, tribal governments have been unfairly subjected to intrusive and overreaching examinations by the Internal Revenue Service that do not similarly scrutinize similar state-run assistance programs.

Now, pursuant to the act, tribal governments have the ability to decide what services and programs best meet the needs of their communities without the fear that the IRS will audit and fine them.

It also gives ease of mind to the recipients of the assistance programs that they will not have personal income tax levied on the value of the assistance they receive.

Importantly, the act directs the secretary of the Treasury to establish a Tribal Advisory Committee to advise the secretary on matters relating the taxation of tribal governments.

It also requires the training and education of IRS agents on federal Indian law and implementation of the act.

Lastly, it will temporarily suspends the audits and examinations of the general welfare assistance programs run by tribes until the implementation and training is completed.

For more information contact Carolyn Drouin, government and legislative affairs associate at cdrouin@nnwo.org

Contact: Jared King, Communications Director, 202/200-0625, jking@nnwo.org

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage9as-141002-30FurigayJane-4883095 30FurigayJane

LOAD-DATE: October 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

September 30, 2014 Tuesday

Lujan Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

LENGTH: 242 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following video in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month.

"This is an exciting time for the Hispanic community. Every year from September 15th to October 15th, America comes together to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. It represents an opportunity to reflect on the enduring contributions of a community that has strengthened the fabric of a nation.

"As the fastest growing ethnic group, the future of our country is increasingly in the hands of Hispanic families and communities. I encourage the community to continue to seize the opportunity to contribute their voices to the most important policy discussions that impact our future. From education and energy, to immigration, the economy and more - the perspectives and contributions of the Hispanic community will continue to make America stronger.

"This month, as we gather to recognize the Hispanic community and our rich culture and traditions - from the way we speak and the food we eat to our values and principals and intellectual contributions - let us embrace them all. I look forward to celebrating the history and numerous contributions of the Hispanic community this month, and encourage you to do the same."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: October 1, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

September 30, 2014 Tuesday

Lujan Statement on Amendment Authorizing Training and Equipping of Rebel Groups in Syria

LENGTH: 402 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting against an amendment to a Continuing Resolution that authorized the training and equipping of rebel groups in Syria. **Luján** voted for the Continuing Resolution that is needed to prevent the government from shutting down at the end of September.

"ISIL poses a threat to the Middle East and has the potential to threaten our homeland if it is not addressed. I support efforts to use targeted airstrikes and intelligence to help degrade ISIL's ability to gain the money and weapons that enhance their destructive capabilities. However, I have serious concerns with the current plan to equip and train Syrian rebels. Countries in the Middle East must take a leading role against this threat in their own region. Our allies in the region must prove that they are willing to stand up and commit the resources necessary to complement the United States. A major focus must be ending the flow of money and the recruitment of fighters that are supporting ISIL. Until our allies fully commit to this effort, I have concerns that remain with the current plan. To date it is not clear our allies have fully committed to this plan and ending the flow of money to ISIL.

"While the amendment calls for the vetting and reporting on every person recruited for training, it does not prevent individuals with ties to extremist or terrorist groups from participating. I am also concerned that the conflict in the region has the potential to escalate and further entangle our country in a civil war in Syria. While the purpose of training Syrians is to combat ISIL, and not the Assad regime, if Assad's forces target the rebels, we will be faced with the prospect of engaging the regime and escalating this conflict. In addition, the Syrians may end up turning their focus to overthrowing the Assad regime instead of concentrating on ISIL.

"While I opposed the amendment, I voted on the underlying bill - the Continuing Resolution - that prevents another government shutdown. The process should have included separate votes and debate on the training of Syrian rebels and the Continuing Resolution."

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: October 1, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

484 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

September 28, 2014 Sunday

For Luján, job creation is the primary mission

BYLINE: Copyright © 2014 Albuquerque Journal BY MICHAEL COLEMAN JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: DIMENSION; Pg. C6

LENGTH: 929 words

WASHINGTON - When Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** looks at New Mexico's neighbors - Colorado, Texas, Utah and Arizona - he sees new jobs he wishes were materializing in his own state.

That's at least in part why the 42-year-old Democrat said he's seeking a fourth term representing northern New Mexico's 3rd Congressional District.

"We see (other states) continuing to benefit from job expansion in large numbers and New Mexico is still in the red," **Luján** said. "We want to bring attention to those issues and shine a light on what's happening in New Mexico and try to make a difference. There is a lot of work to do. We've laid a foundation and we want to continue to be able to work on it."

Luján, a Santa Fe native and former New Mexico Public Regulation commissioner, faces Republican Jefferson Byrd, a rancher from Tucumcari, in the Nov. 4 general election. Democrats outnumber Republicans by nearly 2-to-1 in the congressional district.

Luján, whose late father, Ben **Lujan**, was a Democratic speaker of the New Mexico House of Representatives, is ranked as the 117th most-liberal member of the 435-member U.S. House. He supports gay marriage and abortion rights.

Luján said he's trying to take a legislative approach to job creation in northern New Mexico, especially by aiming to help Los Alamos National Laboratory work with the private sector to launch new businesses.

Luján has proposed a bill that would authorize $20 million per year for five years to cover the government's share of the lab's Cooperative Research and Development Agreements - or CRADAs - with small, innovative companies. That cost is now assumed entirely by the businesses, some of which are reluctant to assume that much risk.

"More and more Republicans seem to be open to that," he said. "These CRADAs create more public-private partnerships with the national labs, which helps us with U.S. competitiveness. It would spin off more opportunity for more interaction with local businesses and tech startups."

Luján also has proposed restructuring the National Nuclear Security Administration, which oversees the national laboratories, including Sandia in Albuquerque, to create a better balance between nuclear weapons work and non-defense-related research and development.

"Our amendment would look at the governance structure there and how we can support the missions at the national labs," he said. "The reason these labs are there is to conduct not only national security but to conduct the research and development that is critical to the United States' economy and the safety of our country. It seems to me that is what the NNSA should be fully supporting."

As vice chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, **Luján** has an influential voice in the nation's ongoing immigration debate.

He has consistently advocated for a so-called path to citizenship for the roughly 11.5 million immigrants now living in the U.S. illegally. He also supports the DREAM Act, which would allow people who were brought to the United States illegally as children to apply for citizenship.

In the current debate over how to deal with thousands of child refugees arriving at the Mexican border from Central America, **Luján** has been among the most outspoken members of Congress in advocating for compassion.

"We have a responsibility to these children," **Luján** said. "We can't lose sight that this is a humanitarian crisis. It's been said a lot, but sadly, I don't know that everyone understands what is happening to these kids and what they are fleeing."

At the same time, **Luján** said, even more local issues, such as working to secure money for acequias, or community-owned water and irrigation channels, in northern New Mexico, also rank high on his agenda.

"We've been working on our land grants and acequias; on requirements for consultation when it comes to public lands designations where acequias and land grants are. It's important for local communities to be at the table."

Luján said that partly because of his efforts in Congress, there are now four federal funding streams open to acequias that were previously available only to private landholders.

"Federal funding will be available to New Mexico acequia members, and the associations are actually developing the rules surrounding this," he said.

If re-elected, **Luján** said, he would also work to protect New Mexico's agricultural heritage. The state is among the nation's largest beef and cheese producers and stands to benefit more as chile, wine and pecan exports pick up.

"We're seeing more microbreweries and wineries and more value in our agriculture," **Luján** said. "We need to look after our crops."

Asked to cite the most important thing he's learned after three terms in Congress, **Luján** said it's all about relationships on Capitol Hill.

"It's the importance of getting to know more people - more Democrats, more Republicans, different ideas, different philosophies," he said. "Those interpersonal relationships are critically important."

He said that historically, the most effective New Mexico leaders have found ways to work across partisan divides.

"The way they were able to be successful on behalf of new Mexicans is they were conveners of people," **Luján** said. "I've learned how important that really is." **Ben Ray Luján**

POLITICAL PARTY: Democratic

RESIDENCE: Nambé

AGE: 42

OCCUPATION: U.S. representative

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in business administration, New Mexico Highlands University

EXPERIENCE: Member of the U.S. House of Representatives, 2008 to present; New Mexico Public Regulation Commission member, 2004-2008; former CFO at New Mexico Cultural Affairs Department

LOAD-DATE: September 29, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

September 26, 2014 Friday

Hispanic heritage no secret in New Mexico

BYLINE: Dan Herrera

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 847 words

While living in California back in the late '80s, I was always somewhat amused by the excitement displayed by my Hispanic friends there whenever someone who shared our ethnicity ran for office - not won, just ran.

I found it funny because as a native New Mexican I've always known of people in power who were Hispanic, lots of them. And the prominence of Hispanic leadership in this state far preceded my own existence.

While political conditions for Hispanic candidates have improved a bit in California, it was actually a recent Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce luncheon that got me thinking about how normal it is for Hispanics in New Mexico to hold positions of political power. The event was the group's annual celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month.

I think it was comedian Jimmie Walker - J.J. from the TV show "Good Times" - whom I first heard complain that February was designated as Black History Month because it's the shortest month of the year.

Well, at least that celebration is all in a single month. Hispanic Heritage Month runs from Sept. 15 through Oct. 15.

But just as there is a legitimate reason Black History Month wound up in short February - its origins have to do with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln (Feb. 12) and Frederick Douglass (Feb. 14) - there is also a reasonable reason the month to honor all things Hispanic in the U.S. actually laps over two months.

It started out as Hispanic Heritage Week, approved by President Lyndon Johnson on Sept. 17, 1968, but was expanded to 30 days by President Ronald Reagan in 1988. Sept. 15 became the start date because Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras and Costa Rica all declared independence from Spain on that date in 1821. And in 1810, Mexico declared independence from Spain on Sept. 16 and Chile on Sept. 18. And Belize declared independence from the United Kingdom on Sept. 21, 1981. (What is it about September?) The October connection recognizes explorer Christopher Columbus' world-changing landing in the Bahamas on Oct. 12, 1492.

It's not really part of the official Hispanic Heritage Month designation, but if you're looking for a New Mexico connection it can be noted that on Sept. 21, 1595, King Philip II of Spain awarded New Mexico's founder and first governor, Don Juan de Oñate, a contract to settle New Mexico.

OK, I realize New Mexico was already settled by Puebloans and other Indian tribes. Native American Heritage Month is November, which has 30 days.

But back to powerful New Mexico Hispanic political figures. Granted, all of New Mexico's governors under Spain and Mexico were Hispanic. But two Hispanics were governors before U.S. statehood. They were Donaciano Vigil, 1847-1848, who called for a public school system open to the poor as well as the rich; and Miguel Antonio Otero, 1897-1906, a Republican for whom Otero County was named.

After statehood, two Hispanics were among the first of New Mexico's governors: Ezequiel Cabeza De Baca, 1917, a Democrat who died after just two months in office; and Octaviano Larrazolo, 1919-1921, a Republican under whom a state board of health was established. He was also the first Hispanic American to be elected to the U.S. Senate.

It took quite a while for a Hispanic candidate to again be elected governor, though several tried. But consider that four of the past seven governors have been Hispanic.

They are Democrats Jerry Apodaca, 1975-1979; Toney Anaya, 1983-1987; Bill Richardson, 2003-2011; and Republican Susana Martinez, 2011-current. Martinez is also the first Hispanic woman in the United States to be elected governor. While Larrazolo was the first Hispanic U.S. senator, he served just over a year and then retired because of ill health. However, another New Mexican, Democrat Dennis Chavez, 1935-1962, was a giant of a senator who is credited with pioneering legislation that ultimately led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The work of Democratic Sen. Joseph Montoya, 1964-1977, on the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy and the Senate Appropriations Committee helped strengthen federal installations in New Mexico. In the U.S. House of Representatives since territorial

days, New Mexico has sent to Washington: Jose Manuel Gallegos, Miguel A. Otero, Francisco Perea, Jose Francisco Chaves, Trinidad Romero, Mariano S. Otero, Tranquilino Luna, Francisco Manzanares, Pedro Perea, Benigno Hernandez, Nestor Montoya, Dennis Chavez, Antonio Fernandez, Joseph Montoya, Manuel**Lujan** Jr., Bill Richardson, **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham. Of these, nine were Democrats and nine were Republicans, although the Democrats have dominated since the Great Depression. In total, that's quite a number. And it doesn't include Supreme Court justices, state legislative leadership, mayors, university presidents, generals and people in other positions of high honor. So whatever your heritage, as New Mexicans all of us have quite a bit to commemorate during Hispanic Heritage Month. UpFront is a daily front-page news and opinion column. Comment directly to editorial page editor Dan Herrera at 823-3810 or

dherrera@abqjournal.com

LOAD-DATE: September 26, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: DENNIS CHAVEZ
OCTAVIANO LARRAZOLO
MANUEL **LUJAN** JR.
DONACIANO VIGIL

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Targeted News Service

September 26, 2014 Friday 5:04 AM EST

Rep. Grisham Introduces Bill to Take Certain Land Into Trust for Indian Pueblos in New Mexico

BYLINE: by MERLY LAPIG, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 180 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Sept. 26 -- Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., has introduced legislation (H.R. 5625) to "require the Secretary of the Interior to take into trust 4 parcels of Federal land for the benefit of certain Indian Pueblos in the State of New Mexico."

The bill was introduced on Sept. 18 and was co-sponsored by Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M.

The legislation was referred to the House Natural Resources Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/LegislativeData.php?&n=BillText. For more information about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information about Targeted News Service products and services, please contact: Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://targetednews.com.

22LapigM 140923-1176614

LOAD-DATE: September 26, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

487 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

September 22, 2014 Monday 8:31 PM EST

Lujan Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 229 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following video in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month.

"This is an exciting time for the Hispanic community. Every year from September 15th to October 15th, America comes together to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. It represents an opportunity to reflect on the enduring contributions of a community that has strengthened the fabric of a nation.

"As the fastest growing ethnic group, the future of our country is increasingly in the hands of Hispanic families and communities. I encourage the community to continue to seize the opportunity to contribute their voices to the most important policy discussions that impact our future. From education and energy, to immigration, the economy and more - the perspectives and contributions of the Hispanic community will continue to make America stronger.

"This month, as we gather to recognize the Hispanic community and our rich culture and traditions - from the way we speak and the food we eat to our values and principals and intellectual contributions - let us embrace them all. I look forward to celebrating the history and numerous contributions of the Hispanic community this month, and encourage you to do the same."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140924-4871605 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: September 23, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

September 22, 2014 Monday

Washington: DISCHARGE PETITIONS -- (House of Representatives - September 19, 2014)

LENGTH: 960 words

DATELINE: Washington

The Library of Congress, The Government of USA has issued the following news release:

Under clause 2 of rule XV, the following discharge petitions were filed:

Petition 11, September 17, 2014, by Mr. JARED POLIS on House Resolution 678, was signed by the following Members: Jared Polis, Rush Holt, Gerald E. Connolly, John Garamendi, Joe Garcia, Sheila Jackson Lee, Barbara Lee, Jared Huffman, Colleen W. Hanabusa, Eliot L. Engel, Eddie Bernice Johnson, Eric Swalwell, Joe Courtney, Peter A. DeFazio, Juan Vargas, Brad Sherman, Gloria Negrete McLeod, Mike Quigley, Loretta Sanchez, Gwen Moore, Tammy Duckworth, Robin L. Kelly, Frank Pallone Jr., Doris O. Matsui, Mark Pocan, William L. Enyart, Albio Sires, Bruce L. Braley, John A. Yarmuth, Denny Heck, Earl Blumenauer, Timothy J. Walz, Grace F. Napolitano, Elizabeth H. Esty, George Miller, Suzanne Bonamici, Suzan K. DelBene, Derek Kilmer, Matt Cartwright, Janice D. Schakowsky, Steven A. Horsford, Tony Cárdenas, Katherine M. Clark, Stephen F. Lynch, Louise McIntosh Slaughter, Sean Patrick Maloney, Henry A. Waxman, Raúl M. Grijalva, Luis V. Gutiérrez, Michael H. Michaud, Lois Capps, James A. Himes, Bill Foster, **Ben Ray Luján**, Paul Tonko, Ami Bera, Dina Titus, Daniel T. Kildee, Terri A. Sewell, John F. Tierney, Jackie Speier, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, Danny K. Davis, Ann M. Kuster, Theodore E. Deutch, Ann Kirkpatrick, Scott H. Peters, Rick Larsen, Allyson Y. Schwartz, Ron Kind, Bobby L. Rush, Susan A. Davis, James R. Langevin, Carol Shea-Porter, Elijah E. Cummings, James E. Clyburn, Hakeem S. Jeffries, Joyce Beatty, Mark Takano, Marcia L. Fudge, Alcee L. Hastings, Nita M. Lowey, Michael M. Honda, Daniel B. Maffei, Gene Green, Michael F. Doyle, Michael E. Capuano, Jim Cooper, James P. McGovern, Jerry McNerney, Beto O'Rourke, Kathy Castor, Tulsi Gabbard, Adam B. Schiff, Joaquin Castro, Timothy H. Bishop, Betty McCollum, Bradley S. Schneider, Carolyn McCarthy, Rosa L. DeLauro, Zoe Lofgren, G. K. Butterfield, Ron Barber, Chaka Fattah, Judy Chu, Janice Hahn, Jim McDermott, Robert A. Brady, Xavier Becerra, John P. Sarbanes, Bill Pascrell Jr., Henry Cuellar, Karen Bass, Chellie Pingree, Donna F. Edwards, Emanuel Cleaver, Yvette D. Clarke, Julia Brownley, Lois Frankel, Jim Costa, Ed Pastor, Charles B. Rangel, Lloyd Doggett, John Lewis, Rubén Hinojosa, Richard M. Nolan, Alan S. Lowenthal, Anna G. Eshoo, Steve Cohen, Nancy Pelosi, Steny H. Hoyer, Al Green, Gary C. Peters, Raul Ruiz, John C. Carney Jr., Patrick Murphy, Wm. Lacy Clay, David Loebsack, Niki Tsongas, Chris Van Hollen, Diana DeGette, Corrine Brown, Richard E. Neal, Mike Thompson, Sanford D. Bishop Jr., John B. Larson, André Carson, Cedric L. Richmond, Gregory W. Meeks, John D. Dingell, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Marcy Kaptur, Brian Higgins, Maxine Waters, Nydia M. Velázquez, Ed Perlmutter, Grace Meng, David N. Cicilline, Joseph P. Kennedy III, William R. Keating, John K. Delaney, Sander M. Levin, David Scott, Jerrold Nadler, Lucille Roybal-Allard, José E. Serrano, Frederica S. Wilson, Henry C. ``Hank'' Johnson Jr., Donald M. Payne Jr., Tim Ryan, William L. Owens, Sam Farr, Joseph Crowley, Filemon Vela, John Conyers Jr., Adam Smith, Steve Israel, Peter Welch, Carolyn B. Maloney, David E. Price, Robert C. ``Bobby'' Scott, C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger, Kurt Schrader, Keith Ellison, Marc A. Veasey, Alan Grayson, James P. Moran, Bennie G. Thompson, Cheri Bustos, and Kyrsten Sinema.

Petition 12, September 18, 2014, by Ms. FREDERICA WILSON on the bill (H.R. 2821), was signed by the following Members: Frederica S. Wilson, Donna F. Edwards, Gloria Negrete McLeod, Brian Higgins, Mike Thompson, Nydia M. Velázquez, Maxine Waters, Ed Perlmutter, Adam B. Schiff, Grace Meng, Lois Frankel, Alan S. Lowenthal, David N. Cicilline, Bill Pascrell Jr., Hakeem S. Jeffries, Joseph P. Kennedy III, William R. Keating, Sanford D. Bishop Jr., Doris O. Matsui, Judy Chu, Mark Takano, Raul Ruiz, Joyce Beatty, Sander M. Levin, David Scott, Jerrold Nadler, Eliot L. Engel, Lucille Roybal-Allard, William L. Enyart, Colleen W. Hanabusa, José E. Serrano, Ann Kirkpatrick, Tammy Duckworth, Robin L. Kelly, Mark Pocan, Peter Welch, Kathy Castor, Joe Courtney, John C. Carney Jr., John Lewis, Henry C. ``Hank'' Johnson Jr., Sheila Jackson Lee, James R. Langevin, Donald M. Payne Jr., Juan Vargas, Theodore E. Deutch, Betty McCollum, Daniel T. Kildee, Steven A. Horsford, Sam Farr, Elizabeth H. Esty, Frank Pallone Jr., Steve Cohen, John B. Larson, Lois Capps, Terri A. Sewell, Yvette D. Clarke, Joseph Crowley, Elijah E. Cummings, Jared Polis, John Conyers Jr., Adam Smith, Grace F. Napolitano, Gerald E. Connolly, Jackie Speier, Michael F. Doyle, Timothy H. Bishop, Karen Bass, Steve Israel, Daniel B. Maffei, Richard E. Neal, Rush Holt, Zoe Lofgren, Marcia L. Fudge, André Carson, Eddie Bernice Johnson, Janice Hahn, Chaka Fattah, Carolyn McCarthy, Jim McDermott, Robert A. Brady, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, Joe Garcia, Loretta Sanchez, Carolyn B. Maloney, Suzanne Bonamici, G. K. Butterfield, Peter A. DeFazio, Joaquin Castro, Robert C. ``Bobby'' Scott, Mike Quigley, Gwen Moore,

Jerry McNerney, **Ben Ray Luján**, Rosa L. DeLauro, C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger, Raúl M. Grijalva, Gregory W. Meeks, Brad Sherman, Suzan K. DelBene, Rick Larsen, Janice D. Schakowsky, Louise McIntosh Slaughter, Charles B. Rangel, Henry A. Waxman, James P. McGovern, Keith Ellison, John A. Yarmuth, Corrine Brown, Cedric L. Richmond, James E. Clyburn, Gene Green, Julia Brownley, Ron Barber, Matt Cartwright, Alan Grayson, James P. Moran, Tony Cárdenas, Xavier Becerra, Al Green, Bennie G. Thompson, Emanuel Cleaver, Nancy Pelosi, and Carol Shea-Porter.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: September 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

September 21, 2014 Sunday

NM senators support plan to arm 'moderate' rebels

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. B2

LENGTH: 744 words

New Mexico's U.S. senators this week put their weight behind an effort to train and arm so-called "moderate" Syrian rebels in the fight against Islamic State, the murderous terror group threatening to further destabilize the Middle East.

Sens. Tom Udall, a Democrat who sits on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Martin Heinrich, also a Democrat, both voted for the measure.

For more than a year, Udall has voiced grave concerns about arming amorphous Islamic rebel groups that may not be reliable U.S. allies. Nevertheless, the senator held his nose and voted yes last week, citing his home state's interests. That's because the bill to arm the rebels, approved 78-22, contained money to avert another government shutdown back home.

"It's the right thing for New Mexico's economy and it supports jobs," Udall said of his vote. "New Mexico cannot afford another government shutdown and (Wednesday's) vote took the threat off the table."

Udall said the bill "includes critical funding for New Mexico's national labs and (military) bases, and ... allows the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant the flexibility it needs" to recover from a February accident at the site. But Udall warned that arming the rebels might be a dumb move.

"I am deeply skeptical about the strategy for arming rebels in Syria and the possibility of further entangling our troops in a religious war in the Middle East," he said. "I was not willing to risk a government shutdown, weakening our security and risking New Mexico's still-fragile economy over Senate process."

Udall issued a similar warning a year ago, when he clashed sharply with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry over a resolution to approve use of U.S. force and arm Syrian rebels against the murderous regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. The circumstances are somewhat different today, but the worries are the same.

"Some of the rebels share our values and want an open society," Udall said at the time. "Many others are allied with al-Qaida - and a greater threat to the United States than President Assad ever was. U.S. military involvement, no matter the limits at this point, will likely only pull us toward greater involvement. And with no clear end game."

The Obama administration has said it will give weapons only to Syrian rebels who are "vetted" by the CIA. There's no word on exactly how they'll conduct those background checks.

Meanwhile, Heinrich didn't seem to share the deep concerns Udall had about arming the rebels.

"President Obama's strategy to degrade and destroy ISIL is a sound policy given the very real threat they pose," he said after the vote.

But Heinrich also said Congress should approve a new Authorization of Use of Military Force - an AUMF in Beltway shorthand - to make clear the will of the American people.

"I believe it is past time for Congress to reassert its constitutional authority by passing a new and more narrow authorization of use of military force that repeals the 2002 Iraq War AUMF language, and replaces it with a more limited and up-to-date authorization," he said.

Heinrich has co-sponsored a Senate bill that would repeal the 2002 agreement for war in Iraq and replace it with a new one that is much narrower in scope.

"The president must make his case to Congress if he believes we need to use military force beyond counter-terrorism strikes against ISIS and Congress should debate an authorization to use force," he said.

The Senate vote last week was far from the typical party line, with senators as diverse as Rand Paul, Elizabeth Warren and Ted Cruz voting against it.

The House voted a day earlier to approve equipping the Syrian rebels but, unlike in the Senate, their vote was separate from the domestic spending bill. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** voted against arming the rebels, while Reps. Steve Pearce and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham voted for it. **Lujan** said he supports air strikes against ISIS, but has "serious concerns" about handing over U.S. arms to the rebels.

"While the amendment calls for the vetting and reporting on every person recruited for training, it does not prevent individuals with ties to extremist or terrorist groups from participating," **Lujan** said. "I am also concerned that the conflict in the region has the potential to escalate and further entangle our country in a civil war in Syria."

President Obama signed the bill to train and arm the rebels on Friday.

E-mail: mcoleman@abqjournal.com Go to www.abqjournal.com/letters/

new to submit a letter to the editor.

LOAD-DATE: September 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Targeted News Service

September 21, 2014 Sunday 11:19 PM EST

Congressional Votes for New Mexico the Week of 09/12 - 09/18/2014

BYLINE: by TARGETED NEWS SERVICE, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 3082 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Sept. 21 -- There were 11 key votes in the House this week; the House held a total of 19 roll call votes in the week ending Thursday. There were five key votes in the Senate, which held a total of nine votes. The most important House and Senate votes were to pass a continuing appropriations resolution that will fund government operations until December 11.

In addition to roll call votes, the House and Senate also took action on several measures by voice vote. The House also passed a resolution (H. Res. 726), sponsored by Rep. Jim Gerlach, R-Pa., to strongly support the right of the people of Ukraine to freely determine their future, including their country's relationship with other nations and international organizations, without interference, intimidation, or coercion by other countries; the Preserving Welfare for Needs Not Weed Act (H.R. 4137), sponsored by Rep. David G. Reichert, R-Wash., to prohibit assistance for temporary assistance for needy families provided by block grants to states from being accessed by using electronic benefit transfer cards (EBTs) at any store that sells marijuana; a bill (H.R. 5418), sponsored by Rep. Charles W. Boustany Jr., R-La., to prohibit officers and employees of the Internal Revenue Service from using personal email accounts to conduct official business; and the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act (S. 2258), sponsored by Sen. Mark Begich, D-Alaska, to provide for a cost of living increase, effective December 1, 2014, in the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and for survivors of certain disabled veterans.

The Senate also passed the Defense Production Act (H.R. 4809), sponsored by Rep. John Campbell, R-Calif., to reauthorize through 2019 the Defense Production Act, which authorizes the federal government to reach contracts for delivery of products from a company as required in emergencies; the Traumatic Brain Injury Reauthorization Act (S. 2539), sponsored by Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, to reauthorize certain programs relating to traumatic brain injury and to trauma research; the Government Reports Elimination Act (H.R. 4194), sponsored by Rep. Darrell E. Issa, R-Calif., to eliminate or modify federal government reporting requirements; and the BLM Permit Processing Improvement Act (S. 2440), sponsored by Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., to expand and extend the program to improve permitting coordination by the Bureau of Land Management.

Here's a look at how area members of Congress voted over the previous week.

HOUSE VOTES:

House Vote 1:

PRO BONO INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LITIGATION: The House has passed a bill (H.R. 5108), sponsored by Rep. Hakeem S. Jeffries, D-N.Y, to permanently establish the Law School Clinic Certification Program at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, with the program's purpose being to allow students in law school clinics to do pro bono patent and trademark litigation before the Office on behalf of impoverished inventors and entrepreneurs. Jeffries said making the program permanent would have the dual benefit of giving law students real-world professional training in intellectual property law and helping inventors and entrepreneurs navigate the complex patent and trademark filing process as they work to bring their beneficial products to market. The vote, on Sept. 15, was 327 yeas to 22 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st)

NOT VOTING: Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 2:

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE FOR CHILDREN: The House has passed the Emergency Medical Services for Children Reauthorization Act (S. 2154), sponsored by Sen. Robert P. Casey, D-Pa. The bill would reauthorize the Emergency Medical Services for Children Program through fiscal 2019, providing $20 million annually in grants to improve pediatric emergency care. A supporter, Rep. Joseph R. Pitts, R-Pa., said the program would help hospitals integrate care for children into their emergency medical service systems and thereby reduce child mortality by improving the ability of hospitals to provide the unique care required for children. The vote, on Sept. 16, was 410 yeas to 4 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 3:

EASING FINANCIAL REGULATION: The House has passed the Promoting Job Creation and Reducing Small Business Burdens Act (H.R. 5405), sponsored by Rep. Michael G. Fitzpatrick, R-Pa. The bill would amend a variety of financial regulation laws, with the intent of easing regulation of small public and private companies and improving their ability to raise capital. Fitzpatrick said the repeal and reform of such regulations would "set businesses and working capital free to invest in the economy and to create jobs" by decreasing their regulatory costs and increasing the amount of money they can invest in business expansion. A bill opponent, Rep. Keith Ellison, D-Minn., said the bill would increase financial risks by diminishing regulatory protections. The vote, on Sept. 16, was 320 yeas to 102 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 4:

MODIFYING FINANCIAL REFORM LAW: The House has passed a bill (H.R. 5461), sponsored by Rep. Andy Barr, R-Ky., that would change the definitions of points and fees for mortgage transactions included in the Dodd-Frank financial reform law and clarify leverage and risk requirements that Dodd-Frank set out for banks, insurers, and other financial firms. Barr said the bill made simple technical corrections to avoid the unintended consequences of vague language in the Dodd-Frank law, including the adoption of "economically destructive regulations" by financial regulatory agencies. A bill opponent, Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., called it an attempt by Republicans to make substantial and disputed changes to Dodd-Frank under the cover of a bill they claimed made only technical changes. The vote, on Sept. 16, was 327 yeas to 97 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 5:

AUDITING THE FEDERAL RESERVE: The House has passed the Federal Reserve Transparency Act (H.R. 24), sponsored by Rep. Paul C. Broun, R-Ga. The bill would require the U.S. Comptroller General to complete a full audit of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal reserve banks within 12 months. Broun said the audit was needed to "usher in a new era of transparency in this nation's monetary policy" at a time when the Federal Reserve has been granted increased regulatory and financial powers, giving it an unprecedented level of influence over the U.S. economy. A bill opponent, Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, D-Md., said auditing communications among members of the Federal Reserve's Board of Governors and transactions made under the Federal Open Market Committee's direction "would severely curtail the independence" of the Federal Reserve and its ability to conduct deliberations and take actions without fear of interference from Congress and the public. The vote, on Sept. 17, was 333 yeas to 92 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 6:

CAPPING TSA AIR SECURITY FEES: The House has passed a bill (H.R. 5462), sponsored by Rep. Richard Hudson, R-N.C., that would cap the aviation security fee collected by the Transportation Security Administration at $5.60 per one-way flight and $11.20 per roundtrip flight. Hudson said the cap was needed because the TSA has eliminated its own cap and begun charging airline passengers higher security fees than Congress intended. Hudson said capping the fee would correct the TSA's bid to overreach its authority and charge the excessive fees, and thereby save airline passengers $60 to $70 million annually. The vote, on Sept. 17, was unanimous with 423 yeas.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 7:

CHESAPEAKE AND OHIO CANAL PARK: The House has passed a bill (S. 476), sponsored by Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin, D-Md., to extend the term of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Commission for 10 years. A bill supporter, Rep. Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., said extending the commission's authority would help it advise the National Park Service on how best to manage the C&O Canal park as a tourist and recreational attraction for Maryland and Pennsylvania. The vote, on Sept. 17, was unanimous with 419 yeas.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 8:

ARMING SYRIAN OPPOSITION: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Buck McKeon, R-Calif., to a bill (H.J. Res. 124). The amendment would authorize the Defense Secretary and State Secretary to work to militarily train and equip groups and individuals in Syria that oppose the Islamic State group and the country's government led by Bashar al-Assad. McKeon said the amendment followed President Obama's request for funding to back the Syrian opposition in its fight against Islamic State while strengthening oversight of the funding "by requiring detailed reports, including progress reports on the plan, the vetting process, and the procedures for monitoring the end use of the training and equipment," as well as requiring Obama to inform Congress on how the Syria measures fit within a larger regional strategy for the U.S. in the Middle East. An amendment opponent, Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, R-Calif., said it was "wishful thinking" to arm and train the Free Syrian Army in the belief that it was trustworthy and would not result in arming insurgents who also

oppose the U.S., and the U.S. should instead be directly arming the Kurdish military to support its fight against Islamic State. The vote, on Sept. 17, was 273 yeas to 156 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 9:

SHORT-TERM APPROPRIATIONS RESOLUTION: The House has passed a resolution (H.J. Res. 124), sponsored by Rep. Harold Rogers, R-Ky. The resolution would provide continuing appropriations to fund government operations until Dec. 11, 2014, at the rate previously established by legislation to fund the operations in fiscal 2014. It would also extend the operating authority of the Export-Import Bank of the United States through June 2015, fund efforts to contain the Ebola virus outbreak in Africa, extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act through Dec. 11, and give border and immigration enforcement agencies funding flexibility. Rogers said the continued funding avoids the possibility of a government shutdown this fall. A resolution opponent, Rep. Barbara Lee, D-Calif., criticized its across-the-board reduction of funding for the needy, including public health and job training programs, as well as the hasty decision to approve arms and training for Syrian rebels without first having "a thorough and robust debate on the long-term implications of taking such actions." The vote, on Sept. 17, was 319 yeas to 108 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 10:

CHANGING TAX CODE, FINANCIAL REGULATIONS: The House has passed the Jobs for America Act (H.R. 4), sponsored by Rep. Dave Camp, R-Mich. The bill would, among other measures, make permanent bonus depreciation of business expenses, make permanent the corporate research and development tax credit, change the definition of full-time work as used to mandate employers to provide health care insurance to their employees from 30 hours per week to 40 hours per week, and repeal the medical device tax. Camp said restoring the 40-hour work week would stop encouraging employers to cut hours worked by their employees in order to avoid falling under the insurance mandate, boosting wages for the employees, and the bill's other measures would also promote the creation of jobs with higher take-home pay. A bill opponent, Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., criticized the bill's effort to significantly constrain the ability of financial regulatory agencies to adopt rules that prevent firms from engaging in risky trading practices that could create another financial crisis and charging too much for payday loans and mortgage services. The vote, on Sept. 18, was 253 yeas to 163 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 11:

ENERGY REGULATION: The House has passed the American Energy Solutions for Lower Costs and More American Jobs Act (H.R. 2), sponsored by Rep. Lee Terry, R-Neb. The bill would approve construction of the Keystone XL pipeline to carry oil from Alberta into the U.S., streamline regulatory reviews of proposals to export liquefied natural gas, build natural gas pipelines, and engage in energy production on federal lands, as well as block the Obama administration from adopting a stream buffer zone rule to regulate coal mining near streams. Terry said that by reducing burdensome regulation of energy development, the bill would "support resource development and minimize the red tape that strangles our job creators" and makes energy supplies less affordable and less reliable. A bill opponent, Rep. Henry A. Waxman, D-Calif., said it would harm the environment by degrading the ability of federal regulators to advance regulations that limit the environmental consequences of energy development. The vote, on Sept. 18, was 226 yeas to 191 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

SENATE VOTES:

Senate Vote 1:

WAGE DISCRIMINATION BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN: The Senate has rejected a motion to end debate on the Paycheck Fairness Act (S. 2199), sponsored by Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski, D-Md. The bill would establish various measures to prevent wage discrimination on the basis of sex, including the collection of data on wages paid to women and men and penalties against employers who violate sex discrimination rules and retaliate against sex discrimination whistleblowers. Mikulski said the bill would close legal loopholes that allow for continued pay discrimination, and would introduce measures to make sure "there is no retaliation, no excuses" for employers who do not pay women and men equally. An opponent of ending debate, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said the bill was bad policy that would increase litigation without benefiting women, and the Senate should instead be working on legislation to reverse the recent trend of falling wages for both women and men. The vote, on Sept. 15, was 52 yeas to 40 nays, with a three-fifths majority required to end debate.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 2:

CONFIRMING NRC COMMISSIONER: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Jeffrey Martin Baran to serve as a commissioner on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the remainder of a term ending at the close of June 2015. A supporter, Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., said Baran had more than 10 years of experience in Congress helping oversee the NRC in roles that included his current work as staff director on the House Energy and Commerce Committee. The vote, on Sept. 16, was 56 yeas to 44 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 3:

CONFIRMING SECOND NRC COMMISSIONER: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Stephen G. Burns to serve as a commissioner on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for a five-year term ending at the close of June 2019. A supporter, Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., cited Burns' lengthy experience as an NRC legal staffer, including serving as the agency's General Counsel from 2009 to 2012. Boxer said Burns and Jeffery Baran, who was confirmed as an NRC commissioner in another Senate vote, "will help lead the NRC in a way that will increase the level of confidence the American people have in the safety of the nation's nuclear facilities." An opponent, Sen. David Vitter, R-La., questioned whether Burns would be an adequate contributor to the NRC due to his lack of qualifications. The vote, on Sept. 16, was 60 yeas to 40 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 4:

CONFIRMING AMBASSADOR TO TURKEY: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of John R. Bass to serve as U.S. ambassador to Turkey. Bass, a career member of the State Department's Foreign Service, had served as ambassador to Georgia from 2009 to 2012, as State Department Executive Secretary since 2012, and in a variety of posts at diplomatic offices in Europe and Africa over the past several decades. There was no floor debate on the nomination. The vote, on Sept. 17, was unanimous with 98 yeas.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 5:

APPROVING SHORT-TERM APPROPRIATIONS RESOLUTION: The Senate has passed a resolution (H.J. Res. 124), sponsored by Rep. Harold Rogers, R-Ky. The resolution would provide continuing appropriations to fund government operations until Dec. 11, 2014, at the rate previously established by legislation to fund the operations in fiscal 2014. It would also extend the operating authority of the Export-Import Bank of the United States through June 2015, fund efforts to contain the Ebola virus outbreak in Africa, extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act through Dec. 11, and give border and immigration enforcement agencies funding flexibility. A supporter, Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski, D-Md., said that along with avoiding a government shutdown this fall, the resolution addressed the need to combat Russian interference in Ukraine, Islamic militants in the Middle East, and the Ebola outbreak. A resolution opponent, Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., said its approval of funding to arm "feckless rebels in Syria" would open the door to those weapons winding up in the hands of the Islamic State group following reversals on the battlefield, with the result of increasing violence and instability in the Middle East and increasing terrorism risks. The vote, on Sept. 18, was 78 yeas to 22 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

For more information about Targeted News Service products and services, please contact: Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service LLC, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://targetednews.com.

-1176444

LOAD-DATE: September 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

491 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

September 17, 2014

LUJAN STATEMENT ON AMENDMENT AUTHORIZING TRAINING AND EQUIPPING OF REBEL GROUPS IN SYRIA; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 393 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting against an amendment to a Continuing Resolution that authorized the training and equipping of rebel groups in Syria. **Lujan** voted for the Continuing Resolution that is needed to prevent the government from shutting down at the end of September.

"ISIL poses a threat to the Middle East and has the potential to threaten our homeland if it is not addressed. I support efforts to use targeted airstrikes and intelligence to help degrade ISIL's ability to gain the money and weapons that enhance their destructive capabilities. However, I have serious concerns with the current plan to equip and train Syrian rebels. Countries in the Middle East must take a leading role against this threat in their own region. Our allies in the region must prove that they are willing to stand up and commit the resources necessary to complement the United States. A major focus must be ending the flow of money and the recruitment of fighters that are supporting ISIL. Until our allies fully commit to this effort, I have concerns that remain with the current plan. To date it is not clear our allies have fully committed to this plan and ending the flow of money to ISIL.

"While the amendment calls for the vetting and reporting on every person recruited for training, it does not prevent individuals with ties to extremist or terrorist groups from participating. I am also concerned that the conflict in the region has the potential to escalate and further entangle our country in a civil war in Syria. While the purpose of training Syrians is to combat ISIL, and not the Assad regime, if Assad's forces target the rebels, we will be faced with the prospect of engaging the regime and escalating this conflict. In addition, the Syrians may end up turning their focus to overthrowing the Assad regime instead of concentrating on ISIL.

"While I opposed the amendment, I voted on the underlying bill - the Continuing Resolution - that prevents another government shutdown. The process should have included separate votes and debate on the training of Syrian rebels and the Continuing Resolution."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-amendment-authorizing-training-and-equipping-of-rebel-groups-in-syria/

LOAD-DATE: September 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

492 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

September 17, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON AMENDMENT AUTHORIZING TRAINING AND EQUIPPING OF REBEL GROUPS IN SYRIA

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 378 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting against an amendment to a Continuing Resolution that authorized the training and equipping of rebel groups in Syria. **Lujan** voted for the Continuing Resolution that is needed to prevent the government from shutting down at the end of September.

"ISIL poses a threat to the Middle East and has the potential to threaten our homeland if it is not addressed. I support efforts to use targeted airstrikes and intelligence to help degrade ISIL's ability to gain the money and weapons that enhance their destructive capabilities. However, I have serious concerns with the current plan to equip and train Syrian rebels. Countries in the Middle East must take a leading role against this threat in their own region. Our allies in the region must prove that they are willing to stand up and commit the resources necessary to complement the United States. A major focus must be ending the flow of money and the recruitment of fighters that are supporting ISIL. Until our allies fully commit to this effort, I have concerns that remain with the current plan. To date it is not clear our allies have fully committed to this plan and ending the flow of money to ISIL.

"While the amendment calls for the vetting and reporting on every person recruited for training, it does not prevent individuals with ties to extremist or terrorist groups from participating. I am also concerned that the conflict in the region has the potential to escalate and further entangle our country in a civil war in Syria. While the purpose of training Syrians is to combat ISIL, and not the Assad regime, if Assad's forces target the rebels, we will be faced with the prospect of engaging the regime and escalating this conflict. In addition, the Syrians may end up turning their focus to overthrowing the Assad regime instead of concentrating on ISIL.

"While I opposed the amendment, I voted on the underlying bill - the Continuing Resolution - that prevents another government shutdown. The process should have included separate votes and debate on the training of Syrian rebels and the Continuing Resolution."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: September 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

September 17, 2014 Wednesday 2:16 AM EST

Lujan Statement on Amendment Authorizing Training and Equipping of Rebel Groups in Syria

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 387 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting against an amendment to a Continuing Resolution that authorized the training and equipping of rebel groups in Syria. **Lujan** voted for the Continuing Resolution that is needed to prevent the government from shutting down at the end of September.

"ISIL poses a threat to the Middle East and has the potential to threaten our homeland if it is not addressed. I support efforts to use targeted airstrikes and intelligence to help degrade ISIL's ability to gain the money and weapons that enhance their destructive capabilities. However, I have serious concerns with the current plan to equip and train Syrian rebels. Countries in the Middle East must take a leading role against this threat in their own region. Our allies in the region must prove that they are willing to stand up and commit the resources necessary to complement the United States. A major focus must be ending the flow of money and the recruitment of fighters that are supporting ISIL. Until our allies fully commit to this effort, I have concerns that remain with the current plan. To date it is not clear our allies have fully committed to this plan and ending the flow of money to ISIL.

"While the amendment calls for the vetting and reporting on every person recruited for training, it does not prevent individuals with ties to extremist or terrorist groups from participating. I am also concerned that the conflict in the region has the potential to escalate and further entangle our country in a civil war in Syria. While the purpose of training Syrians is to combat ISIL, and not the Assad regime, if Assad's forces target the rebels, we will be faced with the prospect of engaging the regime and escalating this conflict. In addition, the Syrians may end up turning their focus to overthrowing the Assad regime instead of concentrating on ISIL.

"While I opposed the amendment, I voted on the underlying bill - the Continuing Resolution - that prevents another government shutdown. The process should have included separate votes and debate on the training of Syrian rebels and the Continuing Resolution."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140918-4864362 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: September 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

494 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

September 17, 2014 Wednesday

Washington: PROMOTING JOB CREATION AND REDUCING SMALL BUSINESS BURDENS ACT -- (House of Representatives - September 16, 2014)

LENGTH: 923 words

DATELINE: Washington

The Library of Congress, The Government of USA has issued the following news release:

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5405) to make technical corrections to the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, to enhance the ability of small and emerging growth companies to access capital through public and private markets, to reduce regulatory burdens, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Fitzpatrick) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were--yeas 320, nays 102, not voting 9, as follows:
[Roll No. 501]
YEAS--320

Amash

Amodei

Bachmann

Bachus

Barber

Barletta

Barr

Barrow (GA)

Benishek

Bentivolio

Bera (CA)

Bilirakis

Bishop (GA)

Bishop (NY)

Bishop (UT)

Black

Blackburn

Boustany

Brady (TX)

Braley (IA)

Bridenstine

Brooks (AL)

Brooks (IN)

Broun (GA)

Brown (FL)

Brownley (CA)

Buchanan

Bucshon

Burgess

Bustos

Byrne

Calvert

Camp

Campbell

Cárdenas

Carney

Carter

Cassidy

Chabot

Chaffetz

Cicilline

Clawson (FL)

Coble

Coffman

Cole

Collins (NY)

Conaway

Connolly

Cook

Cooper

Costa

Cotton

Cramer

Crawford

Crenshaw

Crowley

Cuellar

Culberson

Daines

Davis (CA)

Davis, Rodney

DeGette

Delaney

DelBene

Denham

Dent

DeSantis

Diaz-Balart

Duckworth

Duffy

Duncan (SC)

Duncan (TN)

Ellmers

Engel

Enyart

Eshoo

Esty

Farenthold

Farr

Fincher

Fitzpatrick

Fleischmann

Fleming

Flores

Forbes

Fortenberry

Foster

Foxx

Franks (AZ)

Frelinghuysen

Gallego

Garcia

Gardner

Garrett

Gerlach

Gibbs

Gibson

Gingrey (GA)

Gohmert

Goodlatte

Gosar

Gowdy

Granger

Graves (GA)

Graves (MO)

Griffin (AR)

Griffith (VA)

Grimm

Guthrie

Hall

Hanabusa

Hanna

Harper

Harris

Hartzler

Hastings (WA)

Heck (NV)

Heck (WA)

Hensarling

Herrera Beutler

Higgins

Himes

Holding

Honda

Hoyer

Hudson

Huelskamp

Huizenga (MI)

Hultgren

Hunter

Hurt

Israel

Issa

Jenkins

Johnson (OH)

Johnson, Sam

Jolly

Jordan

Joyce

Keating

Kelly (PA)

Kilmer

Kind

King (IA)

King (NY)

Kingston

Kinzinger (IL)

Kirkpatrick

Kline

Kuster

Labrador

LaMalfa

Lamborn

Lance

Langevin

Lankford

Larsen (WA)

Latham

Latta

Lipinski

LoBiondo

Loebsack

Long

Lowey

Lucas

Luetkemeyer

Lujan Grisham (NM)

Luján, Ben Ray (NM)

Lummis

Maffei

Maloney, Carolyn

Maloney, Sean

Marchant

Marino

Massie

Matheson

Matsui

McAllister

McCarthy (CA)

McCarthy (NY)

McCaul

McClintock

McCollum

McHenry

McIntyre

McKeon

McKinley

McMorris Rodgers

McNerney

Meadows

Meehan

Meeks

Meng

Messer

Mica

Miller (FL)

Miller (MI)

Miller, Gary

Moran

Mullin

Mulvaney

Murphy (FL)

Murphy (PA)

Neugebauer

Noem

Nolan

Nugent

Nunes

O'Rourke

Olson

Owens

Palazzo

Paulsen

Pearce

Perlmutter

Perry

Peters (CA)

Peters (MI)

Peterson

Petri

Pittenger

Pitts

Poe (TX)

Polis

Pompeo

Posey

Price (GA)

Quigley

Rahall

Reed

Reichert

Renacci

Ribble

Rice (SC)

Rigell

Roby

Roe (TN)

Rogers (AL)

Rogers (KY)

Rogers (MI)

Rohrabacher

Rokita

Rooney

Ros-Lehtinen

Roskam

Ross

Rothfus

Royce

Ruiz

Runyan

Ruppersberger

Ryan (WI)

Salmon

Sánchez, Linda T.

Sanchez, Loretta

Sanford

Scalise

Schneider

Schock

Schrader

Schweikert

Scott, Austin

Scott, David

Sensenbrenner

Sessions

Sewell (AL)

Shea-Porter

Sherman

Shimkus

Shuster

Simpson

Sinema

Sires

Slaughter

Smith (MO)

Smith (NE)

Smith (NJ)

Smith (TX)

Southerland

Speier

Stewart

Stivers

Stockman

Stutzman

Swalwell (CA)

Terry

Thompson (CA)

Thompson (PA)

Thornberry

Tiberi

Tipton

Turner

Upton

Valadao

Vargas

Veasey

Vela

Visclosky

Wagner

Walberg

Walden

Walorski

Walz

Weber (TX)

Webster (FL)

Wenstrup

Westmoreland

Whitfield

Williams

Wilson (FL)

Wilson (SC)

Wittman

Wolf

Womack

Woodall

Yarmuth

Yoder

Yoho

Young (AK)

Young (IN)
NAYS--102

Bass

Beatty

Becerra

Blumenauer

Bonamici

Brady (PA)

Butterfield

Capps

Capuano

Carson (IN)

Cartwright

Castro (TX)

Chu

Clark (MA)

Clarke (NY)

Clay

Cleaver

Clyburn

Cohen

Conyers

Courtney

Cummings

Davis, Danny

DeFazio

DeLauro

Deutch

Dingell

Doggett

Doyle

Edwards

Ellison

Fattah

Frankel (FL)

Fudge

Gabbard

Garamendi

Grayson

Green, Al

Green, Gene

Grijalva

Gutiérrez

Hahn

Hastings (FL)

Hinojosa

Horsford

Huffman

Jackson Lee

Jeffries

Johnson (GA)

Johnson, E. B.

Jones

Kaptur

Kelly (IL)

Kennedy

Kildee

Larson (CT)

Lee (CA)

Levin

Lewis

Lofgren

Lowenthal

Lynch

McDermott

McGovern

Michaud

Miller, George

Moore

Nadler

Napolitano

Neal

Negrete McLeod

Pallone

Pascrell

Pastor (AZ)

Payne

Pelosi

Pingree (ME)

Pocan

Price (NC)

Rangel

Richmond

Roybal-Allard

Ryan (OH)

Sarbanes

Schakowsky

Schiff

Schwartz

Scott (VA)

Serrano

Smith (WA)

Takano

Thompson (MS)

Tierney

Titus

Tonko

Tsongas

Van Hollen

Velázquez

Wasserman Schultz

Waters

Waxman

Welch

NOT VOTING--9

Aderholt

Barton

Capito

Castor (FL)

Collins (GA)

DesJarlais

Holt

Nunnelee

Rush

[Time: 18:41]

Ms. KAPTUR, Messrs. SMITH of Washington, RICHMOND, GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. LEE of California, and Messrs. BUTTERFIELD and SCHIFF changed their vote from ``yea'' to ``nay.''

Messrs. POLIS, THOMPSON of California, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. **BEN RAY LUJÁN** of New Mexico, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. FARR, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Mr. LANGEVIN changed their vote from ``nay'' to ``yea.''

[Page: H7577] GPO's PDF

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

LOAD-DATE: September 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

September 15, 2014 Monday

NM labs bypass DOE on tech transfer;
Sandia, LANL broaden aggressive commercialization efforts as Energy Dept. drags its heels

BYLINE: COPYRIGHT © 2014 ALBUQUERQUE JOURNAL BY KEVIN ROBINSON-AVILA JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

SECTION: BUSINESS OUTLOOK; Pg. 6

LENGTH: 1388 words

Sandia National Laboratories is turning to the New Mexico Angels to help take its technology-transfer efforts to the next level.

The Angels, a group of local investors who pool their resources to build startup companies, will host lab scientists and tech-transfer administrators in a first-ever technology showcase luncheon this month to allow the group's members to kick the tires on some new, cutting-edge Sandia inventions.

The event reflects a growing effort by Sandia to reach into the heart of New Mexico's business and investment community to move lab-developed innovation into the marketplace.

Sandia has organized open community events in the past to introduce the public to potentially marketable Sandia technologies. But the Sept. 25 luncheon aims to construct direct bridges with local movers and shakers in New Mexico's startup community, said Peter Atherton, senior manager of industry partnerships at the lab.

"Our previous events attracted many participants and generated a lot of energy and buzz," Atherton said. "But now we're partnering directly with the Angels to help move our intellectual property to market. They represent a broad group of very active investors who have lots of connections, energy and experience in forming and growing companies around technology."

Aggressive efforts

The new partnership with the Angels is the latest in a series of aggressive efforts by both Sandia and Los Alamos National Laboratory to draw private investors and entrepreneurs directly into the process of commercializing lab technology. Thanks to those efforts, both institutions are achieving new milestones in their tech-transfer programs.

Their efforts reflect initiative and willingness among local laboratory leaders to embrace technology commercialization, say veteran investors and tech-transfer professionals in New Mexico. And that, in turn, is placing them ahead of federal initiatives, which remain deficient despite congressional mandates that require the U.S. Department of Energy to push technology commercialization.

"We're seeing things at the lab level move a lot faster than at the federal level," said John Freisinger, president and CEO of Technology Ventures Corp. in Albuquerque, which supports commercialization at Sandia and other laboratories. "I think the labs are getting a little more bold to do things on their own given the lack of leadership from Washington, D.C."

That lack of leadership is a problem, because public and private sector partnerships that draw on advances at the labs are considered critical to improving the competitiveness of American industry in the global economy. Federally funded research, for example, has provided the launching pad for groundbreaking innovation in medicine, energy and computers.

DOE lack of effort

But the DOE has shown a chronic lack of initiative since Congress passed the Energy Policy Act of 2005, according to a report that the DOE Inspector General's office released last February.

The act requires the DOE to appoint a technology-transfer coordinator to oversee commercialization efforts nationwide, develop a comprehensive strategy, and set up a technology-commercialization fund with 0.9 percent of the DOE's annual budget.

But since 2005, only one tech-transfer coordinator has ever served in the post for just two years, until early 2013, and the DOE has never developed a strategy nor set up the required fund.

The DOE does have an "acting coordinator" now drawing up policy recommendations for Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz, who took office last year, but there's been no new federal initiatives.

"From the federal perspective, there hasn't been much change from when the previous tech-transfer coordinator left the DOE in 2013," Freisinger said. "The secretary seems to be in listening mode right now."

Tom Brennan of Arch Venture Partners, a veteran of technology transfer at the laboratories, said he's seen no change at the federal level.

"I only see small initiatives that are in no way focused or big enough to make any real impact," Brennan said.

NM lawmaker doubts

New Mexico legislators say Moniz does appear committed to developing a commercialization plan and addressing deficiencies, but the pace of those efforts is slow.

"I'm disturbed by the things outlined in the Inspector General's report," said Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M. "Those things have been around since before Moniz took office, but we're still lagging on clearing the problems up."

In fact, during a roundtable discussion with New Mexico's top technology-transfer professionals in Albuquerque last month, Moniz said the DOE does want to "raise the game" in technology commercialization, but he stressed that it's a secondary goal at the national labs.

"I want to make it very clear, technology transfer is not our primary mission," Moniz said.

Both **Luján** and Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., have introduced legislation in their respective chambers to accelerate commercialization.

Luján's bill would provide federal funds to pay for the government's share of Cooperative Research and Development Agreements, which give private companies access to lab equipment, infrastructure and scientific expertise to develop and commercialize new technologies.

Udall's bill would create joint public- and private-sector DOE teams to devise and execute strategies, while authorizing the Small Business Administration to broaden existing programs to provide funding and low-cost loans to companies that commercialize lab technology.

But those bills have yet to move in Congress. And in the meantime, that leaves most of the initiative up to the labs themselves.

In New Mexico, the laboratories are stepping up to the plate.

LANL created a new institute last year, the Richard Feynman Center for Innovation, to centralize all tech-transfer programs and administration under one roof, and to integrate those efforts more directly into the lab's core research mission, said center Director David Pesiri.

More important, the center now draws on lab partnerships with private companies to involve investors at the earliest stages in technology development and market strategies.

Enlisting private partners

"We're not now pursuing technology transfer as something separate from what the lab does, but rather bringing it into the lab mission itself," Pesiri said. "We're bringing private partners deeper into the core of how LANL conducts its business."

That's led to some major achievements recently. In early September, for example, the lab signed a major licensing agreement with Whitewood Encryption Systems Inc. in Boston to jointly develop and market advanced data encryption technology created by LANL.

The lab also is providing funding for small companies in northern and central New Mexico to help businesses develop new technologies and services. To date, the lab's "venture acceleration fund" has provided about $3 million to some 40 companies. That includes $30,000 granted in 2013 to Titan Aerospace, a Moriarty firm with a new, solar-powered drone that was acquired early this year by Google.

Sandia, meanwhile, is pursuing a "life cycle" strategy of commercialization that has scientists considering the market potential of new technologies from the earliest stages of research. That's led to a huge increase in patent activity at the lab, with record levels this year of invention disclosures by scientists, patent applications and patents issued, Atherton said.

Sandia also has streamlined its licensing process to cut red tape and overhauled its website and marketing materials to make its technologies more accessible to investors. And now, its reaching out much more aggressively to serial entrepreneurs like the Angels to build the partnerships needed to commercialize innovation.

"We're bringing our inventors directly together with experienced businesspeople," Atherton said. "We want to be part of the emerging energy we see in entrepreneurial innovation and startup activity happening in Albuquerque." The new Sandia-Angel partnership already has generated one success story, with Angels funding a new company, Sandstone Diagnostics, to market Sandia technology to provide over-the-counter fertility tests for males.

"Sandia has some very interesting technologies that we want to look at," said Angels President John Chavez. "After this first event, we expect to do a lot more showcases with them."

LOAD-DATE: September 15, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: COURTESY OF LANL This Los Alamos National Laboratory image shows the Acoustic Cytometry Systems, a field of flow cytometry used to measure various parameters of cells, which the lab licensed to Life Technologies. The image shows DNA fragments flowing through the flow channel from the bottom of the flow cell to the exit tubing at the top. The green laser beam passes through the focusing lens from right to left and then through the flow cell.
LUJÁN: DOE lagging on clearing up problems
JOURNAL FILE U.S. Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz, left, visited Sandia Labs in September of last year.
UDALL: Bill would broaden funding, loans
CHAVEZ: President of New Mexico Angels
COURTESY OF SANDIA LABS Sandia National Laboratories chemist Eric Coker, left, looks over shipping containers developed by Santa Fe businessman Bruce McCormick that safely transport and store temperature-sensitive vaccines and biopharmaceuticals. Coker helped McCormick create a solar thermal icemaker to provide cooling for the containers.
JOURNAL FILE Titan Aerospace Solara 50 is one of the solar atmosphere satellites being developed by Titan Aerospace, recently acquired by Google. Titan received financial support for a Los Alamos

National Laboratory-related fund.
FREISINGER: "Labs getting a little more bold"

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

September 12, 2014 Friday

Congressional challengers question airstrike strategy; Weh worried about militants in U.S.

BYLINE: JAMES MONTELEONE JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C1

LENGTH: 581 words

Two of New Mexico's congressional challengers are voicing opposition to President Barack Obama's strategy to target Islamic State fighters in Iraq and Syria using airstrikes rather than American "boots on the ground."

And the challengers' views are in contrast with the general approval for the Obama strategy from New Mexico's congressional incumbents.

Republican congressional challengers Jeff Byrd and Mike Frese said Thursday that destroying the Islamic State organization will likely require intervention from American ground forces.

The group is commonly referenced by different names, including the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), based on different translations of the group's Arabic name.

"I like that he (Obama) is coming out wanting to eliminate them as a threat," said Byrd, who is challenging Democratic Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** for New Mexico's 3rd Congressional District seat in the U.S. House. "I am concerned about the ability to actually achieve that goal without more than just airstrikes."

Frese, who is challenging Democrat Michelle **Lujan** Grisham for the 1st Congressional District seat, said he's hopeful but "not impressed" by the approach the president outlined in a speech Wednesday night.

"We have to stop them there, because they'll come here," Frese said of the Islamic State. "I don't doubt it. And I don't think this president's timid steps are going to get it done."

Representatives **Luján** and **Lujan** Grisham voiced tentative support for Obama's strategy.

"I believe that Congress and the president must work together to ensure the strategy has clear goals, a clear exit, is precise, and does not commit U.S. combat troops on the ground," **Luján** said.

Lujan Grisham said she would like to see the fight against the Islamic State be collaborative with U.S. allies.

"I support efforts to supplement our military might with a broad coalition of international partners to ensure we are not fighting this threat alone," **Lujan** Grisham said.

Republican U.S. Senate candidate Allen Weh struck a different tone than the House challengers. Weh, a 38-year Marine Corps veteran, has said he could not judge the appropriate use of military force without access to the military briefings provided to members of Congress.

But Weh on Thursday cited concerns about U.S. borders offering easy access for Islamic State fighters seeking to enter the country.

"That's not a comprehensive strategy," Weh said, referring to the president's speech, "and it certainly isn't leadership when it's needed."

"If elected to the Senate, I will fight to seal the border and do everything I can to protect our families," he said.

Democratic Sen. Tom Udall said he supports use of targeted airstrikes against the Islamic State but warned against any effort that would require ground forces.

"I have serious concerns about the call to war that I hear from some of my colleagues. We cannot afford to rush to war again," Udall said.

Republican Rep. Steve Pearce said that he appreciated the president's response to the Islamic State threat and hopes Obama's strategy will be successful.

Democrat Roxanne "Rocky" Lara, who is challenging Pearce for the 2nd Congressional District seat, voiced similar support for Obama's strategy but joined Udall in warning against deployment of ground forces.

"I remain opposed to sending American ground troops to the Middle East," Lara said. "We must build an international coalition and empower allies in region to uproot ISIS."

LOAD-DATE: September 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Congressional Documents and Publications

September 11, 2014

LUJAN STATEMENT ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11 TERRORIST ATTACKS;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 225 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the anniversary of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

"Today we remember those who lost their lives during the terrorist attack on our nation thirteen years ago. While we continue to mourn this tragedy, we also reflect on our country's ability to stand strong and endure in the face of such heinous acts.

"We remember the first responders who exemplified bravery and risked their lives to help those in need, as well as citizens who found the courage to act and help their fellow neighbor. Yesterday, Congress honored those that perished with the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian award that can be bestowed. We also honor and show our gratitude to those who were called to join the Armed Services, especially those who continue to serve and sacrifice in order to protect our country. The heroism and valor of these individuals truly represent the best our country has to offer.

"We are not defined by tragedy, but rather by the strength and resolve that we show in response. On the anniversary of 9/11, let us remain united in spirit and continue to honor the memory of those we lost."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-the-anniversary-of-911-terrorist-attacks/

LOAD-DATE: September 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

September 11, 2014 Thursday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11 TERRORIST ATTACKS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 215 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the anniversary of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

"Today we remember those who lost their lives during the terrorist attack on our nation thirteen years ago. While we continue to mourn this tragedy, we also reflect on our country's ability to stand strong and endure in the face of such heinous acts.

"We remember the first responders who exemplified bravery and risked their lives to help those in need, as well as citizens who found the courage to act and help their fellow neighbor. Yesterday, Congress honored those that perished with the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian award that can be bestowed. We also honor and show our gratitude to those who were called to join the Armed Services, especially those who continue to serve and sacrifice in order to protect our country. The heroism and valor of these individuals truly represent the best our country has to offer.

"We are not defined by tragedy, but rather by the strength and resolve that we show in response. On the anniversary of 9/11, let us remain united in spirit and continue to honor the memory of those we lost."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: September 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

September 11, 2014 Thursday 2:47 AM EST

Lujan Statement on the Anniversary of 9/11 Terrorist Attacks

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 224 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the anniversary of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

"Today we remember those who lost their lives during the terrorist attack on our nation thirteen years ago. While we continue to mourn this tragedy, we also reflect on our country's ability to stand strong and endure in the face of such heinous acts.

"We remember the first responders who exemplified bravery and risked their lives to help those in need, as well as citizens who found the courage to act and help their fellow neighbor. Yesterday, Congress honored those that perished with the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian award that can be bestowed. We also honor and show our gratitude to those who were called to join the Armed Services, especially those who continue to serve and sacrifice in order to protect our country. The heroism and valor of these individuals truly represent the best our country has to offer.

"We are not defined by tragedy, but rather by the strength and resolve that we show in response. On the anniversary of 9/11, let us remain united in spirit and continue to honor the memory of those we lost."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140912-4856912 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: September 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

States News Service

September 9, 2014 Tuesday

NFU HONORS 40 OUTSTANDING MEMBERS OF CONGRESS WITH GOLDEN TRIANGLE AWARD

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 415 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by National Farmers Union (NFU):

National Farmers Union (NFU) recently announced its recipients of the Golden Triangle Award, the organization's highest legislative honor. The annual award is presented to members of Congress who have demonstrated leadership and support policies that benefit America's family farmers, ranchers, fishermen and rural communities.

"Recipients of the Golden Triangle Award have been strong advocates for family farmers and ranchers, and support similar principles and policies as Farmers Union," said NFU President Roger Johnson. "We are pleased to honor those who have proven to be true allies of our organization and our members across the country."

This year's Golden Triangle recipients were selected for their leadership on a variety of issues, including votes on the farm bill and related amendments. The awards will be presented at a reception during NFU's Annual Legislative Fly-In this September.

The Golden Triangle Award is based on NFU's symbol - a triangle with "legislation" and "cooperation" forming the sides and "education" the base. The Golden Triangle Awards have been presented to legislators since 1988.

List of all 2014 Golden Triangle Award Recipients:

Sen. Tammy Baldwin, Wis. Sen. Michael Bennet, Colo. Rep. Bruce Braley, Iowa Sen. Sherrod Brown, Ohio

Rep. Cheri Bustos, Ill. Sen. Thad Cochran, Miss. Rep. Joe Courtney, Conn. Rep. Rodney Davis, Ill.

Sen. Joe Donnelly, Ind. Rep. Sam Farr, Calif. Rep. Michael Fitzpatrick, Pa. Rep. Jeff Fortenberry, Neb.

Sen. Al Franken, Minn. Sen. Charles Grassley, Iowa Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, N.M. Sen. Martin Heinrich, N.M

Sen. Heidi Heitkamp, N.D. Sen. John Hoeven, N.D Rep. Jared Huffman, Calif. Sen. Tim Johnson, S.D.

Rep. Marcy Kaptur, Ohio Sen. Amy Klobuchar, Minn. Rep. Ann McLane Kuster, N.H. Sen. Patrick Leahy, Vt.

Rep. Dave Loebsack, Iowa Rep. Frank Lucas, Okla. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan Grisham,** N.M. Sen. Jerry Moran, Kan.

Rep. Rick Nolan, Minn. Rep. Nancy Pelosi, Calif. Rep. Gary Peters, Mich. Rep. Collin Peterson, Minn.

Rep. Chellie Pingree, Maine Rep. Mark Pocan, Wis. Sen. Debbie Stabenow, Mich. Sen. Mark Udall, Colo.

Sen. Tom Udall, N.M. Sen. Jon Tester, Mont. Sen. John Walsh, Mont. Rep. Tim Walz, Minn.

National Farmers Union has been working since 1902 to protect and enhance the economic well-being and quality of life for family farmers, ranchers and rural communities through advocating grassroots-driven policy positions adopted by its membership.

-30-

LOAD-DATE: September 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

September 7, 2014 Sunday

Pueblo's easement battle raises tensions in El Rancho

BYLINE: Staci Matlock, The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 1926 words

Sept. 07--As a teenager in the early 1980s, Janet Hererra drove the county roads around her hometown of El Rancho, a small community stretched along both sides of the Pojoaque River north of Santa Fe. Now she drives the same Santa Fe County roads to reach N.M. 502 and her job at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

At least she thought they were county roads. That's how they were labeled on maps. Everyone knew the county maintained them.

But Herrera and her neighbors found out a few months ago that San Ildefonso Pueblo believes County Road 84 and several spur roads belong to the pueblo. The pueblo has told the county and two El Rancho residents to negotiate easements or face trespassing fines.

Questions about rights of way cloud the titles to El Rancho properties and are making it hard for some people to sell their homes. Some residents fear the pueblo could prevent them from accessing their homes.

This isn't the only issue rattling the community of about 1,000 people. A settlement in the long-running Aamodt water-rights suit that will impact water delivery and new easements for utility lines crossing pueblo lands eventually will hit El Rancho residents in their pocketbooks.

"People are upset," said Herrera, 50. "People are wondering how did we get here and where will it end?"

San Ildefonso Pueblo Gov. Terry Aguilar, who is an attorney, said he is simply following the law when it comes to rights of way. "We're not going to be taken advantage of anymore," Aguilar said.

The issue has created a rift between pueblo and El Rancho residents, who have lived side by side for generations.

The situation isn't unique. Around New Mexico and across the West, tribes and communities are renegotiating leases that affect everything from oil pipelines to state highways.

Longtime neighbors

The Spanish came to the Pojoaque Valley and San Ildefonso Pueblo in the 1600s. Pueblo people had been there for a few centuries already. They were joined by an influx of Anglos in the 1940s as Los Alamos grew up around the Manhattan Project.

"We farmed together. We traded together. We attended baptisms," said San Ildefonso Tribal Councilor Tim Martinez. "We helped each other at harvest. We played ball together."

Herrera said Gov. Aguilar's aunt used to come over to her grandmother Maria Duran's house with big pans of biscochitos and other food. The two women worked on crafts together. Herrera said when her grandfather Tony "AC" Duran was still an infant, his mother died and he was nursed by a San Ildefonso Pueblo potter.

Herrera and her husband attend Mass at the San Ildefonso church every Sunday.

But things have changed in the last year as the pueblo has asserted its right to renegotiate easements and questioned road boundaries.

"It is really sad what is happening now," said Herrera during a recent lunch break in Los Alamos. "The tensions are high. Between the Jemez Mountains Electric Cooperative easements and rate increase, and now the roads and next the regional water system -- it doesn't feel so friendly anymore."

Martinez, speaking recently at Tesuque Village Market, said, "We don't want to see communities separate in the valley."

But he said the pueblo has been dealing with trespassers for a long time, and now is the time to finally get it under control. "What would you do if people were trespassing on your land?" he asked.

History of disputes

As it turns out, history is simply repeating itself in the dispute over land, roads and rights between San Ildefonso Pueblo and El Rancho. A Spanish governor in 1701 made land grants to Spanish families in the area that became El Rancho, land San Ildefonso Pueblo still considered its own, according to Spanish Archives of New Mexico and scholars. El Rancho is completely surrounded by pueblo land.

Disputes over the land continued through the 18th century.

By 1868, land patents held by San Ildefonso and other pueblos had been recognized by each conquering government -- Spain, Mexico and the United States. More legal wrangling followed, though, as the U.S. Supreme Court made pendulum swings in how it viewed Native Americans and land rights.

At different times, the pueblo government sold off parcels of land.

To stop all the disputes, Congress passed the 1924 Pueblo Lands Act and told everyone in the valley -- pueblo and non-pueblo -- to prove their claims. It seemed the whole dispute over lands and boundaries was settled.

But as communities grew, electric lines were put in, roads were built and natural gas pipelines were installed. Disputes over rights of way across pueblo lands increased.

In 1967, the pueblo refused an easement deal with the New Mexico Highway Commission to extend N.M. 30 between Española and the road to Los Alamos. The state threatened to condemn the 3.6-mile section across San Ildefonso Pueblo land because the pueblo wouldn't agree to the offered price.

In 1976, San Ildefonso Pueblo named trespassing by non-pueblo people as one of its main concerns. Over the years, pueblo officials said, fences had been cut, woodcutters had hauled off firewood, trash had piled up and off-road trails had appeared on pueblo land. It's not that people meant harm, said James Martinez, the pueblo governor at the time. "They're just individuals who don't pay attention to signs."

In the late 1990s, when Terry Aguilar became governor of San Ildefonso, the pueblo again disputed Santa Fe County's jurisdiction over County Road 84-C. The pueblo was furious when the county's maintenance trucks came through the pueblo during religious ceremonies. The county apologized but said it was responsible for maintaining the road.

Pueblo officials in 1999 also threatened to shut down a portion of N.M. 4 that crosses pueblo land after negotiations to renew a 50-year-old lease failed. But the road wasn't closed and the two sides eventually worked out a deal.

Rising tensions

Still, people in El Rancho and San Ildefonso say they don't remember anything like the tension that's arisen in the last year. "I don't know all the players. I don't know all the issues," said Stella Shelburnfrom her home in El Rancho. "I just know people are hurting."

The community's residents already were angry over new rights-of-way agreements between Jemez Mountains Electric Cooperative and five pueblos that would raise their electricity rates by up to 30 percent over the next few years. The way the rate cases were handled made them feel abandoned by the state Public Regulation Commission, the cooperative and their elected officials.

Then they found out San Ildefonso Pueblo was threatening Santa Fe County with trespass on County Road 84, 84-C and other spurs. Until N.M. 502 was built, County Road 84 was the main road between Pojoaque and El Rancho. Santa Fe County inked an easement agreement with the pueblo in 1989, and El Rancho residents had thought the easement was permanent. The pueblo says it isn't.

El Rancho residents have formed a couple of groups to get information out to the community.

"I guess you could say we are feeling a bit not represented by our elected officials," said Heather Nordquist, Shelburn's daughter, who is the fifth generation on her mother's side to grow up in El Rancho. "We don't have anything against the pueblo, but if the feds and the county are working with them and giving them money, then who is working for us?"

"We want the pueblo to succeed, but we don't feel everyone else has to fail for the pueblo to succeed."

Official salvos in the county road trespass battle have fired back and forth between officials since December, when Raymond Fry, superintendent of the Northern Pueblos Agency of the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, sent a letter to Santa Fe County saying it lacked an easement to use County Roads 84, 84A to 84D and Sandy Way across San Ildefonso Pueblo land. The county was given 30 days to negotiate a rights-of-way easement with the pueblo for the roads or face trespass fines and eviction.

Two El Rancho residents who live on private land accessed by those roads received the same letter telling them they were trespassing.

County Manager Katherine Miller and then county attorney Stephen Ross fired an angry letter back to the BIA, saying the agency had failed to properly research the road easement and asking Fry to immediately withdraw his letter. The county called the BIA's allegation of trespass "a serious overreaching" and "far from a constructive way to renew the debate about county lands and access to non-Indian property within the Pueblos."

New Mexico Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** sent a letter to Kevin Washburn, assistant secretary of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, saying the agency's letters "have begun to unravel the fabric of the local community. Community members are in fear of losing access to their homes and businesses."

The BIA responded in April, noting the agency and San Ildefonso Pueblo don't agree that the 1989 right-of-way agreement covers all the county roads in question.

"BIA doesn't get involved unless they are 100 percent sure they are right," Gov. Aguilar said.

Tensions surrounding County Road 84 boiled over at a community meeting last month, when private property owners in the community of El Rancho accused Aguilar of taking away their rights, according to people who were there.

Congressman **Luján**, a Pojoaque Valley native, attended the meeting. "I am concerned with the emotional tone in the community," **Luján** said later via email. "At the public meeting the situation regarding Ferguson, Missouri was brought up. Given what has happened in other parts of the country, I am fearful of what could fall apart in our community."

"It is important that as we deal with these issues we do not lose sight of the fact that we are one big community that must find a way to work together to find peaceful solutions."

Aguilar said his intention is to show where the county roads cross pueblo land and to ensure everyone who has a driveway connecting to the county roads across pueblo lands has legal access. "Let's determine if this is Indian land or non-Indian land," he said.

The pueblo is working with the county to survey the roads and adjacent lands in El Rancho now. They will hold another community meeting to discuss the results.

Revenue opportunities

San Ildefonso Pueblo has no casino like its neighbors in Pojoaque, Santa Clara and Tesuque. Aguilar is clear his intention is to make sure the pueblo is fairly paid by companies to run water lines, gas lines, electricity and fiber optics across pueblo land.

Aguilar said that ultimately, settling road access issues will help El Rancho residents. "Right now, with unresolved access issues, property values can be impacted and affect their ability to sell property," he said in an email.

"It's always like this when Native Americans become very aggressive, become educated, study and decide to make things better for themselves," Martinez said. "People come out of the woodwork and say, 'You can't do this to us.' "

Nordquist said the problem is that people in El Rancho don't understand the pueblo's endgame. "We're all just sitting back and thinking, what are they going to do? Are they going to lock us out of their property? Are they planning to charge us so much for utility easements that we can't afford the bills?

"Maybe if we understood it better, there wouldn't be so much controversy," she said.

Contact Staci Matlock at 986-3055 or smatlock@sfnewmexican.com Follow her on Twitter @stacimatlock.

___ (c)2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: September 7, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20140907-SF-Pueblo-s-easement-battle-raises-tensions-in-El-Rancho-0907-20140907

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican

Associated Press State & Local

September 1, 2014 Monday 3:01 PM GMT

5 things to know about New Mexico's elections

SECTION: POLITICAL NEWS; STATE AND REGIONAL

LENGTH: 551 words

DATELINE: ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) - New Mexico voters will be choosing a lot more than a governor this November. They will also be electing a new attorney general and deciding whether Democrats will retain control of the state U.S. Senate seats and the statehouse. Here are five things to know about the midterm elections:

- U.S. SENATE

Democratic U.S. Sen. Tom Udall is seeking his second term, and with a sizeable campaign fund, he's favored for an easy re-election. But Republican Allen Weh is putting up some of his personal fortune to launch an aggressive challenge. Udall is a popular former attorney general and congressman. Weh, a longtime Albuquerque businessman, is a former state Republican Party chairman and a retired Marine colonel who came in second behind Gov. Susana Martinez in the governor's primary four years ago.

- ATTORNEY GENERAL

State auditor Hector Balderas, considered a rising star in the state Democratic Party, holds a more than 20-to-1 campaign cash advantage over Republican Susan Riedel in the race for attorney general. Balderas has stockpiled more money than any other statewide office candidates, except for Republican Gov. Susana Martinez. Balderas and Riedel are seeking the post being vacated by Gary King, who is attempting to unseat Martinez. Riedel is a former prosecutor and judge from Las Cruces.

- U.S. HOUSE

All three incumbents for New Mexico's congressional seats are running for re-election. In the 1st Congressional District that covers most of Albuquerque, Democrat Michelle **Lujan** Grisham is being challenged in her bid for a second term by Republican Mike Frese, a 66-year-old scientist and small business owner from Corrales. For the 2nd Congressional District seat, Democratic three-term incumbent Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** is being challenged for a second time by Republican Jefferson Byrd of Tucumcari. In southern New Mexico, the national Democratic Congressional Committee is working to help Carlsbad lawyer Democratic attorney Roxanne "Rocky" Laura in her bid to unseat 3rd District Rep. Steve Pearce, who held the seat from 2003 to 2009, and most recently since 2011.

- LEGISLATURE

All 70 House seats are up for election this year. Twenty-five incumbents are unopposed. Republicans are eyeing the November election in hopes they can pick up enough seats to take control of the House for the first time in 60 years. Democrats hold a 37-33 advantage in the House. Democrats have a 25-17 majority in the Senate, and senators don't run for election until 2016. Republicans hope their House candidates will receive a boost this fall by having the governor on the ballot to increase turnout of GOP-leaning voters in several potentially tight races.

- SECRETARY OF STATE

One of the feistier races is that between Republican Secretary of State Dianna Duran and Democratic Bernalillo County Clerk Maggie Toulouse Oliver. They gave a preview on primary night with a squabble over how test returns ended up on a state website. Duran's office blamed the county,

saying some 88,000 Democratic votes that were part of test files were mistakenly reported by the clerk's office. County Clerk Maggie Toulouse Oliver said technicians verified the county sent only one file to state election officials Tuesday and that file included the correct results that the county posted on its own website.

LOAD-DATE: September 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

3 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

August 24, 2014 Sunday

Congress reconsiders militarized police

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. B2

LENGTH: 786 words

On a late night in June, the U.S. House of Representatives was debating a routine military spending bill when Rep. Alan Grayson offered an unusual amendment.

The Florida Democrat asked his colleagues to end a federal program that allows the U.S. military to transfer - free of charge - its high-powered weaponry and other war fighting equipment to local police.

Calling it "a growing problem throughout our country" Grayson lamented police militarization resulting from the Pentagon's 1033 program, which enables departments to acquire armored vehicles, bombs, grenade launchers, gun silencers, camouflage uniforms, helicopters, drones and more for use in policing.

"I think this is appalling," Grayson said. "Those weapons have no place in our streets regardless of who may be deploying them. I don't think this is the way I want my America to be. I think our police should act like public servants, not warriors at war."

Grayson's House colleagues quickly trounced his amendment on a 355-62 vote with New Mexico Reps. Steve Pearce, a Republican, and **Ben Ray Lujan**, a Democrat, voting against it. Democratic Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham was in Albuquerque attending a funeral and missed the vote, her spokesman said.

Opponents of the amendment argued that cash-strapped police departments need the gear and don't abuse it.

Fast forward two months to Ferguson, Mo. Suddenly members of Congress - including some from New Mexico - are changing their tune.

Ferguson police, armed with some of the military-style gear Grayson described, have clashed with protestors repeatedly since the cops' controversial Aug. 9 shooting of an unarmed man named Michael Brown.

Televised images of police-warriors confronting protestors with tear gas and rubber bullets has sparked a national debate not only about tactics, but the intimidating paramilitary equipment now commonplace in police departments across the country.

Sen. Claire McCaskill, D-Mo., has already called for a hearing to look into the 1033 program when Congress reconvenes in September.

My three-part Journal series on "mission creep" at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, published in April, described how DHS and the Pentagon funnel millions of dollars in grants and war fighting equipment to New Mexico law enforcement agencies. Neither the federal government nor the state could account for how millions had been spent on such equipment in New Mexico.

Pearce, alarmed by the Bureau of Land Management's "militarized attitude" in its standoff with Nevada Rancher Cliven Bundy this summer, said he would rethink his vote against Grayson's amendment. He voiced worry not only about militarized local cops, but the proliferation of federal police agencies such as the BLM's.

"I'm extremely concerned with the militarization of the police," Pearce told me in a phone interview. "I think it is sending exactly the wrong signal. People have to stand in the streets and object to a government that is so strong. If the vote were had today - even it had Alan Grayson's hooks in it - I might vote for it."

Lujan Grisham wondered if the paramilitary gear creates community mistrust.

"Without proper oversight and accountability, I am concerned that local law enforcement's unrestricted access to military-grade weapons and vehicles will contribute to mutual distrust between officers and the public that they have the responsibility to protect," she said. "Congress should not only establish additional safeguards against police militarization, but ensure that local law enforcement agencies have the proper equipment and training to protect themselves and the public that they serve."

Sen. Tom Udall, a Democrat and former New Mexico attorney general, said police officers should have "every tool they need ... but it must come with accountability and respect for civil liberties."

"It's appropriate for us in Congress and for leaders at every level of government to examine whether policies like the 1033 program are incentivizing an antagonistic or militaristic relationship between civilians and police," he said.

Ben Ray Lujan, D-N.M., agreed: "This situation has made it clear that a review of the policies and programs that have allowed the events of Ferguson to transpire - including the transfer of military equipment to police forces - is needed."

Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., said while the Senate has had no proposals to limit military transfers, he suggested he is open to it.

"I have real concerns that Congress has failed to properly scrutinize this program after authorizing it and would question whether the transfer of some equipment has been proportionate to local needs and the expectations of ordinary, law-abiding citizens," he said.

E-mail: mcoleman@abqjournal.com

LOAD-DATE: August 25, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

4 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

August 24, 2014 Sunday

Feds' plan to make more nuke triggers at LANL raises questions

BYLINE: Patrick Malone, The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 1492 words

Aug. 24--Los Alamos National Laboratory, birthplace of the atomic bomb, could ramp up production of triggers for nuclear weapons to levels not seen since the Cold War, if federal defense and energy officials get their way.

The federal government sees the site atop a rugged canyon cliff overlooking the vast expanse of plateaus and distant hills in Northern New Mexico as the perfect place -- really, the only one -- for an ambitious mission to massively increase production of plutonium pits -- the softball-sized cores that can have the explosive power of the Nagasaki bomb. The pits are used to set off thermonuclear reactions in weapons tens of thousands of times more powerful than the pits themselves. The new pits would not be used for new weapons, proponents of the plan say, but to replace aging pits in the nation's nuclear stockpile.

But questions abound over the proposal. Foremost among them: Are more pits needed? Thousands of pits already are warehoused at a storage facility in Texas that scientists say could be used to supply the needs of the nation's nuclear industry for many decades.

There are also questions about the costs of increased production, whether Los Alamos has the space to increase production and whether the lab has the ability to safely house the dangerous and delicate war-grade plutonium required to produce the weapon components. The lab facility designated for pit production at Los Alamos is considered too small for the levels of production officials propose, and it sits over a seismic fault.

In a report to lawmakers this month, the Congressional Research Service describes a national defense agenda to produce 30 war reserve plutonium pits per year by 2026, and up to 80 pits per year by 2030.

To put the magnitude of the strategy in perspective, the U.S. has produced a total of 30 pits -- all at Los Alamos -- between 2007 and the present. Before that, domestic pit production had been at a standstill since 1989, when federal agents stormed the Rocky Flats Plant in Colorado to investigate environmental crimes and the facility was shuttered. Rocky Flats had produced up to 2,000 pits annually during the Cold War.

One nuclear watchdog familiar with the idea said the mission at Los Alamos carries the further risk of eroding the trust of countries that, along with the United States, have committed to drawing down their nuclear stockpiles.

"There's a financial cost. There's an environmental cost. There's a cost to our identity as a country, and there's a cost to our international credibility in nonproliferation," said Greg Mello, executive director of the Los Alamos Study Group.

In the years following the closure of Rocky Flats, a combination of the shutdown and international treaties prohibiting the production of new nuclear weapons halted production of plutonium pits in the U.S. for nearly two decades. Production resumed in 2007, but only at Los Alamos, which produced 11 that year. The lab has never produced more than six in any year since then.

But the same nonproliferation treaties that halted the production of new weapons also prohibited the testing of existing stockpiles. Those provisions have created uncertainty about the reliability of the aging bombs.

One popular analogy among frustrated factions in national defense circles likens the stockpile to a rusty old car in a driveway. It might unexpectedly need to be driven someday, but turning the key to test whether it will start is strictly forbidden.

The U.S. Department of Defense, some in Congress and the National Nuclear Safety Administration -- an arm of the Department of Energy that manages the country's nuclear weapons program -- want to replace aging triggers with new ones to ensure the weapons will work if they're ever needed.

A debate has raged for years between nuclear hawks and nonproliferation advocates about whether the pits need updating. Mello and other skeptics point to a 2006 report from the JASON Defense Advisory Panel, an independent scientific group, that said the useful life of a plutonium pit is up to 100 years. That would give many of the existing pits another half-century before they would need to be replaced.

For subscribers to that theory, the roughly 15,000 plutonium pits manufactured at Rocky Flats and stored at the Pantex Plant in Amarillo, Texas, are already more than enough.

But proponents of increased production, including some members of Congress, say it is critical to have an arsenal they know will work. And having new pits would provide that confidence.

"Modernization of infrastructure and a robust plutonium science and technology program are key to our ability to respond to emerging issues and threats, to ensure safety of our facilities and personnel, and to assure the safety, security and effectiveness of the U.S. nuclear deterrent," said Kevin Roark, a spokesman for the lab, which supports the plan.

The Republican-controlled U.S. House of Representatives believed enough in the stepped-up pit production plan that it included it in the defense authorization bill adopted for fiscal year 2015.

The Congressional Research Service report makes it clear that Los Alamos is the front-runner -- if not the sole candidate -- to house those activities. It describes Plutonium Facility 4, or PF-4, at Los Alamos as "the only building in the United States with the combination of attributes required to make pits."

But the building, constructed in 1978 over a seismically active fault, would need expensive modifications to make it big enough and safe enough for increased production, the report said.

In comments at the National Republican Club of Capitol Hill in Washington last year, Jack Mansfield, a member of the federal Defense Nuclear Facility Safety Board, called the building "brittle" and not sufficiently constructed to survive a serious earthquake.

"There is a probability, albeit small, that the building could collapse with great loss of life within and with dispersal of plutonium," he said.

Another building at the lab also would have to be retrofitted to safely store between 400 and 1,760 grams of plutonium for increased production, the report says. The building is currently designed to hold 26 grams.

The congressional report makes no recommendations about how the nuclear defense complex should proceed with the strategy to increase pit production and doesn't speculate at the cost. Rather, it poses questions for Congress to consider about the steps and associated costs necessary to execute the plan.

"With NNSA, Los Alamos National Laboratory is exploring a wide spectrum of options to fulfill our mission commitments to plutonium manufacturing," LANL spokesman Roark said. "While using existing facilities both at Los Alamos and across the complex is a short-term solution, it is not sustainable for the long haul."

Mello questions the report's conclusion that Los Alamos is the best place to do the work. But he thinks the report makes clear that the decision already has been made.

"Nobody should doubt that this is a high-hazard industrial operation," he said. "The bigger it is, the more complicated it is, the more likely it is that there will be accidents."

Mello worries the shifting international landscape of nuclear posturing -- Iran's capability to produce weapons and unknowns about Russia's intentions in Ukraine -- will be leveraged to convince some members of Congress to support the plan.

And he expects little resistance from New Mexico's members of Congress, who have been largely mum on the plan.

"The citizens of Santa Fe have to wake up and realize that the identity of their metro area is tied up in this," he said. "It would only take one disaster to end community development."

Of the state's five-member congressional delegation, only the offices of U.S. Sen. Tom Udall and U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, both Democrats, answered The New Mexican's questions about the plan.

Jennifer Talhelm, a spokeswoman for Udall, said the senator supports reducing the number of nuclear weapons around the globe, but also supports replacing weapon components to ensure the safety, security and reliability of the U.S. stockpile.

"Los Alamos is the only lab capable of this work," she said.

Luján said he also embraces nonproliferation, but he believes the existing stockpile should be well maintained, and that Los Alamos should play a big role in that.

But he did not commit to a firm position on the plan described in the report and said Congress should proceed cautiously.

"While this report discusses many of the factors that go into pit production, there are a number of questions that remain," **Luján** said, "along with the need for significant discussion and research to determine the best path forward."

Contact Patrick Malone at 986-3017 or pmalone@sfnewmexican.com Follow him on Twitter @pmalonenm.

___ (c)2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: August 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20140824-SF-Feds-plan-to-make-more-nuke-triggers-at-LANL-raises-questions-0824-20140824

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican

US Official News

August 22, 2014 Friday

U.S. Department of Commerce Invests $75,000 to Help Taos County Economy and Workers

LENGTH: 408 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

The U.S. Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration (EDA) today announced a $75,000 grant to the North Central New Mexico Economic Development District (NCNMEDD) of Santa Fe, New Mexico, to provide critical technical assistance to Taos County that will help them address the economic impacts of the Chevron Molybdenum mine closure and the resultant job loss.

"The Obama administration is committed to helping communities impacted by major economic challenges develop and implement their plans to diversify, grow, and provide the critical skills that displaced workers need to compete," said U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development Jay Williams. "The EDA grant announced today will help Taos County and the Village of Questa capitalize on the opportunities available for assistance to address the mine closure."

"The closure of the mine in Questa is devastating to the workers, their families and the region, and I'm dedicated to helping the community rebuild the economy. I'm pleased that the Economic Development Administration has acted quickly to provide Taos County with funding for critical help

to maximize available federal resources and address the economic impacts of the Chevron mine closure," said U.S. Senator Tom Udall (NM). "The EDA grant will help the Village of Questa as it develops a long-term plan to grow the economy and will provide training opportunities to help workers find new jobs."

"In this difficult time for the Questa community, the mine workers, and all those impacted by the closure of the Chevron mine, these funds will assist with important efforts to create new opportunities for these hard-working men and women," said U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Luján**. "A workforce training program is a key component that will help workers get the skills and training they need to find a good job."

In August, 2014, 300 miners employed at the Chevron-owned Questa mine were laid off when the mine permanently closed. The EDA investments will provide technical assistance to Taos County to address the economic impacts of the Chevron Molybdenum mine closure and the resultant 300 displaced workforce in Questa, including building a workforce training program tailored to the interests and abilities of displaced employees.

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov

LOAD-DATE: August 23, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

6 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

August 21, 2014

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE INVESTS $75,000 TO HELP TAOS COUNTY ECONOMY AND WORKERS; Rebound in the Wake of Major Mine Operation Closure in Questa, New Mexico; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 522 words

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration (EDA) today announced a $75,000 grant to the North Central New Mexico Economic Development District (NCNMEDD) of Santa Fe, New Mexico, to provide critical technical assistance to Taos County that will help them address the economic impacts of the Chevron Molybdenum mine closure and the resultant job loss.

"The Obama administration is committed to helping communities impacted by major economic challenges develop and implement their plans to diversify, grow, and provide the critical skills that displaced workers need to compete," said U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development Jay Williams. "The EDA grant announced today will help Taos County and the Village of Questa capitalize on the opportunities available for assistance to address the mine closure."

"The closure of the mine in Questa is devastating to the workers, their families and the region, and I'm dedicated to helping the community rebuild the economy. I'm pleased that the Economic Development Administration has acted quickly to provide Taos County with funding for critical help to maximize available federal resources and address the economic impacts of the Chevron mine closure," said U.S. Senator Tom Udall (NM). "The EDA grant will help the Village of Questa as it develops a long-term plan to grow the economy and will provide training opportunities to help workers find new jobs."

"In this difficult time for the Questa community, the mine workers, and all those impacted by the closure of the Chevron mine, these funds will assist with important efforts to create new opportunities for these hard-working men and women," said U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**. "A workforce training program is a key component that will help workers get the skills and training they need to find a good job."

In August, 2014, 300 miners employed at the Chevron-owned Questa mine were laid off when the mine permanently closed. The EDA investments will provide technical assistance to Taos County to address the economic impacts of the Chevron Molybdenum mine closure and the resultant 300 displaced workforce in Questa, including building a workforce training program tailored to the interests and abilities of displaced employees.

NCNMEDD is an association of local units of government and other organizations created to encourage and allow regional cooperation on a multitude of issues.

About the U.S. Economic Development Administration (www.eda.gov)

The mission of the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting competitiveness and preparing the nation's regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. An agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce, EDA makes investments in economically distressed communities in order to create jobs for U.S. workers, promote American innovation, and accelerate long-term sustainable economic growth.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/us-department-of-commerce-invests-75000-to-help-taos-county-economy-and-workers/

LOAD-DATE: August 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Las Vegas Optic (New Mexico)

August 21, 2014 Thursday

EPA grants waiver for dam; Bradner project now eligible for federal funding

BYLINE: Mercy Lopez

SECTION: LOCAL NEWS

LENGTH: 665 words

The city of Las Vegas has overcome a major hurdle in its quest to come up with the final funding piece for its Bradner Reservoir enlargement project.

The city recently applied for $20 million in funding for the project from the New Mexico Finance Authority under the United States Environmental Protection Agency Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund program. But it was notified that under EPA rules, dams typically aren't funded with that money.

The city applied for a waiver and was able to get Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** to support the request.

At Wednesday's City Council meeting, Mayor Alfonso Ortiz announced that the EPA had granted the waiver.

"Without this waiver, we would have been hurting significantly...," Ortiz said.

While the New Mexico Finance Authority has been supportive of the city's funding request, city officials stress that the money from the Revolving Loan Fund program has not yet been allocated. The waiver simply means that the Bradner project is eligible for the funding.

Nevertheless, getting a waiver from the EPA is a major accomplishment, representatives of the New Mexico congressional delegation told city officials.

"An EPA waiver -- I think it's a small miracle that it happened," said Pam Garcia, of **Lujan**'s office.

Ortiz agreed.

"It is a small miracle," he said. "To get the waiver we requested, they had to change to rules. I'm pleasantly shocked. If there was no waiver, it would have stopped us to a large extent, financially."

Garcia also commended the city and its residents for being willing to shoulder part of the financial burden of the massive project through phased-in water rate increases. She said those rate increases demonstrate to funding agencies that the city is willing to do its part to make the project a reality.

Garcia, and Patricia Dominguez, of Heinrich's office, and Carlos Sanchez, of Udall's office, were presented with resolutions from the governing body thanking Udall, Heinrich and **Lujan** for their support of the Bradner project.

The project comes with a roughly $30 million price tag, but the city had previously secured nearly $2 million in funding from the state to design the project. State lawmakers this year appropriated another $10 million for the project. Then in June, the state Water Trust Board approved an additional $4 million for Bradner, with 90 percent of the funding in the form of a grant and the remaining 10 percent a low interest loan.

The city had previously sought $16 million from the Legislature, saying it could raise the remaining $12 million through revenue bonds.

City Utilities Director Ken Garcia said the waiver is a major milestone because it gets the city closer to completing the funding package for the project. He said the NMFA board will consider the city's funding application on Sept. 25.

He thanked the city's governing body, the congressional delegation and the community for supporting the project.

City officials have said the Bradner project will triple the amount of water storage the city currently has.

The city now has the ability to store about 1,000 acre-feet of water, which roughly equates to a four-month supply. The Bradner enlargement project would give the city the ability to store a year's worth of water, which is critical to its ability to deal with such things as prolonged droughts or a fire in the Gallinas Watershed, where the city gets most of its water.

In their letter of support for the waiver, the congressional delegation noted that Las Vegas is classified as an extremely disadvantaged community.

"Without access to this loan, the city will be required to divert funds intended for other elements of their water system, preventing them from providing a reliable source of drinking water to city residents," the delegation wrote. "The city has worked on the Bradner Dam proposal for several years and has identified enlargement of the dam as the most cost effective way to meet the city's drinking water needs."

LOAD-DATE: August 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Las Vegas Optic, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

8 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

August 21, 2014 Thursday

LUJAN ANNOUNCES $650,000 GRANT IN SUPPORT OF HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTIONS FOR UNM-TAOS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 292 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that the University of New Mexico-Taos has been selected to receive nearly $650,000 through the Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) Program. The program, which is administered through the U.S. Department of Education, provides competitive grants to help HSIs expand educational opportunities for Hispanic students and enhance their academic offerings, program quality, and institutional stability. To be designated an HSI, an institution must have an undergraduate full-time equivalent enrollment of at least 25 percent Hispanic students.

"UNM-Taos has provided a strong educational foundation for the many students it has served," Congressman **Lujan** said. "This grant will support its efforts to provide more students with a quality education and enhance the opportunities for distance learning - opportunities that are an essential component for students in rural communities."

UNM-Taos will receive $649,492 in the first year of a five-year project period that ends in 2019. The college will partner with Adams State College in southern Colorado and New Mexico Highlands University to address barriers of geography, distance, and under-funded K-16 education systems that have impacted access to postsecondary opportunities for residents in the region. The project is focused on increasing the number of Hispanics and other students enrolling and succeeding in programs at the three schools, increasing the number of distance education courses available to students in northern New Mexico, and increasing the retention, success and graduation rates of students at each institution.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: August 29, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

9 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Associated Press State & Local

August 15, 2014 Friday 2:16 AM GMT

Navajo lawmaker seeks better deal on land divide

BYLINE: FELICIA FONSECA, Associated Press

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL

LENGTH: 585 words

DATELINE: FLAGSTAFF, Ariz.

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) - A hard-fought measure pending in Congress that would split land from a former New Mexico Army base between two American Indian tribes took an uncertain turn this week when a Navajo Nation lawmaker derailed a tribal proposal supporting the move.

Navajo lawmaker Edmund Yazzie got the land split off a Tribal Council agenda, saying he could get a better deal. Most of his colleagues disagree, and the Zuni Tribe said it isn't interesting in renegotiating.

The more than 31 square miles of land at Fort Wingate was offered to the tribes after Congress shut down the Army installation in 1993. Both tribes claim aboriginal ties to it.

Navajo and Zuni officials endorsed a bill in the U.S. House that would give each tribe about half the land with access to Interstate 40 near Gallup, New Mexico, and to cultural sites. It came after nearly two decades of negotiation.

Yazzie was part of the negotiations but now says his constituents disagree with the measure introduced by Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-New Mexico, and co-sponsored by Rep. Steve Pearce, R-New Mexico. Yazzie wants the entire northern portion of the land, which would block direct access for Zuni to the interstate, and a provision that says neither tribe can build a casino.

"I don't think Washington (D.C.) should be telling us what to do," he said Thursday.

The Navajo Nation already operates a casino near Gallup, and tribal officials said they don't want direct competition should Zuni enter the casino business. The Zuni Tribe, which has an unemployment rate of about 65 percent, sent a letter to New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez earlier this year expressing interest in negotiating to open a casino.

Darrell Tsabetsaye, director of special projects for the Zuni Tribe, said Thursday that the tribe isn't jumping into gambling at this point. But, he said: "It's not fair for one sovereign nation to limit another sovereign nation on what they can do and cannot do."

If the Navajo Nation delays much further, the two tribes could end up with nothing, Tsabetsaye said.

"They're not only going to hurt their people, but they're going to hurt the Zuni Tribe as well," he said.

Clara Pratte, director of the Navajo Nation's office in Washington, D.C., said she believes Yazzie changed course on the agreement because he received unexpected backlash from his constituents. She said Navajo officials need to do a better job explaining the bill to tribal members because if the measure dies, reintroducing it is going to be a tough sell.

Lujan, Pearce and Rep. Don Young, R-Alaska, who chairs the House Subcommittee on Indian and Alaska Native Affairs, made clear in a letter to the tribes in June 2013 that the land had to be divided equitably, each tribe would get contiguous parcels and each would have access to I-40.

The letter also requested that tribal officials with decision-making authority be part of the negotiations so that any agreement would carry weight, Young's spokesman, Matt Shuckerow, said.

Lujan's spokesman, Andrew Stoddard, said the congressman is waiting for official buy-in from the tribes before moving forward with the legislation, although the agreement doesn't specifically require approval from the tribal councils.

Pearce said he's growing impatient after tribal officials agreed the split was equitable and now it appears Yazzie is reneging on the agreement.

"It has taken far more time than it should have taken, and it's unthinkable now for him to say, 'Let's open renegotiations,'" Pearce told The Associated Press.

LOAD-DATE: August 15, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

10 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

August 12, 2014 Tuesday

Lujan Statement on House Republican Bills that Undermines Human Trafficking Law and Protections for DREAMers

LENGTH: 329 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement tonight on House Republicans' legislation that fails to provide adequate funding for the humanitarian crisis at the border, weakens a human trafficking law, and eliminates protections for DREAMers.

"The legislation introduced today by House Republicans fails to live up to the values that make our nation so great. Children from Central American, children as young as five years old, have risked their lives to escape extreme violence that has gripped Guatamala, El Salvador, and the murder capital of the world, Honduras.

"Instead of working with Democrats in a bipartisan manner to pass comprehensive immigration reform that addresses the humanitarian crisis on the border and fixes our broken immigration system, House Republicans have veered even further to the extreme right. Their legislative package weakens protections for victims of violence and human trafficking, fails to provide the resources necessary to improve the situation at the border, and weakens protections for DREAMers - kids who were brought here through no fault of their own and have worked to build a better life for themselves and their communities. In addition, it makes a distressing change for victims of domestic abuse who are seeking a visa to stay in the country. By eliminating the ability for a victim to continue working during the application process, it would leave many victims unable to make a living, increasing the chances they would have to rely on their abuser during that period.

"Pope Francis said, 'this humanitarian emergency requires, as a first urgent measure, these children be welcomed and protected.' Sadly in the House of Representatives, those words and that sentiment have been ignored by my Republican colleagues."

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov

LOAD-DATE: August 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

11 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

August 10, 2014 Sunday 2:45 PM EST

Congressional Votes for New Mexico the Week of 08/01 - 08/07/2014

BYLINE: by TARGETED NEWS SERVICE, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 909 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Aug. 10 -- There were three key votes in the House this week; the House held a total of seven roll call votes in the week ending Thursday. The Senate held no roll call votes this week. The most important House vote was to pass a bill providing supplemental appropriations for the remainder of fiscal 2014, funding immigration programs, including caring for and processing unaccompanied alien children who have crossed the U.S.-Mexico border. On last Saturday, Congress began its August recess, and it is not scheduled to return to legislative session until September 8.

The Senate, by voice vote, passed the following measures: a bill (H.J. Res. 76), sponsored by Rep. Rodney P. Frelinghuysen, R-N.J., to provide $225 million, available until the end of September 2015, to provide Israel with equipment for its Iron Dome system for defending against rockets fired into Israel by Hamas and other groups; the Money Remittances Improvement Act (H.R. 4386), sponsored by Rep. Keith Ellison, D-Minn., to allow the Treasury Secretary to rely on state examinations for certain financial institutions to determine compliance with reporting requirements on monetary instrument transactions; and the Emergency Afghan Allies Extension Act (H.R. 5195), sponsored by Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., to provide 1,000 additional visas for the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa program in 2014.

The House also passed a resolution (H. Res. 683), sponsored by Rep. Juan Vargas, D-Calif., to express the sense of the House on the urgent need to protect religious minorities from persecution from the Islamic State in Iraq and Levant (ISIL) as it expands its control over areas of Iraq; and passed a resolution (H. Res. 699), sponsored by Rep. Gregory W. Meeks, D-N.Y., to welcome African leaders to the first United States-Africa Leaders' Summit and welcome African trade ministers to the 13th forum of the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

Here's a look at how area members of Congress voted over the previous week.

There were no key votes in the Senate this week.

HOUSE VOTES:

House Vote 1:

ADDRESSING INFLUX OF CENTRAL AMERICAN CHILDREN: House has passed a bill (H.R. 5230), sponsored by Rep. Harold Rogers, R-Ky., to provide $659 million of supplemental appropriations for the 2014 fiscal year. The funding would cover increased security levels at the U.S.-Mexico border, an increased capacity for immigration courts to handle the recent influx of unaccompanied children from Central America, and $197 million to care for the children while they are in U.S. custody, and change the law to ensure that unaccompanied children from countries that do not border the U.S. are treated the same, for the purpose of returning them to their countries, as unaccompanied children from Canada and Mexico. Rogers called the bill "a fair, sensible, and reasonable address of the most immediate needs on the border. It also puts in place much-needed policy changes that should stop the flow of unaccompanied children who are being put at risk during their long, dangerous journey through Mexico." A bill opponent, Rep. Nita M. Lowey, D-N.Y., said the funding was insufficient to allow immigration agencies to handle the unaccompanied children, and Lowey criticized the attempt to change immigration policy in a hurried fashion. The vote, on August 1, was 223 yeas to 189 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 2:

DEFERRED ACTION AGAINST ILLEGAL ALIEN IMMIGRANTS: The House has passed a bill (H.R. 5272), sponsored by Rep. Marsha Blackburn, R-Tenn., that would bar federal government agencies from considering applications for deferred deportation by illegal alien residents of the U.S. who arrived in the country as children and bar the agencies from authorizing those aliens to work in the U.S. Blackburn said the bill would effectively revoke a 2012 executive order from President Obama that illegitimately ordered deferred action on the illegal alien residents, a power that Blackburn said the Constitution reserves solely to Congress. A bill opponent, Rep. Kathy Castor, D-Fla., said it was "moving us farther away from immigration reform, farther away from justice, farther away from smart policy to utilize the talents of young men and women who love America, and farther away from the values America holds dear." The vote, on August 1, was 216 yeas to 192 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 3:

FUNDING ISRAEL'S MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM: The House has passed a motion sponsored by Rep. Harold Rogers, R-Ky., to concur in the Senate amendments to a bill (H.J. Res. 76), to make continuing appropriations for the National Nuclear Security Administration for fiscal 2014. The amendments would provide $225 million, available until the end of September 2015, to provide Israel with equipment for its Iron Dome system for defending against rockets fired into Israel by Hamas and other groups. There was no debate on the House floor. The vote, on August 1, was 395 yeas to 8 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

For more information about Targeted News Service products and services, please contact: Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service LLC, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://targetednews.com.

-1171976

LOAD-DATE: August 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

12 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

August 9, 2014 Saturday

Martinez campaign ad attacks King's record in Legislature

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C1

LENGTH: 476 words

In her most recent TV ad, Gov. Susana Martinez's re-election campaign takes aim at Democratic opponent Gary King's voting record and last name.

The ad, which was launched this week, portrays King wearing a crown while a narrator says, "It's good to be the King."

The ad describes a tax increase package that King voted for in 1987- his first year in a 12-year stint in the state House of Representatives - as the "largest in history."

However, 2010 tax hikes signed into law by Martinez's predecessor, Democratic Gov. Bill Richardson, during a lean state budget year were actually larger, dollar-wise, than the 1987 package proposed by then-Republican Gov. Garrey Carruthers.

King, now New Mexico's attorney general, said Friday he does not regret voting in favor of the increase on gasoline and income taxes, among others.

"Had we not raised taxes, we would have had to significantly curtail the (public) education system," King told the Journal.

The ad also targets King's votes on several legislator compensation measures, saying, "... Gary King took good care of himself. King repeatedly voted to raise his own pay. Voted to sweeten his taxpayer-funded retirement."

King said he did not recall voting to increase the size of legislative pensions, but acknowledged supporting a bill that would have given a salary to lawmakers. He said he still supports such a concept.

- By Dan Boyd, dboyd@abqjournal. com

Democrats in New Mexico's congressional delegation have criticized the state Human Services Department's shakeup of the behavioral health system and asked a federal agency to keep closer tabs on the department.

Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham said this week there were irregularities in HSD's suspension of Medicaid payments to 15 non-profits, 12 of which were later replaced by Arizona firms.

They said the audit that prompted the suspensions last year was flawed, there was a lack of transparency, and the shakeup jeopardized services to some of the most vulnerable New Mexicans.

In a letter to Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell, the Democrats said they had "serious questions" about whether HSD has an effective process to determine whether fraud allegations are credible. They called the payment suspensions "a de facto termination from the state's Medicaid program without any meaningful due process."

The Democrats urged HHS to "vigorously increase oversight" of the suspension process and its aftermath.

There was a barbed response from Republican Gov. Susana Martinez's administration.

"It's no surprise that Washington politicians don't see a problem" with improper use of Medicaid money, "but we will continue to root out waste, fraud and abuse to ensure Medicaid funds are protected for those who need it most," said HSD's Matt Kennicott.

-By Deborah Baker, dbaker@ abqjournal.com

LOAD-DATE: August 11, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Associated Press State & Local

August 9, 2014 Saturday 12:23 AM GMT

Democrats seek oversight of state Medicaid agency

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL

LENGTH: 152 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) - Democrats in New Mexico's congressional delegation are asking for more federal oversight of the state Human Services Department because it suspended Medicaid payments to 15 mental health providers last year.

Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and **Ben Ray Lujan** made the request to U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell.

The state suspended payments because of fraud and overbilling allegations, and contracted with Arizona companies to take over management of most of the suspended providers.

The system changed in January as Medicaid managed care companies assumed responsibility for behavioral services and contracting with providers.

The congressional letter expressed concerns that services have been disrupted.

But Human Services spokesman Matt Kennicott said more people are receiving services since the transition to the Arizona providers.

LOAD-DATE: August 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

14 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

August 8, 2014 Friday

Congressional Dems seek oversight of state Human Services

BYLINE: Patrick Malone, The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 630 words

Aug. 08--In a letter to President Barack Obama's Cabinet secretary for Health and Human Services, Democrats in New Mexico's congressional delegation on Wednesday criticized Republican Gov. Susana Martinez's abrupt shake-up last year of the state's behavioral health care system.

U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham chided the New Mexico Human Services Department, accusing it of prematurely ousting more than a dozen behavioral health providers without due process and causing disruptions in the providers' employment and care for the state's mentally ill and people with substance abuse problems.

"We have heard from numerous constituents including families, consumers, advocates and providers about a frayed behavioral health system," stated the letter to U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell.

The state Human Services Department responded by defending its actions.

"If these politicians want to stand on the side of defending and excusing rampant overbilling in Medicaid, and the siphoning of millions of Medicaid dollars away from those most in need, that's their prerogative," department spokesman Matt Kennicott said. "Meanwhile, we have worked diligently to stop this abuse of taxpayer money and ensure that New Mexicans in need are receiving behavioral health services."

In June 2013, the state Human Services Department froze funding to 15 New Mexico-based providers of behavioral health services, citing credible allegations of Medicaid billing fraud totaling up to $36 million. Three of the companies reached settlement agreements with the state and resumed providing services.

The congressional delegation referenced inconsistencies in the damning audit, which State Auditor Hector Balderas recently discussed with a panel of state lawmakers.

Reviews of two of the terminated companies by the New Mexico Attorney General's Office found no proof of fraud, although the investigation into one of the companies, Santa Fe-based Easter Seals El Mirador, has been reopened at the request of the Human Services Department.

"If a state can establish a credible allegation of fraud based on a haphazard determination of potential overbilling," the letter read, "there is nothing preventing it from shutting down any statewide network of safety net providers based on what could turn out to be baseless allegations."

The New Mexico providers were replaced by five Arizona companies, which received $24 million in state support to take over behavioral health services. A review of payment records to the company conducted by The New Mexican showed that executives billed the state between $200 and $300 per hour for tasks such as creating security badges for employees and waiting for flights in airports. Additionally, one of the Arizona companies, Agave Health, billed the state for services months before the audit accusing the New Mexico providers of fraud had been completed.

Now, Easter Seals El Mirador and The Counseling Center of Alamogordo, which the Attorney General's Office cleared of fraud, have initiated legal actions seeking Medicaid funds that were withheld from them by the state.

The congressional delegation urged the federal government to take a more active oversight role in the state's behavioral health system.

"We continue to hear reports of lack of access to services for this very vulnerable population and want to work with you to ensure that anyone who needs care gets it without delay," the members of Congress wrote.

Contact Patrick Malone at 986-3017 or pmalone@sfnewmexican.com Follow him on Twitter @pmalonenm.

___ (c)2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: August 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20140808-SF-Congressional-Dems-seek-oversight-of-state-Human-Services-0808-20140808

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican

US Official News

August 4, 2014 Monday

Lujan Statement on House Republican Bills that Undermines Human Trafficking Law and Protections for DREAMers

LENGTH: 329 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement tonight on House Republicans' legislation that fails to provide adequate funding for the humanitarian crisis at the border, weakens a human trafficking law, and eliminates protections for DREAMers.

"The legislation introduced today by House Republicans fails to live up to the values that make our nation so great. Children from Central American, children as young as five years old, have risked their lives to escape extreme violence that has gripped Guatamala, El Salvador, and the murder capital of the world, Honduras.

"Instead of working with Democrats in a bipartisan manner to pass comprehensive immigration reform that addresses the humanitarian crisis on the border and fixes our broken immigration system, House Republicans have veered even further to the extreme right. Their legislative package weakens protections for victims of violence and human trafficking, fails to provide the resources necessary to improve the situation at the border, and weakens protections for DREAMers - kids who were brought here through no fault of their own and have worked to build a better life for themselves and their communities. In addition, it makes a distressing change for victims of domestic abuse who are seeking a visa to stay in the country. By eliminating the ability for a victim to continue working during the application process, it would leave many victims unable to make a living, increasing the chances they would have to rely on their abuser during that period.

"Pope Francis said, 'this humanitarian emergency requires, as a first urgent measure, these children be welcomed and protected.' Sadly in the House of Representatives, those words and that sentiment have been ignored by my Republican colleagues."

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov

LOAD-DATE: August 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

August 4, 2014 Monday

Lujan: House Republicans Want to Weaken Protections for Children Fleeing Human Trafficking and Go After DREAMers

LENGTH: 340 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District and First Vice Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) joined members of the House Democratic Leadership and CHC at a press conference today in the Capitol. **Luján** discussed House Republicans' attempts to weaken human trafficking laws and DREAMer protections as part of legislation addressing the humanitarian crisis at the border. Below are his remarks. Click here to watch the press conference. **Luján** also spoke on the House floor earlier this morning about this important issue. His speech is available here.

"Yesterday we saw a House Republican conference that was in disarray because Ted Cruz and a sizable number of their members were not satisfied with a bill that they drafted that would strip away due process from children who are trying to escape the most unimaginable violence that has gripped Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras - the murder capital of the world.

"The stories of violence, sexual abuse, and human trafficking are heartbreaking. You've reported on them. But it wasn't enough for House Republicans to weaken anti human trafficking laws, taking away the opportunity for these young people to tell their stories - they'll be sending them back to the very traffickers and rapists they are trying to escape.

"Today we are hearing from House Republicans that now they want to add provisions to go after DREAMers, children who were brought to this country through no fault of their own and have grown up here in the only home they have known, contributing to the greatest nation in the world.

"Rather than working with Democrats in a bipartisan way, House Republicans again are giving into the most extreme wing of their party to bring a mean-spirited bill that will break up families and go after those who want to build a better life for themselves, their families, and their communities.

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov

LOAD-DATE: August 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

17 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

August 4, 2014 Monday

Lujan: House Republicans to Sue the President Instead of Addressing the Priorities of the American People

LENGTH: 255 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** released the following statement today after House Republicans moved forward with legislation supporting a lawsuit against the President rather than addressing critical issues facing the country.

"Today House Republicans hit a new low with their frivolous lawsuit against President Obama. Rather than spend time bringing legislation to the floor that grows our economy, spurs job creation, makes college more affordable, or fixes our broken immigration system, House Republicans wasted more time playing politics and attacking President Obama for doing what they have failed to do - act on the pressing issues facing our country.

"The American people want leaders who will work on real solutions to strengthen the middle class and create good jobs in our communities. All House Republicans have to offer is a lawsuit against the President that has been widely criticized by numerous legal scholars. House Democrats have an agenda to strengthen the middle class by providing affordable, quality education; investing in roads and bridges; ensuring equal work for equal pay; and providing incentives to create good jobs right here at home. With only days left before the House begins the August district work period, our focus should be on the priorities of the American people, not a political stunt aimed to appease members of the Tea Party."

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov

LOAD-DATE: August 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

August 4, 2014 Monday

Lujan Statement on Passage of VA Reform Legislation

LENGTH: 252 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after the passage of the Conference Report for the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act - legislation to address the serious problems impacting veterans' health care at VA facilities across the country.

"The disturbing reports of misconduct at VA facilities in Albuquerque and across the country are deeply disappointing and strike at the very heart of our commitment to our veterans. This legislation takes important steps that can help rebuild the trust of America's veterans by providing key funding to reduce the VA backlog, hire new medical personnel at VA hospitals and clinics, and allow the VA to lease new medical facilities.

"This legislation will not fix all of the problems plaguing the VA and I would have preferred a bill that includes more funding for our veterans, but it addresses many of the failures that left veterans without timely access to health care, and it is the beginning of what must be an ongoing process to make systematic reforms that honor the sacrifice of the men and women who honorably served our country. It is critical that the Senate also passes this legislation before leaving for the August district work period so we can get it to the President's desk and signed into law."

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov

LOAD-DATE: August 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

August 4, 2014 Monday

Lujan Takes to House Floor to Discusses Humanitarian Crisis at the Border and Human Trafficking

LENGTH: 681 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor yesterday evening during debate on a number of bills aimed at combating human and sex trafficking. **Luján** highlighted the importance of protecting children from violence and the need to do the same for children who are fleeing extreme violence in Central America. Below are **Luján**'s remarks.

"I rise today in support of this legislation and many other bills we are considering that deal with human and sex trafficking - an important issue, a critical issue - especially as it relates to protecting children who are too often victims of abuse and violence, and I commend the Speaker for bringing these bills up for a vote.

"Mr. Speaker, as I was watching the debate this evening I couldn't help but come back to the floor. I hope all of my colleagues that are speaking tonight on the importance of passing these human trafficking bills will join us next week to talk about the importance of protecting children. It was with alarm, Mr. Speaker, that I read a letter that Speaker Boehner penned to President Barack Obama - that appears that my Republican colleagues when they left the meeting earlier this afternoon, are asking to take away the very protections from children [from] a law that was passed in 2008 - [yet they] are asking to protect these children tonight.

"So I come today to ask my colleagues to read the transcripts, to hear the debate this evening, and to think about it - to go home this weekend and whatever faith that we may be, that we pray about it and we talk to our pastors and our religious leaders about it. Because these kids that we are going to be talking about next week are the very children that need protections as well.

"The motivation to pass these bills today is the same motivation that moved this body to pass legislation that became law in 2008 - to protect children. This law has since become the subject of much condemnation from many of my Republican colleagues as we discuss the humanitarian crisis on the border.

"We are here on this floor debating legislation to protect children, yet many of my colleagues want to take away due process from children who are trying to escape unimaginable violence in Central America. In Honduras, the murder capital of the world, the violence was captured in a story recently, and I apologize for the graphic nature of this story.

"The story that was reported on - 'during a recent late-night visit to the San Pedro Sula morgue, more than 60 bodies, all victims of violence, were seen piled in a heap, each wrapped in a brown plastic bag. While picking bullets out of a 15-year-old boy shot 15 times, technicians discussed how they regularly received corpses of children under 10, and sometimes as young as 2. Last week, in nearby Santa Barbara, an 11-year-old had his throat slit by other children, because he did not pay a 50-cent extortion fee.'

"The doctor at the morgue said, before we saw children being killed because they were at the scene when gangs were coming to prey on families and they just happened to be there. Now we're seeing kids kill kids. There are hundreds of other stories like this, of which I will ask to submit into the record with extraneous materials, but Mr. Speaker, I beg and I plead of my colleagues - each and every one of us that may or may not have been here when the law was passed, but those of us who are here now - these are kids. And I know that you and I, Mr. Speaker, that we love children and we want to make sure they are not victims of these horrific crimes.

"Please, please take this weekend and ask the Speaker [Boehner] to remove the provisions that would take away the due process from these children. And as we pass these bills together, let us not forget what brought this Congress together in 2008 to protect these children. Let us show the same compassion that is the driving force of these bills tonight."

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov

LOAD-DATE: August 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

20 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

August 3, 2014 Sunday

NM delegation talks pot policy

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. B2

LENGTH: 753 words

Did you see the "Meet the Press" segment on marijuana legalization last Sunday?

If not, you didn't miss much - except the irritating spectacle of smug Beltway insiders making lame jokes about one of the most interesting public policy experiments of our time.

Host David Gregory, reportedly on thin ice because of his cellar-dwelling ratings, kicked off what could have been a lively debate by mentioning last Sunday's landmark New York Times editorial calling for federal pot legalization.

Times columnist David Brooks, who recently wrote a tortured piece explaining how he and his friends used to enjoy smoking weed but now he thinks it's bad, set the condescending tone.

"I don't know what they've been smoking up there in the (Times) office. The haze is...," at which point the panel erupted in chuckles.

"When I think of grass, I think of something to walk on," Judy Woodruff of PBS chimed in. "I think of pot as something you put a plant in."

Thanks for that insight, Judy. As "elite" media pundits embarrass themselves on national television with silly, self-satisfied bromides, cities and states are wrestling with the very serious notion of legalizing, decriminalizing or otherwise changing marijuana laws.

In Colorado and Washington, pot possession is now legal. In Albuquerque and Santa Fe, residents are scrambling to put decriminalization on the ballot. As of this month in Washington, D.C., possession of an ounce of pot or less is punishable by a $25 fine.

Members of Congress have long been reluctant to even discuss, much less legislate on, the issue. Last week, I briefly interviewed New Mexico's congressional delegation on pot policy. To their credit they took my questions seriously, but with the exception of Rep. Steve Pearce, the delegation's lone Republican, none took a firm stand for or against changing the federal law.

"I think it's time that it becomes a part of our policy debate," said Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, a Democrat. "Because Congress has done nothing about it - we don't want to touch it - you've got local communities and states trying to figure out what to do.

"We've got more myths about marijuana than we do facts. I'm encouraged that the FDA is now studying marijuana so we'll have more information. I'm certainly supportive of New Mexico or anybody else who wants to get that on the ballot and see what voters think, but there are always unintended consequences. I'm aware of that."

Democratic Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich advocated a wait and see approach.

"Why don't we watch Washington and Colorado for a couple of years and see what the results are there," Udall said. "I think that's a very legitimate approach."

Udall, a former attorney general, said his understanding is that police in New Mexico rarely jail people for small amounts of marijuana, something he described as "de facto" decriminalization.

"The law enforcement community has been very smart to actually decriminalize, in fact," Udall said. "If you ask the question 'do people go to jail for a small amount of personal marijuana?' the answer in New Mexico as far as I know, I don't think you're going to find anybody. Small amounts, personal use in the home you're not going to find anything."

Heinrich acknowledged that pot is less dangerous than cocaine, methamphetamine or other hard drugs.

"But I'm also cautious about where we're going, and before people jump forward and assume they have all the answers on this stuff it would be smart to look at the states that are starting down this road, and to take some time and look at what works and what does not," he said. "I think we need to be cautious."

Pearce said he is staunchly opposed to any relaxation of marijuana laws.

"Anytime you're going to legalize stuff that makes it harder to raise families and provide a productive workforce you just undermine the long-term prosperity of the nation," Pearce said.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, a Democrat, said "the data is showing there should definitely be more support for decriminalization in some instances, but I still want to see everything that's out there."

Lujan also pointed to a 2013 vote of Congress to remove hemp - a type of cannabis sativa used to make rope, wax, paper and other products - from the list of federally controlled substances as a sign of change.

"I would say that's a reflection that at least some elected officials that represent the United States have changed their approach to the way they are looking at this subject and are open to conversation," **Lujan** said.

E-mail: mcoleman@abqjournal.com

LOAD-DATE: August 4, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

States News Service

August 2, 2014 Saturday

ADVOCACY 101: HOW TO ASK MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO SUPPORT H.R. 4190

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 1298 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, DC

The following information was released by the American Pharmacists Association (APhA):

APhA Trustees Tery Baskin, PharmD, FAPhA, and Nicki Hilliard, PharmD, MHSA, BCNP, FAPhA, visit all of the Arkansas congressional offices on Capitol Hill on June 23 to seek support for provider status legislation (H.R. 4190).

Melody Ryan, PharmD, MPH, BCPS, CGP, FCCP, FAPhA, of Lexington, KY, recently went to Capitol Hill for the first time to meet with her Members of Congress or their staff in their Washington, DC offices. During the meetings, she emphasized that H.R. 4190 would provide patients in her largely rural state expanded access to health care through their pharmacists.

Ryan visited the offices of Rep. Andy Barr (R-KY) and Sens. Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and Rand Paul (R-KY), and described the meetings as "positive with some interest." Ryan is a professor in the Departments of Pharmacy Practice and Science and Neurology and Director of International Professional Student Education at the University of Kentucky College of Pharmacy. She practices in neurology ambulatory care.

"I didn't feel that it was much different than talking with patients," Ryan told Pharmacy Today. "It was just policy instead of medicines that I was discussing."

Ideal time for unified voice

Now is the time for pharmacists and student pharmacists to advocate for H.R. 4190 to their Members of Congress.

The month of August is traditionally a quiet time in Washington, DC, with Members of Congress back home in their congressional districts and states. It's an ideal time for pharmacists and student pharmacists to bring their messages directly to lawmakers in a unified voice.

APhA is part of the Patient Access to Pharmacists' Care Coalition, whose mission is to develop and help enact federal legislation that would enable patient access to, and coverage for, Medicare Part B services by state-licensed pharmacists in medically underserved communities. H.R. 4190 was introduced March 11, 2014, by Reps. Brett Guthrie (R-KY), G.K. Butterfield (D-NC), and Todd Young (R-IN). As Today went to press, the bill had amassed 82 cosponsors.

As the President of the APhA Academy of Pharmaceutical Research and Science and an APhA Trustee, Ryan hit the Hill in conjunction with APhA's Board of Trustees on June 23. That day, the Board fanned out across House and Senate offices to talk to their legislators and their staff about provider status.

On the House side, APhA Board members asked representatives and their staff to cosponsor H.R. 4190, wrote APhA Executive Vice President and CEO Thomas E. Menighan, BSPharm, MBA, ScD (Hon), FAPhA, in a June 30 CEO Blog post on pharmacist.com. On the Senate side, although a bill in the Senate had not yet been introduced as Today went to press, APhA Board members informed senators and their staff about pharmacists' abilities and knowledge and updated them on H.R. 4190.

"H.R. 4190 and provider status broadly remains our number one advocacy priority," said APhA President Matthew C. Osterhaus, BSPharm, FASCP, FAPhA, co-owner of Osterhaus Pharmacy in Maquoketa, IA.

Ways of building relationships

Pharmacists and student pharmacists can find out whether their Member of Congress is a cosponsor of H.R. 4190 at https://beta.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-bill/4190/cosponsors. If not, they can ask their Members of Congress to support H.R. 4190 in a number of different ways.

"You don't have to go to Washington, DC, to advocate with your Member of Congress," said APhA Senior Vice President of Government Affairs and Pharmacy Practice Stacie Maass, BSPharm, JD.

Beyond visiting a Member of Congress's office in Washington, DC, a few ways to advocate include sending a letter; making a phone call; and visiting a district office. These are described below.

More ways to advocate for H.R. 4190 include arranging a pharmacy visit; becoming a member of and getting involved in APhA and other pharmacy associations at the national, state, and local levels; giving to any pharmacy association's political action committee (PAC); and sharing a story through APhA's Pharmacists Provide Care campaign. For more information about these or for information about the APhA-PAC, visit PharmacistsProvideCare.com.

"To get in at the grassroots level and try to change things, working both with your representative's local office and your state pharmacy association is incredibly important," said Ernie Dole, PharmD, PhC, a clinical pharmacist at University of New Mexico Hospital's Pain Consultation and Treatment Center. "That way, you can begin to build relationships so that when issues like this come up, the staffer knows who you are."

And here's Dole's advice to pharmacists and student pharmacists who are embarking on political advocacy for the first time: "Just do it."

Letters, phone calls

A letter tool is available through APhA's website. APhA members can log in to compose and send a message to their legislator.

"I used [the letter tool] and then I tweaked it," said Nicki Hilliard, PharmD, MHSA, BCNP, FAPhA, a professor of pharmacy practice at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences College of Pharmacy and a leader in nuclear pharmacy practice. She is President of the APhA Academy of Pharmacy Practice and Management and an APhA Trustee. "I made it more personal. I told them who I am and my position, and made it relate to the state of Arkansas."

Dale Tinker, Executive Director of the New Mexico Pharmacists Association, pointed out that all three members of his state's congressional delegation in the U.S. House of Representatives are cosponsors of H.R. 4190. Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (D-NM) cosigned April 28, Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-NM) cosigned May 19, and Rep. Stevan Pearce (R-NM) cosigned July 10. Several pharmacists already had close relationships with their Members of Congress and reached out with personal phone calls to seek their support for the bill, Tinker said.

Dole and Joe Anderson, PharmD, PhC, both convinced **Lujan** Grisham to cosponsor the bill. **Lujan** Grisham "has always been a strong supporter of pharmacy," Dole said. "I talked to one of her staff members about H.R. 4190. I had dealt with her staffer before and had her phone number, so I just called and sort of picked up the conversation," he continued. "It was easy just to call her specifically for that topic. I had some level of credibility, and so her staffer asked what was the bill about, and how it would help the health care of New Mexicans." The congressional staffer got the bill number, did some research on her own, and took that to**Lujan** Grisham.

District offices

In late June, the district staff of Reps. Judy Chu (D-CA), Linda Sanchez (D-CA), Adam Schiff (D-CA), and Brad Sherman (D-CA) met with several student pharmacists, pharmacists, and other health professionals to learn about H.R. 4190, according to Daniel Kudryashov, a 2015 PharmD candidate at the University of Southern California School of Pharmacy and the recipient of the 2014 APhA Good Government Student Pharmacist of the Year Award.

"Setting up a meeting in a local congressional district office is very simple," Kudryashov said. "I just called the congressional district office and inquired about the office scheduler's e-mail address. Then I sent an e-mail to the scheduler, directly stating that I wanted to schedule a meeting with the Congressman or a member of staff. I also noted the reason for my meeting request, the names of the other constituents who would be attending, and the date I wanted to schedule the meeting on. That was it! After a short e-mail exchange, the meeting was scheduled."

Talking points for H.R. 4190

Talking points, maps, and more information about H.R. 4190 are available at PharmacistsProvideCare.com and at www.pharmacist.com/get-facts-provider-status.

Diana Yap, Editorial Director

LOAD-DATE: August 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

States News Service

August 2, 2014 Saturday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON HOUSE REPUBLICAN BILLS THAT UNDERMINES HUMAN TRAFFICKING LAW AND PROTECTIONS FOR DREAMERS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 316 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement tonight on House Republicans' legislation that fails to provide adequate funding for the humanitarian crisis at the border, weakens a human trafficking law, and eliminates protections for DREAMers.

"The legislation introduced today by House Republicans fails to live up to the values that make our nation so great. Children from Central American, children as young as five years old, have risked their lives to escape extreme violence that has gripped Guatamala, El Salvador, and the murder capital of the world, Honduras.

"Instead of working with Democrats in a bipartisan manner to pass comprehensive immigration reform that addresses the humanitarian crisis on the border and fixes our broken immigration system, House Republicans have veered even further to the extreme right. Their legislative package weakens protections for victims of violence and human trafficking, fails to provide the resources necessary to improve the situation at the border, and weakens protections for DREAMers - kids who were brought here through no fault of their own and have worked to build a better life for themselves and their communities. In addition, it makes a distressing change for victims of domestic abuse who are seeking a visa to stay in the country. By eliminating the ability for a victim to continue working during the application process, it would leave many victims unable to make a living, increasing the chances they would have to rely on their abuser during that period.

"Pope Francis said, "this humanitarian emergency requires, as a first urgent measure, these children be welcomed and protected.' Sadly in the House of Representatives, those words and that sentiment have been ignored by my Republican colleagues."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: August 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

August 1, 2014 Friday

NM representatives split votes on airfare advertising; Pearce backed House bill, Lujan Grisham didn't, Luján missed voice vote

BYLINE: JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

SECTION: BUSINESS; Pg. B1

LENGTH: 244 words

New Mexico's three U.S. representatives split their support earlier this week - on a voice vote in the House - that rejected consumers' complaints and passed legislation letting airline advertising emphasize the base price of tickets, before taxes and fees are added.

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., did not support it.

"Congress must both ensure that consumers are protected and provided accurate, accessible pricing information, and airlines are treated fairly," **Lujan** Grisham said. "As currently written, the Transparent Airfares Act falls short in balancing those fundamental goals."

Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., said he supported the legislation because "it provided more transparency," according to a spokeswoman.

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., supported it, but he was not present on the floor for the voice vote, not uncommon for that kind of proceeding.

"Rep. **Luján** supports truth in billing and is OK with airlines breaking down the cost as long as it is abundantly clear what the total cost of the ticket is before a consumer purchases it," said Andrew Stoddard, a spokesman for **Luján**. "We'll watch to see how this is implemented if it is signed into law."

The legislation would roll back federal regulations that since 2012 have required ads to prominently display the full ticket price.

Under the bill, the base price would have to be the one most prominently shown in ads as long as taxes and fees are displayed separately, such as in footnotes or pop-up ads.

LOAD-DATE: August 1, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS Airlines could advertise the base fare price - before taxes and fees are added - under a bill passed by the U.S. House.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Congressional Documents and Publications

August 1, 2014

LUJAN STATEMENT ON HOUSE REPUBLICAN BILLS THAT UNDERMINES HUMAN TRAFFICKING LAW AND PROTECTIONS FOR DREAMERS;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 334 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement tonight on House Republicans' legislation that fails to provide adequate funding for the humanitarian crisis at the border, weakens a human trafficking law, and eliminates protections for DREAMers.

"The legislation introduced today by House Republicans fails to live up to the values that make our nation so great. Children from Central American, children as young as five years old, have risked their lives to escape extreme violence that has gripped Guatamala, El Salvador, and the murder capital of the world, Honduras.

"Instead of working with Democrats in a bipartisan manner to pass comprehensive immigration reform that addresses the humanitarian crisis on the border and fixes our broken immigration system, House Republicans have veered even further to the extreme right. Their legislative package weakens protections for victims of violence and human trafficking, fails to provide the resources necessary to improve the situation at the border, and weakens protections for DREAMers - kids who were brought here through no fault of their own and have worked to build a better life for themselves and their communities. In addition, it makes a distressing change for victims of domestic abuse who are seeking a visa to stay in the country. By eliminating the ability for a victim to continue working during the application process, it would leave many victims unable to make a living, increasing the chances they would have to rely on their abuser during that period.

"Pope Francis said, 'this humanitarian emergency requires, as a first urgent measure, these children be welcomed and protected.' Sadly in the House of Representatives, those words and that sentiment have been ignored by my Republican colleagues."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-house-republican-bills-that-undermines-human-trafficking-law-and-protections-for-dreamers/

LOAD-DATE: August 4, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

August 1, 2014

LUJAN: HOUSE REPUBLICANS WANT TO WEAKEN PROTECTIONS FOR CHILDREN FLEEING HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND GO AFTER DREAMERS;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 362 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and First Vice Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) joined members of the House Democratic Leadership and CHC at a press conference today in the Capitol. **Lujan** discussed House Republicans' attempts to weaken human trafficking laws and DREAMer protections as part of legislation addressing the humanitarian crisis at the border. Below are his remarks. Click here to watch the press conference. **Lujan** also spoke on the House floor earlier this morning about this important issue. His speech is available here.

"Yesterday we saw a House Republican conference that was in disarray because Ted Cruz and a sizable number of their members were not satisfied with a bill that they drafted that would strip away due process from children who are trying to escape the most unimaginable violence that has gripped Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras - the murder capital of the world.

"The stories of violence, sexual abuse, and human trafficking are heartbreaking. You've reported on them. But it wasn't enough for House Republicans to weaken anti human trafficking laws, taking away the opportunity for these young people to tell their stories - they'll be sending them back to the very traffickers and rapists they are trying to escape.

"Today we are hearing from House Republicans that now they want to add provisions to go after DREAMers, children who were brought to this country through no fault of their own and have grown up here in the only home they have known, contributing to the greatest nation in the world.

"Rather than working with Democrats in a bipartisan way, House Republicans again are giving into the most extreme wing of their party to bring a mean-spirited bill that will break up families and go after those who want to build a better life for themselves, their families, and their communities.

"As the Conference of Catholic Bishops said, [it's like] sending them back into a burning building."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-house-republicans-want-to-weaken-protections-for-children-fleeing-human-trafficking-and-go-after-dreamers/

LOAD-DATE: August 4, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

August 1, 2014 Friday

LUJAN: HOUSE REPUBLICANS WANT TO WEAKEN PROTECTIONS FOR CHILDREN FLEEING HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND GO AFTER DREAMERS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 344 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and First Vice Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) joined members of the House Democratic Leadership and CHC at a press conference today in the Capitol. **Lujan** discussed House Republicans' attempts to weaken human trafficking laws and DREAMer protections as part of legislation addressing the humanitarian crisis at the border. Below are his remarks. Click here to watch the press conference. **Lujan** also spoke on the House floor earlier this morning about this important issue. His speech is available here.

"Yesterday we saw a House Republican conference that was in disarray because Ted Cruz and a sizable number of their members were not satisfied with a bill that they drafted that would strip away due process from children who are trying to escape the most unimaginable violence that has gripped Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras - the murder capital of the world.

"The stories of violence, sexual abuse, and human trafficking are heartbreaking. You've reported on them. But it wasn't enough for House Republicans to weaken anti human trafficking laws, taking away the opportunity for these young people to tell their stories - they'll be sending them back to the very traffickers and rapists they are trying to escape.

"Today we are hearing from House Republicans that now they want to add provisions to go after DREAMers, children who were brought to this country through no fault of their own and have grown up here in the only home they have known, contributing to the greatest nation in the world.

"Rather than working with Democrats in a bipartisan way, House Republicans again are giving into the most extreme wing of their party to bring a mean-spirited bill that will break up families and go after those who want to build a better life for themselves, their families, and their communities.

"As the Conference of Catholic Bishops said, [it's like] sending them back into a burning building."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: August 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

August 1, 2014 Friday 3:30 AM EST

Lujan Statement on House Republican Bills that Undermines Human Trafficking Law and Protections for DREAMers

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 325 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement tonight on House Republicans' legislation that fails to provide adequate funding for the humanitarian crisis at the border, weakens a human trafficking law, and eliminates protections for DREAMers.

"The legislation introduced today by House Republicans fails to live up to the values that make our nation so great. Children from Central American, children as young as five years old, have risked their lives to escape extreme violence that has gripped Guatamala, El Salvador, and the murder capital of the world, Honduras.

"Instead of working with Democrats in a bipartisan manner to pass comprehensive immigration reform that addresses the humanitarian crisis on the border and fixes our broken immigration system, House Republicans have veered even further to the extreme right. Their legislative package weakens protections for victims of violence and human trafficking, fails to provide the resources necessary to improve the situation at the border, and weakens protections for DREAMers - kids who were brought here through no fault of their own and have worked to build a better life for themselves and their communities. In addition, it makes a distressing change for victims of domestic abuse who are seeking a visa to stay in the country. By eliminating the ability for a victim to continue working during the application process, it would leave many victims unable to make a living, increasing the chances they would have to rely on their abuser during that period.

"Pope Francis said, 'this humanitarian emergency requires, as a first urgent measure, these children be welcomed and protected.' Sadly in the House of Representatives, those words and that sentiment have been ignored by my Republican colleagues."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140802-4818499 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: August 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

28 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

August 1, 2014 Friday 3:30 AM EST

Lujan: House Republicans Want to Weaken Protections for Children Fleeing Human Trafficking and Go After DREAMers

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 352 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and First Vice Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) joined members of the House Democratic Leadership and CHC at a press conference today in the Capitol. **Lujan** discussed House Republicans' attempts to weaken human trafficking laws and DREAMer protections as part of legislation addressing the humanitarian crisis at the border. Below are his remarks. Click here to watch the press conference. **Lujan** also spoke on the House floor earlier this morning about this important issue. His speech is available here.

"Yesterday we saw a House Republican conference that was in disarray because Ted Cruz and a sizable number of their members were not satisfied with a bill that they drafted that would strip away due process from children who are trying to escape the most unimaginable violence that has gripped Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras - the murder capital of the world.

"The stories of violence, sexual abuse, and human trafficking are heartbreaking. You've reported on them. But it wasn't enough for House Republicans to weaken anti human trafficking laws, taking away the opportunity for these young people to tell their stories - they'll be sending them back to the very traffickers and rapists they are trying to escape.

"Today we are hearing from House Republicans that now they want to add provisions to go after DREAMers, children who were brought to this country through no fault of their own and have grown up here in the only home they have known, contributing to the greatest nation in the world.

"Rather than working with Democrats in a bipartisan way, House Republicans again are giving into the most extreme wing of their party to bring a mean-spirited bill that will break up families and go after those who want to build a better life for themselves, their families, and their communities.

"As the Conference of Catholic Bishops said, [it's like] sending them back into a burning building."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140802-4818500 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: August 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

29 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

August 1, 2014 Friday 12:02 AM EST

Lujan Introduces Bill to Address Ongoing Land Status Issues in Northwestern New Mexico

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 145 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The Navajo Nation Washington Office, a federally-recognized Native American tribe, issued the following news release:

On July 23, Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M (http://**lujan**.house.gov/)., introduced HR 5176 (https://beta.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-bill/5176/text), bipartisan legislation that would allow the Navajo Nation to protect lands selected in New Mexico. Rep. Cynthia Lummis, R-Wyo (http://lummis.house.gov/)., is an original co-sponsor of the bill.

The legislation would allow holders of preference right lease applications to exchange the applications for bidding rights on other federal lands.

The Navajo Nation would then receive full and clear title to the selected lands in New Mexico.

Contact: Jared King, Communications Director, 202/200-0625, jking@nnwo.org

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage9as-140802-30FurigayJane-4817809 30FurigayJane

LOAD-DATE: August 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

30 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

July 31, 2014 Thursday

Delegation wary of possible worker plan; President reportedly weighs executive action

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 1105 words

WASHINGTON - If President Barack Obama decides to bypass Congress and use his executive power to offer work permits to millions of people living in the United States illegally, he'll get a mixed reception - at best - from New Mexico's congressional delegation.

The delegation's only Republican blasted the idea, and most of its Democrats this week offered less than full support. Meanwhile, some immigration advocates and lawmakers close to the White House say an executive action plan is in the works and could come before the November elections.

Obama is considering expanding a so-called deferred action program to as many as 9 million adults living in the U.S. illegally, according to The Associated Press and other media reports. The plan, which has not been formally proposed, would build on the president's 2012 executive order that granted work permits to certain young immigrants who entered the U.S. illegally. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, program has been made available to more than 500,000 immigrants.

The possible presidential expansion of the DACA program comes in the midst of a crisis at the Mexican border, where thousands of children and adults are arriving from Central America. The status of about 11.5 million immigrants already living in the United States illegally and the recent border influx from Central America are separate issues from a legislative standpoint, except that both raise immigration problems for U.S. policymakers.

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., told the Journal on Wednesday that she sympathizes with Obama's frustration over Congress' failure to pass comprehensive immigration reform, but that she's wary of setting such an expansive work permit policy without approval of Congress.

"If we don't get Congress to set the policy, then we continue to have confusion and debates, and I think we create hostility and animosity on this immigration issue with our constituents and the public at large," **Lujan** Grisham said. "I think that's ineffective, and I really hope he takes that into consideration and weighs that very carefully."

A unilateral move by the White House on the issue would be sure to roil the political waters in an election year.

Republicans, including Rep. Steve Pearce of New Mexico, oppose the president's possible proposal to give more work permits to those who are in the U.S. illegally.

Pearce has long advocated expanding the guest worker program, but only through legislation.

"I might agree with it 100 percent, but I would be opposed if it were President Bush or a Republican president equally because the process is more important than the policy," Pearce told the Journal.

Pearce said an executive action by the president offering millions of undocumented workers legal permits without approval from Congress could create a constitutional crisis. "That's one of the reasons I think even Democrats are becoming alarmed with the president," Pearce said. "He is undermining the checks and balances. He is undermining the entire constitutional foundation of the republic. This is unsettling."

But Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., said the GOP has tied Obama's hands on the immigration issue and given the president little choice but to use his executive power.

Luján told the Journal that House Republican leaders should allow a vote on the comprehensive immigration policy reform bill the Senate approved last year.

"In light of the House not acting, what is the president to do?" **Lujan** said. "If Republicans do not want the president taking actions, then let us have a vote on the Senate bill."

The Senate bill would create a "path to citizenship" for millions of immigrants already in the U.S. illegally, double the number of Border Patrol agents, establish 700 miles of new fencing and require an E-Verify system for migrant workers, among other things. Only undocumented immigrants who entered the country before Dec. 31, 2011, could apply to legalize their status.

"Executive action is no replacement for congressional action, but as long as House Republicans refuse to allow a vote on bipartisan legislation to fix our broken immigration system, I would support President Obama taking steps to address the issue using his existing authority, including expanding DACA," **Luján** added.

Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., expressed reservations about the work permit proposal. Heinrich, like all Democrats in the New Mexico delegation, said the Senate immigration reform bill would be a better solution.

"I understand - and share - the administration's frustration with the lack of progress in passing comprehensive immigration reform," Heinrich said in a statement. "While I think the president should be exploring all constitutionally sound administrative options, whatever steps he takes will lack the permanence of law. So while I am interested in learning more about potential administrative fixes to our broken immigration system, it will not be a replacement for congressional action."

Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., in a statement provided to the Journal, suggested he might not object but stopped far short of endorsing the idea.

"I believe the best response to our broken immigration system is the Senate's comprehensive bill that addressed the millions of undocumented immigrants already in the country while significantly increasing border security," Udall said. "If the House won't take the action we all know is necessary, then the administration is right to investigate a range of options - within the scope of the law - to deal with the facts on the ground."

White House officials led by Domestic Policy Council Director Cecilia Muñoz and White House Counsel Neil Eggleston, along with Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson, have been working to chart a plan on executive actions Obama could take, hosting frequent meetings with interest groups and

listening to recommendations from immigration advocates, law enforcement officials, religious leaders, Hispanic lawmakers and others, according to The Associated Press.

Advocates and lawmakers who were in separate meetings last week said administration officials are weighing a range of options including reforms to the deportation system and ways to grant relief from deportation to targeted populations in the country, likely by expanding the DACA program.

Proponents of expanding the worker permits would like to see deferred action made available to anyone who would have been eligible for eventual citizenship under a comprehensive immigration bill the Senate passed last year, which would be around 9 million people. House vote

GOP schedules action on legislation to block extending deportation relief A6

LOAD-DATE: July 31, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

July 31, 2014 Thursday

New Mexico delegation praises VA bipartisan bill

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. A3

LENGTH: 294 words

WASHINGTON - A rare bipartisan agreement to reform the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is being hailed by New Mexico's congressional delegation as a productive plan to fix a scandal-plagued system that has led to shabby and delayed health care for the nation's veterans, including those in New Mexico.

Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, both New Mexico Democrats, hailed the deal.

"This legislation will help veterans who cannot get prompt appointments to obtain care outside the VA system, addresses the shortage of medical staff at many VA facilities ... and funds a $9.5 million lease agreement to continue VA's pharmacy research center in Albuquerque."

Heinrich said, "We should move forward as soon as possible and pass this bipartisan compromise, which addresses the mismanagement and systemic problems at the VA. It's critical that we restore confidence and accountability in the VA health care system and ensure our veterans receive the quality services that they were promised.."

Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., said the VA scandal has spurred rare bipartisan agreement.

"The anger generated by the American people over the treatment of our veterans has spurred Washington to work together to find a solution," Pearce said.

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., has urged Congress to delay its August recess to approve the deal.

"This agreement increases access to much-needed private care, shortening wait times and helping those veterans who live in rural and frontier areas," she said.

Ben Ray Luján, D-N.M., said the agreement "takes important steps that can help rebuild the trust of America's veterans by providing key funding to reduce the VA backlog, hire new medical personnel at VA hospitals and clinics, and allow the VA to lease new medical facilities."

LOAD-DATE: July 31, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Congressional Documents and Publications

July 30, 2014

LUJAN STATEMENT ON PASSAGE OF VA REFORM LEGISLATION; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 248 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after the passage of the Conference Report for the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act - legislation to address the serious problems impacting veterans' health care at VA facilities across the country.

"The disturbing reports of misconduct at VA facilities in Albuquerque and across the country are deeply disappointing and strike at the very heart of our commitment to our veterans. This legislation takes important steps that can help rebuild the trust of America's veterans by providing key funding to reduce the VA backlog, hire new medical personnel at VA hospitals and clinics, and allow the VA to lease new medical facilities.

"This legislation will not fix all of the problems plaguing the VA and I would have preferred a bill that includes more funding for our veterans, but it addresses many of the failures that left veterans without timely access to health care, and it is the beginning of what must be an ongoing process to make systematic reforms that honor the sacrifice of the men and women who honorably served our country. It is critical that the Senate also passes this legislation before leaving for the August district work period so we can get it to the President's desk and signed into law."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan.**house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-passage-of-va-reform-legislation/

LOAD-DATE: August 1, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

33 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

July 30, 2014

LUJAN: HOUSE REPUBLICANS TO SUE THE PRESIDENT INSTEAD OF ADDRESSING THE PRIORITIES OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 259 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** released the following statement today after House Republicans moved forward with legislation supporting a lawsuit against the President rather than addressing critical issues facing the country.

"Today House Republicans hit a new low with their frivolous lawsuit against President Obama. Rather than spend time bringing legislation to the floor that grows our economy, spurs job creation, makes college more affordable, or fixes our broken immigration system, House Republicans wasted more time playing politics and attacking President Obama for doing what they have failed to do - act on the pressing issues facing our country.

"The American people want leaders who will work on real solutions to strengthen the middle class and create good jobs in our communities. All House Republicans have to offer is a lawsuit against the President that has been widely criticized by numerous legal scholars. House Democrats have an agenda to strengthen the middle class by providing affordable, quality education; investing in roads and bridges; ensuring equal work for equal pay; and providing incentives to create good jobs right here at home. With only days left before the House begins the August district work period, our focus should be on the priorities of the American people, not a political stunt aimed to appease members of the Tea Party."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-house-republicans-to-sue-the-president-instead-of-addressing-the-priorities-of-the-american-people/

LOAD-DATE: August 1, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

July 30, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN: HOUSE REPUBLICANS TO SUE THE PRESIDENT INSTEAD OF ADDRESSING THE PRIORITIES OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 242 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** released the following statement today after House Republicans moved forward with legislation supporting a lawsuit against the President rather than addressing critical issues facing the country.

"Today House Republicans hit a new low with their frivolous lawsuit against President Obama. Rather than spend time bringing legislation to the floor that grows our economy, spurs job creation, makes college more affordable, or fixes our broken immigration system, House Republicans wasted more time playing politics and attacking President Obama for doing what they have failed to do - act on the pressing issues facing our country.

"The American people want leaders who will work on real solutions to strengthen the middle class and create good jobs in our communities. All House Republicans have to offer is a lawsuit against the President that has been widely criticized by numerous legal scholars. House Democrats have an agenda to strengthen the middle class by providing affordable, quality education; investing in roads and bridges; ensuring equal work for equal pay; and providing incentives to create good jobs right here at home. With only days left before the House begins the August district work period, our focus should be on the priorities of the American people, not a political stunt aimed to appease members of the Tea Party."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: August 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

States News Service

July 30, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON PASSAGE OF VA REFORM LEGISLATION

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 240 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after the passage of the Conference Report for the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act - legislation to address the serious problems impacting veterans' health care at VA facilities across the country.

"The disturbing reports of misconduct at VA facilities in Albuquerque and across the country are deeply disappointing and strike at the very heart of our commitment to our veterans. This legislation takes important steps that can help rebuild the trust of America's veterans by providing key funding to reduce the VA backlog, hire new medical personnel at VA hospitals and clinics, and allow the VA to lease new medical facilities.

"This legislation will not fix all of the problems plaguing the VA and I would have preferred a bill that includes more funding for our veterans, but it addresses many of the failures that left veterans without timely access to health care, and it is the beginning of what must be an ongoing process to make systematic reforms that honor the sacrifice of the men and women who honorably served our country. It is critical that the Senate also passes this legislation before leaving for the August district work period so we can get it to the President's desk and signed into law."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: August 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

July 30, 2014 Wednesday 4:31 AM EST

Lujan Statement on Passage of VA Reform Legislation

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 248 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after the passage of the Conference Report for the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act - legislation to address the serious problems impacting veterans' health care at VA facilities across the country.

"The disturbing reports of misconduct at VA facilities in Albuquerque and across the country are deeply disappointing and strike at the very heart of our commitment to our veterans. This legislation takes important steps that can help rebuild the trust of America's veterans by providing key funding to reduce the VA backlog, hire new medical personnel at VA hospitals and clinics, and allow the VA to lease new medical facilities.

"This legislation will not fix all of the problems plaguing the VA and I would have preferred a bill that includes more funding for our veterans, but it addresses many of the failures that left veterans without timely access to health care, and it is the beginning of what must be an ongoing process to make systematic reforms that honor the sacrifice of the men and women who honorably served our country. It is critical that the Senate also passes this legislation before leaving for the August district work period so we can get it to the President's desk and signed into law."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140731-4815518 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: July 31, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

37 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

July 30, 2014 Wednesday 3:30 AM EST

Lujan: House Republicans to Sue the President Instead of Addressing the Priorities of the American People

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 251 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** released the following statement today after House Republicans moved forward with legislation supporting a lawsuit against the President rather than addressing critical issues facing the country.

"Today House Republicans hit a new low with their frivolous lawsuit against President Obama. Rather than spend time bringing legislation to the floor that grows our economy, spurs job creation, makes college more affordable, or fixes our broken immigration system, House Republicans wasted more time playing politics and attacking President Obama for doing what they have failed to do - act on the pressing issues facing our country.

"The American people want leaders who will work on real solutions to strengthen the middle class and create good jobs in our communities. All House Republicans have to offer is a lawsuit against the President that has been widely criticized by numerous legal scholars. House Democrats have an agenda to strengthen the middle class by providing affordable, quality education; investing in roads and bridges; ensuring equal work for equal pay; and providing incentives to create good jobs right here at home. With only days left before the House begins the August district work period, our focus should be on the priorities of the American people, not a political stunt aimed to appease members of the Tea Party."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140802-4818502 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: August 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

July 29, 2014 Tuesday 2:34 AM EST

New Mexico Dems: Steve Pearce Earns a Zero from National Hispanic, Asian Pacific Islander, Labor and Faith Leaders on 2014 National Immigration Scorecard

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 507 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

National Hispanic groups, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, as well as labor leaders and faith leaders have announced an unprecedented partnership and initiative of civic participation, beginning with the launch of its' 2014 National Score Card on Immigration. The score card showing how Congress has failed on the issue of immigration reform. (Click here for the Scorecard (http://www.immigrationscores.com/score-cards--vote-descriptions.html))

Republican Congressman Steve Pearce of New Mexico's 2nd Congressional District earned 0% on the Scorecard (http://www.immigrationscores.com/uploads/3/2/0/9/32095163/new_mexico.pdf), while Democratic colleagues Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-CD1) and Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** (NM-CD3) each earned a 91% score. (Click here for the scores (http://www.immigrationscores.com/uploads/3/2/0/9/32095163/new_mexico.pdf).)

"After the 2012 elections, Congress made several promises to enact immigration reform. However, opposition from anti-immigrant extremists turned these into fists hitting pointedly attempts to immigration reform and immigrant families, "said in a statement the 10 EU national leaders, civil rights and faith together Monday. "Congress can try to ignore us and the immigration issue, but we will not."

Amid a national immigration crisis and a shameful lack of leadership in the U.S. Capitol, "Nowhere is anger and disappointment toward Congress is more palpable than in Latino, Asian American and Pacific Islanders communities, and immigrants who suffer daily the consequences of the failure of Congress to remedy the dysfunctional and immoral immigration system" said the advocates of immigration reform.

In response, national leaders have undertaken extensive civic engagement initiative that includes the national distribution of the very first score card on Immigration 2014 showing how Congress failed on issues of immigration reform by refusing to submit to the full House of Representatives a comprehensive draft law, and to appeal to anti-immigrant voting, such as the immediate termination of the DACA program and deportation of dREAMERS. Scores are based on tabulations of votes and actions related to immigration, including the co-sponsorship of bills that include a path to citizenship and family reunification through a visa reform.

The report also shows how the ratings of several members were knocked down by the refusal of leaders to present the full immigration legislation could have been passed in the House of Representatives.

"The National Assessment Card Immigration 2014 leaves no doubt about who supported immigration reform and who worked against us," according to the joint statement. "The American people support immigration reform and join us to send a clear and unambiguous signal to Washington: Congress inaction fuels our action. The time for our communities to be involved is now. "

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage10PkS-140730-30TacordaCheng-4813383 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: July 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

39 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

July 29, 2014 Tuesday 12:57 AM EST

CHCI Celebrates Latino Cabinet Members

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 326 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute issued the following news:

On July 28, CHCI and its Chair, Rep. Ruben Hinojosa, hosted a reception in the Russell Senate Office Building, celebrating top Latino Cabinet members currently serving on President Barack Obama's administration. This historic gathering honored Labor Secretary Tom Perez, HUD Secretary Julian Castro, SBA Administrator Maria Contreras-Sweet, and OPM Director Katherine Archuleta. Also in attendance were the 46 CHCI Summer Congressional Interns and 40 R2L NextGen participants, the future leaders of our community.

CHCI President & CEO Esther Aguilera led the program with the pledge of allegiance, giving way to CHCI Chair, Rep. Ruben Hinojosa, to provide opening remarks. Sen. Bob Menendez, Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, Rep. Xavier Becerra, and Rep. Linda Sanchez all took turns introducing the honorees, highlighting the wonderful journey that led them where they are today. A palpable energy could be felt in the room, as guests were moved by the inspiring words of each speaker. We also would like to thank all the leaders who came out in support of the Latino cabinet members, which include Reps. Lucille Roybal-Allard, Grace Napolitano, Tony Cardenas, Joaquin Castro, Joe Garcia, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, Raul Ruiz, Juan Vargas, Judy Chu, Sheila Jackson Lee, and Richard Nolan. CHCI was also honored to welcome the Ambassador of Spain, His Excellency Ramon Gil-Casares, and White House Director of Domestic Policy, Cecilia Munoz.

The CHCI Latino Cabinet Member Reception is made possible due to the generous support of Bank of America, Cargill, McDonald's Corporation, Samsung, American Federation of Teachers, National Association of Realtors, Mary Kay, Toyota, Bright House Networks, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), National Association of Minority Automotive Dealers (NAMAD), and Popular Community Bank.

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage6yd-140731-30VitinMar-4814867

LOAD-DATE: July 31, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

40 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

July 27, 2014 Sunday 3:51 PM EST

Congressional Votes for New Mexico the Week of 07/18 - 07/24/2014

BYLINE: by TARGETED NEWS SERVICE, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 2396 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, July 27 -- There were 10 key votes in the House this week; the House held a total of 18 roll call votes in the week ending Thursday. There were five key votes in the Senate, which held a total of eight votes. The most important House vote was to pass a bill reauthorizing the Brand USA program for promoting foreign tourism to the U.S. The most important Senate vote was to confirm the nomination of Julie E. Carnes to serve as a judge on the U.S. Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals.

The House also passed the STELA Reauthorization Act (H.R. 4572), sponsored by Rep. Greg Walden, R-Ore., to extend through 2019 expiring provisions relating to the retransmission of signals of television broadcast stations; passed the NIST Reauthorization Act (H.R. 5035), sponsored by Rep. Larry Bucshon, R-Ind., to reauthorize the National Institute of Standards and Technology; passed the Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act (H.R. 4802), sponsored by Rep. Richard Hudson, R-N.C., to improve intergovernmental planning for and communication during security incidents at domestic airports; and passed the Honor Flight Act (H.R. 4812), sponsored by Rep. Cedric L. Richmond, D-La., to require the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to establish a process for providing expedited and dignified passenger screening services for veterans traveling to visit war memorials built and dedicated to honor their service.

Here's a look at how area members of Congress voted over the previous week.

HOUSE VOTES:

House Vote 1:

PROMOTING FOREIGN TRAVEL TO THE U.S.: The House has passed the Travel Promotion, Enhancement, and Modernization Act (H.R. 4450), sponsored by Rep. Gus M. Bilirakis, R-Fla. The bill would reauthorize through 2020 the Brand USA program, a public-private partnership that promotes

foreign travel to the U.S., and introduce a variety of measures to increase oversight of Brand USA. Bilirakis said Brand USA required no funding from the federal government and increased the number of international visitors to the U.S. by 1.1 million in fiscal 2013, generating $3.4 billion of economic activity and associated job creation. The vote, on July 22, was 347 yeas to 57 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 2:

SANCTIONS AGAINST HEZBOLLAH: The House has passed the Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act (H.R. 4411), sponsored by Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C. The bill would impose sanctions on financial institutions that conduct business for Hezbollah and on groups that support the operation of Hezbollah's al-Manar TV network, and designate Hezbollah as a significant foreign narcotics trafficker. Meadows said the sanctions were needed to make sure that Congress does what it can to cripple Hezbollah's ability to finance terrorism operations that endanger Israel, America, and other nations. The vote, on July 22, was unanimous with 404 yeas.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 3:

RESEARCHING ENERGY CRITICAL ELEMENTS: The House has rejected the Securing Energy Critical Elements and American Jobs Act (H.R. 1022), sponsored by Rep. Eric Swalwell, D-Calif. The bill would have authorized the Energy Department to create a research and development program for rare earth elements and other elements critical to energy-related technologies, communications technologies, and weapons systems, as well as the creation of a Critical Materials Energy Innovation Hub for collaborating on research into energy critical elements. Swalwell said the elements, despite being in limited supply, are vital to a range of new energy technologies, including solar and wind power, but China dominates the supply of rare earth elements, and the bill was needed to help "ensure that the United States maintains a sufficient, reliable supply of energy critical elements." No opponents of the bill spoke on the House floor. The vote, on July 22, was 260 yeas to 143 nays, with a two-thirds majority required for approval.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 4:

DUAL ENROLLMENT AND COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Trey Gowdy, R-S.C., to the Advancing Competency-Based Education Demonstration Project Act (H.R. 3136). The amendment would allow students in dual enrollment programs to be included in demonstration projects for competency-based education. Gowdy said high school students who are attending college classes deserve to take part in the projects to help achieve their goal of getting college credit and reducing their higher education costs while still in high school. The vote, on July 23, was unanimous with 413 yeas.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 5:

COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION: The House has passed the Advancing Competency-Based Education Demonstration Project Act (H.R. 3136), sponsored by Rep. Matt Salmon, R-Ariz. The bill would direct the Education Secretary to choose colleges and universities to voluntarily participate in programs to demonstrate competency-based education, which assesses and measures student learning instead of, or in addition to, measuring students' credit or clock hours. Salmon said the

programs could cut higher education costs for students, especially older students, by giving them credit for the skills they have received before going to college, and incentivize them "to work hard to accelerate their degree attainment, potentially cutting their overall education costs and allowing them to begin their careers sooner." The vote, on July 23, was unanimous with 414 yeas.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 6:

FINANCIAL EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Derek Kilmer, D-Wash., to the Empowering Students Through Enhanced Financial Counseling Act (H.R. 4984). The amendment would require that student loan recipients be introduced to the financial management resources provided by the Treasury Department's Financial Literacy and Education Commission. Kilmer said the commission, which was established in 2003, can offer students guidance on how to "responsibly manage their finances" and avoid problems created by having too much debt, without the ability to repay their student loans. The vote, on July 24, was 404 yeas to 14 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 7:

STUDENT LOAN COUNSELING: The House has passed the Empowering Students Through Enhanced Financial Counseling Act (H.R. 4984), sponsored by Rep. Brett Guthrie, R-Ky. The bill would require colleges and universities to annually provide counseling about Pell Grants to grant recipients and about the cost of student loans to students borrowing money under the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan program. Guthrie said information provided to students under the bill would empower students by ensuring that they understand the terms of their loans, their financial options for managing and repaying their loans, and the longer-term impact of having to repay their loans. The vote, on July 24, was 405 yeas to 11 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 8:

CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING: The House has passed a bill (H.R. 5111), sponsored by Rep. Joyce Beatty, D-Ohio, to replace the term "child prostitution" with "child sex trafficking" in the list of categories for reporting child sexual exploitation to the CyberTipline for receiving leads and tips regarding suspected crimes of sexual exploitation. Beatty said the change of terms would help ensure that victims of child sex trafficking are considered victims rather than criminals and "continue to fight the perception that sex trafficking is a voluntary, victimless crime." The vote, on July 24, was unanimous with 409 yeas.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 9:

TAX INCENTIVES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION: The House has passed the Student and Family Tax Simplification Act (H.R. 3393), sponsored by Rep. Diane Black, R-Tenn. The bill would amend the tax code to establish an American Opportunity Tax Credit that awards an up to $2,000 tax credit for higher education tuition and related expenses to students, while eliminating four current tax incentives for higher education. Black said that by consolidating the tax incentives into a single tax credit, the bill would make it easier for students to receive help paying for their education by simplifying the tax code. A bill opponent, Rep. Sander M. Levin, D-Mich., said the consolidated credit

would harm a variety of students by removing the lifetime learning tax credit and limiting the tax incentive for higher education to the first four years a student is enrolled. The vote, on July 24, was 227 yeas to 187 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 10:

NEGOTIATING VERSIONS OF VA REFORM BILL: The House has rejected a motion sponsored by Rep. Scott H. Peters, D-Calif., to instruct House conferees with the Senate on negotiating differences between the two chambers' conflicting versions of the Veteran Access to Care Act (H.R. 3230). The motion would have instructed the conferees to agree to the Senate's version of the bill. Peters said the Senate's plan for reforming the Veterans Affairs Department to address problems with a lack of medical care for veterans was superior to the House plan because it provided $17.6 billion needed for the VA to "lease more facilities, hire doctors and nurses to fill their most pressing staff shortages," and allow veterans to go outside the VA to receive care. A motion opponent, Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Fla., said the VA has not justified its request for $17.6 billion, especially given its track record of wasting budgeted funds. The vote to instruct conferees, on July 24, was 205 yeas to 207 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

SENATE VOTES:

Senate Vote 1:

CONFIRMING APPEALS COURT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Julie E. Carnes to serve as a judge on the U.S. Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. A supporter, Sen. Johnny Isakson, R-Ga., cited Carnes' 22 years of service as a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, preceded by more than 10 years of work as an assistant U.S. attorney. Isakson said Carnes has "immense capacity, outstanding integrity, and outstanding ability" and those assets would strengthen the appeals court. The vote, on July 21, was unanimous with 94 yeas.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 2:

CALIFORNIA DISTRICT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Andre Birotte Jr. to serve as a U.S. District Judge for the Central District of California. A supporter, Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., praised Birotte's performance as U.S. attorney for the district the past four years, and previous service as an assistant U.S. attorney in the district and inspector general for the Los Angeles Police Commission. Feinstein said that throughout his career, Birotte "has built a reputation for fairness and for a profound commitment to the rule of law. He has earned the deep respect of people on all sides of difficult issues." The vote, on July 22, was unanimous with 100 yeas.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 3:

FLORIDA DISTRICT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Robin L. Rosenberg to serve as a U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Florida. A supporter, Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., cited Rosenberg's 25 years of experience in the law, including the last seven years as a judge on Florida's Fifteenth Judicial Circuit and, previously, as a private lawyer, attorney for the Justice Department and city of West Palm Beach, and law clerk in the Southern District of Florida. Nelson added that Rosenberg received a unanimously qualified rating from the American Bar Association. The vote, on July 22, was unanimous with 100 yeas.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 4:

TAX CREDIT FOR MOVING BUSINESSES TO AMERICA: The Senate has agreed to a motion to end debate on the motion to consider the Bring Jobs Home Act (S. 2569), sponsored by Sen. John E. Walsh, D-Mont. The bill would amend the tax code to offer businesses an up to 20 percent tax credit for expenses incurred from transferring a business from outside the U.S. to inside the U.S., while also denying a tax deduction for expenses incurred from transferring a business from inside the U.S. to outside the U.S. Walsh said: "There are companies out there right now that are considering bringing business activities back to the United States. We must do everything we possibly can to help those companies create jobs and grow our American economy right here at home." The vote, on July 23, was 93 yeas to 7 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 5:

DEBATING APPEALS COURT NOMINEE: The Senate has approved a motion to end debate on the nomination of Pamela Harris to serve as a judge on the U.S. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. A supporter of ending debate, Sen. Patrick J. Leahy, D-Vt., cited Harris' experience as a law professor, private lawyer, Justice Department official, and law clerk to appeals court and Supreme Court judges. Leahy called Harris "a highly accomplished lawyer with excellent legal credentials." An opponent of ending debate, Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, questioned whether Harris would depend on the Constitution and the law in making impartial rulings as an appeals judge, rather than seek to advance a liberal agenda. The vote, on July 24, was 54 yeas to 41 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

For more information about Targeted News Service products and services, please contact: Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service LLC, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://targetednews.com.

-1170198

LOAD-DATE: July 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

41 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

July 24, 2014 Thursday

Luján bid to improve broadcasting moves ahead

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 292 words

An amendment proposed by Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D-3) to expand television markets was included in a bill reauthorizing the satellite television law.

Luján said his amendment proposes to create new broadcasting markets based on current and future technologies instead of the limitations of broadcasting antennas.

"Despite new technological innovations, television viewers remain limited to broadcasts that are intended for their designated market areas based upon maps that were drawn decades ago," **Luján** said in a statement. "As traditional services such as over-the-air broadcast, cable, and satellite companies have been joined by new alternatives such as over-the-top content, Internet Protocol television, and other services, it is time to revisit DMAs so that Nielsen's maps of almost obsolete antenna networks no longer block consumers from accessing programing from outside their DMA."

The bill was passed by the House on Tuesday.

"With a broadband connection, viewers can watch an almost infinite amount of on-demand video online. With a smartphone, tablet, or other mobile device, they can watch this content from a wi-fi hotspot or virtually anywhere with wireless service. Through the internet, consumers can listen to radio signals from around the globe," **Luján** said in a statement. "But under this antiquated system governing the boundaries of a DMA, viewers in Clovis, Portales, or Tucumcari cannot watch TV broadcast from New Mexico. It's time to examine how we can improve this outdated system."

Want Albuquerque news in your inbox? Click here to sign up for our email newsletters

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: July 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

July 24, 2014

LUJAN TAKES TO HOUSE FLOOR TO DISCUSSES HUMANITARIAN CRISIS AT THE BORDER AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 682 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor yesterday evening during debate on a number of bills aimed at combating human and sex trafficking. **Lujan** highlighted the importance of protecting children from violence and the need to do the same for children who are fleeing extreme violence in Central America. Below are **Lujan's** remarks.

"I rise today in support of this legislation and many other bills we are considering that deal with human and sex trafficking - an important issue, a critical issue - especially as it relates to protecting children who are too often victims of abuse and violence, and I commend the Speaker for bringing these bills up for a vote.

"Mr. Speaker, as I was watching the debate this evening I couldn't help but come back to the floor. I hope all of my colleagues that are speaking tonight on the importance of passing these human trafficking bills will join us next week to talk about the importance of protecting children. It was with alarm, Mr. Speaker, that I read a letter that Speaker Boehner penned to President Barack Obama - that appears that my Republican colleagues when they left the meeting earlier this afternoon, are asking to take away the very protections from children [from] a law that was passed in 2008 - [yet they] are asking to protect these children tonight.

"So I come today to ask my colleagues to read the transcripts, to hear the debate this evening, and to think about it - to go home this weekend and whatever faith that we may be, that we pray about it and we talk to our pastors and our religious leaders about it. Because these kids that we are going to be talking about next week are the very children that need protections as well.

"The motivation to pass these bills today is the same motivation that moved this body to pass legislation that became law in 2008 - to protect children. This law has since become the subject of much condemnation from many of my Republican colleagues as we discuss the humanitarian crisis on the border.

"We are here on this floor debating legislation to protect children, yet many of my colleagues want to take away due process from children who are trying to escape unimaginable violence in Central America. In Honduras, the murder capital of the world, the violence was captured in a story recently, and I apologize for the graphic nature of this story.

"The story that was reported on - 'during a recent late-night visit to the San Pedro Sula morgue, more than 60 bodies, all victims of violence, were seen piled in a heap, each wrapped in a brown plastic bag. While picking bullets out of a 15-year-old boy shot 15 times, technicians discussed how they regularly received corpses of children under 10, and sometimes as young as 2. Last week, in nearby Santa Barbara, an 11-year-old had his throat slit by other children, because he did not pay a 50-cent extortion fee.'

"The doctor at the morgue said, before we saw children being killed because they were at the scene when gangs were coming to prey on families and they just happened to be there. Now we're seeing kids kill kids. There are hundreds of other stories like this, of which I will ask to submit into the record with extraneous materials, but Mr. Speaker, I beg and I plead of my colleagues - each and every one of us that may or may not have been here when the law was passed, but those of us who are here now - these are kids. And I know that you and I, Mr. Speaker, that we love children and we want to make sure they are not victims of these horrific crimes.

"Please, please take this weekend and ask the Speaker [Boehner] to remove the provisions that would take away the due process from these children. And as we pass these bills together, let us not forget what brought this Congress together in 2008 to protect these children. Let us show the same compassion that is the driving force of these bills tonight."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-takes-to-house-floor-to-discusses-humanitarian-crisis-at-the-border-and-human-trafficking/

LOAD-DATE: July 25, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

July 24, 2014 Thursday

BYLINE: Kathy Helms navajo1@gallupindependent.com, DIN É BUREAU

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1

LENGTH: 944 words

DATELINE: WINDOW ROCK

WINDOW ROCK -- The 22nd Navajo Nation Council wrapped up its Summer Session Wednesday after tabling a number of resolutions, including the Fort Wingate Land Division Act of 2014.

Delegate Danny Simpson said the Fort Wingate Task Force had done a tremendous amount of work with help from the Eastern Navajo Land Commission.

"Congressman Stephen Pearce had a legislation in place to divide that land 50-50. We started working with the Fort Wingate Task Force and Eastern Land Commission to address this issue. Some of the members from Eastern Land Commission made a trip to meet with Congressman (**Ben Ray) Lujan** to stop this bill that Congressman Pearce was sponsoring.

"During that meeting we asked Congressman **Luján** to say we would like to get 100 percent of the land at Fort Wingate -- 'No, we don't want the one that is contaminated, we want the good land, 100 percent.'"

Luján told them there was no way they could get a deal passed giving 100 percent of Fort Wingate to the Navajo Nation, that there had to be a compromise, Simpson said.

50-50 split?

Larry Rodgers of Eastern Navajo Land Commission, said the efforts of the Land Commission came into play when it seemed they were going to be behind the eight-ball when the bill went to Congress. "As Mr. Simpson indicated, Mr. Pearce introduced a bill that would give 4,500 acres of Parcel 1 all to Zuni, and two little parcels to the Navajo Nation, Parcel 15 and 17. Altogether, 25 parcels make up the military reservation," he said.

Navajo and Zuni began negotiations in late 2012, meeting first at Zuni. "Two essential questions came about right away. The Zuni question was, 'Will Navajo negotiate with us on a 50 to 50 basis?'" Rodgers said Speaker Johnny Naize told them no.

"The Navajo question to Zuni was, 'If you want to negotiate, can you ask Pearce to withdraw his bill?' Zuni said no. And that was it. The talks ended right here. The Zuni then asked the Navajo delegation to stay for lunch and that was it. We were out of there," Rodgers said.

New parameters

In the summer of 2013 both tribes were asked to come to Washington to negotiate, and to bring their plans with them. Rodgers said Zuni brought a plan that was practically half and half. Navajo structured a map that would have given Navajo about 60 percent and Zuni about 30 percent, with the remaining 10 percent to be maintained by the military

"Of course, with that type of wide division, the differences between the two, the first talks in D.C. did not pan out either and the facilitators, Mr. Pearce and also Mr. **Lujan**, instructed the tribes to go back and find a neutral place to continue negotiations, which never occurred," Rodgers said.

A year went by and they received another letter from the congressmen, setting down some parameters for the tribes for final negotiations.

"One was that both tribes would have access to I-40, that the lands not be checker-boarded, and that the acreage be about as equitable as possible," Rodgers said. They met July 8, 2013, in Washington with Pearce as the main facilitator. "He wanted to go parcel by parcel. For those parcels that we were pretty much in agreement with, we didn't necessarily discuss those. It was kind of automatically given. For those areas that we had disagreement and overlap, those were strongly discussed."

Parcel 1, in the southern area, is the higher terrain of the military reservation. "All of that, the Zuni wanted," Rodgers said, but Baahaali Chapter wanted to make sure that it was able to get something out of the land settlement. Their piece, as recommended, was carved out of Parcel 1 because it was closest and adjacent to their chapter.

In the northern tier, he said, they were able to get more than half of Parcel 10A adjacent to Sundance for Churchrock Chapter. "We strongly believe that Sundance, first of all, needs to be expanded. It's been a growing community for a very long time. So we argued that they would need to have access to that adjacent land."

Navajo prevails

Rodgers said they went on and on in terms of agreeing and disagreeing on certain areas, but they could never agree on Parcel 1. "At the end of the day, the three congressmen said, 'We will decide how to divide up Parcel 1 and we will let you know."

On their way to the airport, Rodgers said he and Simpson got texts from the Navajo Nation Washington Office that the land division in Parcel 1 had gone in their favor, and that they had even picked up additional acreage there.

"Mainly, I think, it's because of the reverency we have as Navajos. When Mr. Naize was asked, 'Would you allow Zuni to access traditional land areas for shrine visit purposes and so forth, and he says, 'Sure, we do it with Hopi.' And Zuni was asked, 'Would you allow Navajos to enter your part?' and they said no. So I think that in itself was the determination of why the three congressmen decided to give a larger piece in Parcel 1 to Navajo than we had bargained for," Rodgers said.

Delegate Edmund Yazzie asked his colleagues to table the resolution for two weeks, until after they talk with congressional leaders on Tuesday to see whether they can negotiate further with the Zuni Tribe.

"There are records that's been shown ... studies, historically, that this land belongs to the Navajo Nation. Code talkers have signed in there at Fort Wingate. There's a letter by President Roosevelt that indicates an executive order in 1907 saying that this land does belong to Navajo. That's why this legislation is very hard. We cannot vote on this. We need to work this out. We can't jump to this. I am pleading with you for the people that speak within our chapters," Yazzie said.

The tabling motion passed 12-9.

LOAD-DATE: July 29, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

44 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

July 24, 2014 Thursday

LUJAN TAKES TO HOUSE FLOOR TO DISCUSSES HUMANITARIAN CRISIS AT THE BORDER AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 666 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor yesterday evening during debate on a number of bills aimed at combating human and sex trafficking. **Lujan** highlighted the importance of protecting children from violence and the need to do the same for children who are fleeing extreme violence in Central America. Below are **Lujan's** remarks.

"I rise today in support of this legislation and many other bills we are considering that deal with human and sex trafficking - an important issue, a critical issue - especially as it relates to protecting children who are too often victims of abuse and violence, and I commend the Speaker for bringing these bills up for a vote.

"Mr. Speaker, as I was watching the debate this evening I couldn't help but come back to the floor. I hope all of my colleagues that are speaking tonight on the importance of passing these human trafficking bills will join us next week to talk about the importance of protecting children. It was with alarm, Mr. Speaker, that I read a letter that Speaker Boehner penned to President Barack Obama - that appears that my Republican colleagues when they left the meeting earlier this afternoon, are asking to take away the very protections from children [from] a law that was passed in 2008 - [yet they] are asking to protect these children tonight.

"So I come today to ask my colleagues to read the transcripts, to hear the debate this evening, and to think about it - to go home this weekend and whatever faith that we may be, that we pray about it and we talk to our pastors and our religious leaders about it. Because these kids that we are going to be talking about next week are the very children that need protections as well.

"The motivation to pass these bills today is the same motivation that moved this body to pass legislation that became law in 2008 - to protect children. This law has since become the subject of much condemnation from many of my Republican colleagues as we discuss the humanitarian crisis on the border.

"We are here on this floor debating legislation to protect children, yet many of my colleagues want to take away due process from children who are trying to escape unimaginable violence in Central America. In Honduras, the murder capital of the world, the violence was captured in a story recently, and I apologize for the graphic nature of this story.

"The story that was reported on - "during a recent late-night visit to the San Pedro Sula morgue, more than 60 bodies, all victims of violence, were seen piled in a heap, each wrapped in a brown plastic bag. While picking bullets out of a 15-year-old boy shot 15 times, technicians discussed how they regularly received corpses of children under 10, and sometimes as young as 2. Last week, in nearby Santa Barbara, an 11-year-old had his throat slit by other children, because he did not pay a 50-cent extortion fee.'

"The doctor at the morgue said, before we saw children being killed because they were at the scene when gangs were coming to prey on families and they just happened to be there. Now we're seeing kids kill kids. There are hundreds of other stories like this, of which I will ask to submit into the record with extraneous materials, but Mr. Speaker, I beg and I plead of my colleagues - each and every one of us that may or may not have been here when the law was passed, but those of us who are here now - these are kids. And I know that you and I, Mr. Speaker, that we love children and we want to make sure they are not victims of these horrific crimes.

"Please, please take this weekend and ask the Speaker [Boehner] to remove the provisions that would take away the due process from these children. And as we pass these bills together, let us not forget what brought this Congress together in 2008 to protect these children. Let us show the same compassion that is the driving force of these bills tonight."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: August 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

45 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

July 24, 2014 Thursday 1:56 AM EST

Lujan Takes to House Floor to Discusses Humanitarian Crisis at the Border and Human Trafficking

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 675 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor yesterday evening during debate on a number of bills aimed at combating human and sex trafficking. **Lujan** highlighted the importance of protecting children from violence and the need to do the same for children who are fleeing extreme violence in Central America. Below are **Lujan's** remarks.

"I rise today in support of this legislation and many other bills we are considering that deal with human and sex trafficking - an important issue, a critical issue - especially as it relates to protecting children who are too often victims of abuse and violence, and I commend the Speaker for bringing these bills up for a vote.

"Mr. Speaker, as I was watching the debate this evening I couldn't help but come back to the floor. I hope all of my colleagues that are speaking tonight on the importance of passing these human trafficking bills will join us next week to talk about the importance of protecting children. It was with alarm, Mr. Speaker, that I read a letter that Speaker Boehner penned to President Barack Obama - that appears that my Republican colleagues when they left the meeting earlier this afternoon, are asking to take away the very protections from children [from] a law that was passed in 2008 - [yet they] are asking to protect these children tonight.

"So I come today to ask my colleagues to read the transcripts, to hear the debate this evening, and to think about it - to go home this weekend and whatever faith that we may be, that we pray about it and we talk to our pastors and our religious leaders about it. Because these kids that we are going to be talking about next week are the very children that need protections as well.

"The motivation to pass these bills today is the same motivation that moved this body to pass legislation that became law in 2008 - to protect children. This law has since become the subject of much condemnation from many of my Republican colleagues as we discuss the humanitarian crisis on the border.

"We are here on this floor debating legislation to protect children, yet many of my colleagues want to take away due process from children who are trying to escape unimaginable violence in Central America. In Honduras, the murder capital of the world, the violence was captured in a story recently, and I apologize for the graphic nature of this story.

"The story that was reported on - 'during a recent late-night visit to the San Pedro Sula morgue, more than 60 bodies, all victims of violence, were seen piled in a heap, each wrapped in a brown plastic bag. While picking bullets out of a 15-year-old boy shot 15 times, technicians discussed how they regularly received corpses of children under 10, and sometimes as young as 2. Last week, in nearby Santa Barbara, an 11-year-old had his throat slit by other children, because he did not pay a 50-cent extortion fee.'

"The doctor at the morgue said, before we saw children being killed because they were at the scene when gangs were coming to prey on families and they just happened to be there. Now we're seeing kids kill kids. There are hundreds of other stories like this, of which I will ask to submit into the record with extraneous materials, but Mr. Speaker, I beg and I plead of my colleagues - each and every one of us that may or may not have been here when the law was passed, but those of us who are here now - these are kids. And I know that you and I, Mr. Speaker, that we love children and we want to make sure they are not victims of these horrific crimes.

"Please, please take this weekend and ask the Speaker [Boehner] to remove the provisions that would take away the due process from these children. And as we pass these bills together, let us not forget what brought this Congress together in 2008 to protect these children. Let us show the same compassion that is the driving force of these bills tonight."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140725-4808668 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: July 25, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

July 23, 2014 Wednesday

Lujan Introduces Legislation to Promote Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

LENGTH: 369 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District introduced legislation recently that will promote energy savings through increased efficiency standards and increased investments in renewable energy, such as wind, solar, geothermal, hydro, and biomass. The American Renewable Energy and Efficiency Act, introduced by **Luján** and Rep. Peter Welch of Vermont - both members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, enacts a national renewable energy standard to reduce carbon emissions and drive clean energy deployment in states around the country.

"Promoting the use of renewable energy and increased energy efficiency is not only good for our environment, but it is good for our economy and for consumers," **Luján** said. "A renewable energy standard will drive the development of the clean energy sector, creating good jobs in communities across the country, especially New Mexico where we are home to abundant renewable resources. A greater emphasis on energy efficiency will also lower energy bills and put more money back in the pockets of hard-working families."

"The United States is lagging behind on energy efficiency and in adopting renewables. Our nation's energy policies are overdue for a rewrite," said Welch. "Our legislation charts a new energy future

where energy efficiency and renewable technologies are put to work creating jobs, saving money and improving the environment."

The legislation requires electric utilities to obtain a minimum of 25 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2025. Electric and natural gas utilities will also need to implement energy efficiency programs in order to save the equivalent of 15 percent and 10 percent of sales respectively by 2025.

An analysis of the American Renewable Energy Efficiency Act and similar legislation found the bill would create more than 400,000 jobs, save the average household $39 annually in energy, and reduce carbon emissions by 480 million metric tons by 2025. Companion legislation has been introduced in the Senate by Ed Markey of Massachusetts.

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov

LOAD-DATE: July 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

47 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

July 23, 2014 Wednesday

Lujan Visits Albuquerque VA Facility, Meets with Acting VA Secretary

LENGTH: 311 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after visiting the Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center in Albuquerque and meeting with Acting Secretary of the VA Sloan Gibson.

"The Albuquerque VA has experienced serious problems that have significantly impacted the quality and scheduling of care that New Mexico's veterans have received. This mismanagement strikes at the very heart of our commitment to our veterans and must be fixed quickly and thoroughly. Secretary Gibson's visit today provided an important opportunity to convey what New Mexico's veterans have experienced - from unacceptable wait times to care that fails to live up to our commitment.

"I expressed the importance of accountability and transparency at the Albuquerque VA, so that we can take the necessary steps to provide health care that is worthy of the service of these brave men and women. Secretary Gibson assured us that, as members of Congress, we would receive information from the New Mexico VA that is critical to perform our oversight responsibility, and ensuring our veterans receive the care they deserve. It is also essential that whistleblowers who step forward with concerns regarding the treatment of veterans are listened to, and not intimidated and discouraged from speaking up. A culture of intimidation must change, and we need leadership that will embrace those who share their concerns rather than trying to hide or ignore them.

"Finally, I highlighted for the Secretary the importance of seeing that our veterans in rural areas across New Mexico have access to high quality care and the need to address the challenges that are unique to these communities."

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov

LOAD-DATE: July 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

States News Service

July 22, 2014 Tuesday

LUJAN AMENDMENT TO EXAMINE NEW BROADCASTING MARKETS PASSES HOUSE

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 481 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted the passage of legislation today that included an amendment he offered as part of the Satellite Television Extension and Localism Act (STELA) reauthorization. **Lujan's** amendment explores how new broadcasting markets could be created if they are based upon the potential of current and future technologies instead of the limitations of aging broadcasting antennas. The STELA bill reauthorizes the nation's satellite television law, ensuring that 1.5 million subscribers in hard-to-reach areas continue to receive broadcast programming.

Currently, television viewers are limited to broadcasts that are intended for their designated market areas (DMA). The FCC has delegated the role of defining these DMAs to the Nielsen Company, a privately-held for-profit marketing research company. Nielsen has divided up the country into

separate DMAs based upon the reach of a television station's antiquated broadcast antennas. These antennas, which were considered cutting-edge technology back in the 1950's, are now relied upon by less than 10 percent of viewers, but continue to determine the broadcast stations available at any given location in the country.

"Despite new technological innovations, television viewers remain limited to broadcasts that are intended for their designated market areas based upon maps that were drawn decades ago," Congressman **Lujan** said. "As traditional services such as over-the-air broadcast, cable, and satellite companies have been joined by new alternatives such as over-the-top content, Internet Protocol television, and other services, it is time to revisit DMAs so that Nielsen's maps of almost obsolete antenna networks no longer block consumers from accessing programing from outside their DMA."

Lujan's amendment allows the FCC to embrace and explore the possibilities of cutting-edge technologies and their impact on broadcasting by building on a study of DMAs commissioned by the last STELA bill in 2010. It requires the FCC to update its earlier study and explore how new broadcasting markets could be created if they are based upon the potential of current and future technologies instead of the limitations of aging broadcast antennas.

"With a broadband connection, viewers can watch an almost infinite amount of on-demand video online. With a smartphone, tablet, or other mobile device, they can watch this content from a wi-fi hotspot or virtually anywhere with wireless service. Through the internet, consumers can listen to radio signals from around the globe," **Lujan** added. "But under this antiquated system governing the boundaries of a DMA, viewers in Clovis, Portales, or Tucumcari cannot watch TV broadcasted from New Mexico. It's time to examine how we can improve this outdated system."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: August 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

July 21, 2014 Monday

Luján introduces bill to increase renewable energy use

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 326 words

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D-3) has introduced a bill in Congress seeking to promote energy savings through increased efficiency standards and increased investments in renewable energy.

The bill ins being cosponsored by fellow Democrat Rep. Peter Welch of Vermont, who is also on the House Energy and Commerce Committee with **Luján**.

"Promoting the use of renewable energy and increased energy efficiency is not only good for our environment, but it is good for our economy and for consumers," **Luján** said in a statement. "A renewable energy standard will drive the development of the clean energy sector, creating good jobs in communities across the country, especially New Mexico where we are home to abundant renewable resources. A greater emphasis on energy efficiency will also lower energy bills and put more money back in the pockets of hard-working families."

The bill would require utilities to obtain a minimum of 25 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2025. Electric and natural gas utilities would also be required to implement energy efficiency programs in order to save the equivalent of 15 percent and 10 percent of sales respectively by 2025.

"The United States is lagging behind on energy efficiency and in adopting renewables. Our nation's energy policies are overdue for a rewrite," Welch said. "Our legislation charts a new energy future where energy efficiency and renewable technologies are put to work creating jobs, saving money and improving the environment."

The representative said an analysis of their bill found it would create more than 400,000 jobs and save the average household $39 annually. A companion bill has been introduced in the Senate by Sen. Ed Markey (D-Mass.)

Want Albuquerque news in your inbox? Click here to sign up for our email newsletters

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: July 21, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

50 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

July 21, 2014 Monday 2:57 AM EST

New Mexico Dems: Congressman Ben Ray Lujan Introduces Legislation to Promote Renewable Energy and Efficiency

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 415 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District has introduced legislation that will promote energy savings through increased efficiency standards and increased investments in renewable energy, such as wind, solar, geothermal, hydro, and biomass. The American Renewable Energy and Efficiency Act, introduced by **Lujan** and Rep. Peter Welch of Vermont - both members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, enacts a national renewable energy standard to reduce carbon emissions and drive clean energy deployment in states around the country.

"Promoting the use of renewable energy and increased energy efficiency is not only good for our environment, but it is good for our economy and for consumers," **Lujan** said. "A renewable energy standard will drive the development of the clean energy sector, creating good jobs in communities across the country, especially New Mexico where we are home to abundant renewable resources. A greater emphasis on energy efficiency will also lower energy bills and put more money back in the pockets of hard-working families."

"The United States is lagging behind on energy efficiency and in adopting renewables. Our nation's energy policies are overdue for a rewrite," said Welch. "Our legislation charts a new energy future where energy efficiency and renewable technologies are put to work creating jobs, saving money and improving the environment."

The legislation requires electric utilities to obtain a minimum of 25 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2025. Electric and natural gas utilities will also need to implement energy efficiency programs in order to save the equivalent of 15 percent and 10 percent of sales respectively by 2025.

An analysis of the American Renewable Energy Efficiency Act and similar legislation found the bill would create more than 400,000 jobs, save the average household $39 annually in energy, and reduce carbon emissions by 480 million metric tons by 2025. Companion legislation has been introduced in the Senate by Ed Markey of Massachusetts.

As a member of the Public Regulatory Commission before coming to Congress, **Lujan** worked with his colleagues to develop a renewable portfolio standard to increase renewable energy production by New Mexico utilities and to diversity utilities' renewable portfolios to include solar energy.

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage10PkS-140722-30TacordaCheng-4804320 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: July 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

51 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

July 20, 2014 Sunday

WRESTLING WITH AN IMMIGRATION CRISIS; Lawmakers grapple with how U.S. should handle influx of children

BYLINE: Copyright © 2014 Albuquerque Journal BY MICHAEL COLEMAN JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 1922 words

WASHINGTON - As thousands of Central American children stream northward toward the U.S. border, lawmakers in Washington - including New Mexico's congressional delegation - are grappling with how to respond.

In Journal interviews last week, all five members of New Mexico's congressional delegation suggested they would likely support some sort of emergency spending bill to deal with the crisis, but each also said Congress must enact longer-term legislative solutions.

Many of the recent border arrivals, including some children as young as five, are fleeing widespread poverty and gang violence in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador. The U.S. government is scrambling to counter perceptions in Central America that refugees would be welcomed with open arms at the U.S. border - a mistaken view that has proliferated since a 2012 policy change by the White House that allowed children already in the country illegally to stay and gain perma- nent residency cards.

More than 52,000 unaccompanied minors, as well as 39,000 adults with children, have been apprehended trying to cross the U.S.-Mexico border since October, according to the White House.

The delegation's remarks to the Journal on the crisis last week came as nearly 40 Honduran children and adults, who had been detained in the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Artesia, boarded a government airplane in Roswell for deportation last Monday. The Artesia facility is one of many makeshift detention centers used to house the illegal immigrants in states along the U.S.-Mexico border.

"On a gut level, it's hard because I'm sure that most of them went back to very difficult conditions," said Sen. Martin Heinrich, a Democrat. "However, we're a nation of laws and there is a process. You don't get to go to the front of the line because of economic reasons. If you have a credible asylum case, that's a different story and we need to treat those folks who qualify for asylum differently."

Last week, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid tapped Heinrich to help shape Senate Democrats' messaging on the crisis. On Wednesday, the New Mexico lawmaker went to the Senate floor to make a speech challenging some Republicans' insistence that the influx of illegal immigrant children is a result of lax border enforcement.

"The reality is, what's driving children to our borders is unimaginable violence, corruption, extreme poverty and instability in their home countries," Heinrich said in his speech, adding that increased manpower and technology has made the U.S. border more secure than ever. "The exodus in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala is about children fleeing for their lives."

Rep. Steve Pearce, the lone Republican in New Mexico's five-person congressional delegation, maintains that most of the immigrants entering the U.S. illegally from Central America are fleeing because of poverty and not violence.

Pearce is serving on a newly created Republican House task force created to recommend a set of policy prescriptions for the border crisis. He and other members of the task force traveled to

Honduras and Guatemala this month to assess the reasons for the migrant exodus. The group met with the presidents of both countries but otherwise rarely ventured from their hotel for safety reasons.

"They were saying, 'Send us our kids back,' " Pearce said, adding that the July 14 deportation flight from his district in New Mexico sent an important signal to people planning to enter the country illegally.

"The president and (Homeland Security Secretary) Jeh Johnson have said they will enforce the law and enforce it vigorously. This indicated to me the administration is really going through with it."

Pearce also said the deportation flight sent a message to Artesia residents, some of whom are apprehensive about the tide of Central American immigrants arriving in their community.

"They are asking, 'What about the schools?' " Pearce said. "I'm telling people that Artesia is the site where the administration is trying to follow the law very scrupulously. People will be cycling though there, but it's not like they will be building up and living in the community for decades."

On Wednesday, Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, a Democrat, met with President Barack Obama at the White House, along with other members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. During the meeting, **Luján** made an emotional plea, urging the president to act with compassion toward the new arrivals.

Luján recounted a story he had read about two nuns working with immigrant children at Catholic Charities in Honduras. He said the nuns reported that one child's parents tried to prevent his recruitment by a local gang, only to see the child murdered by the gang, who then killed the parents, as well.

"We have a responsibility to these children," **Luján** said in a Journal interview before the White House meeting. "We can't lose sight that this is a humanitarian crisis. It's been said a lot, but sadly I don't know that everyone understands what is happening to these kids and what they are fleeing.

"These are kids - 7, 8, 9 years old, and some as young as 5," **Luján** said, while rebuking fellow lawmakers calling for swift deportations. "I never realized that so many of my colleagues thought so poorly of kids around the world that are so desperate for help. I never thought I would see this day. It's not how I was raised and it's not how I was taught in my church."

However, the congressman stopped short of calling for blanket amnesty for children arriving at the U.S. border from Central America.

Speedy deportation

Luján and other New Mexico delegation Democrats said they are unlikely to support a new bipartisan proposal by Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, and Rep. Henry Cuellar, D-Texas, that would speed deportations.

The bill aims to change the 2008 William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Action Act to give Border Patrol agents greater authority to screen and deport Central American children.

Currently, the law allows for rapid deportation of children arriving at the U.S. border from Mexico, but not Central America. The Cornyn-Cuellar bill would treat all children the same under the law by allowing them to file a legal claim with an immigration court within a week of being screened by Department of Health and Human Services officials. A judge would have 72 hours to rule on whether the child is eligible to stay in the U.S. If not, the child would be returned to his or her home country.

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, another New Mexico Democrat, said merely expediting deportations does not address the root problem of the thousands of Central American kids trying to get into the U.S.

"I appreciate that there is an immediate effort to do something about the crisis," **Lujan** Grisham said. "I'm not in agreement that minimizing the due process requirement in the law gives you a better outcome. It doesn't solve the problem, which is why you need more thoughtful proposals. I worry that that's not the way this country ought to be treating unaccompanied minors who have found their way into this country."

Pearce said he is unsure if he would support the Cornyn-Cuellar bill in its entirety, but he does support amending the William Wiberforce Act to expedite the return of immigrants to their home countries.

"Changing the 2008 law absolutely must be done," Pearce said.

He also said the system is already working as it should with respect to asylum proposals.

"Everyone who says they came from violence is listened to," Pearce said. "The hearing process will ensure we don't send people back into violent situations. That is handled by the Justice Department. It's not a matter of legislation. It's already in law, and I trust that law is working quite well."

Obama proposal

Earlier this month, President Barack Obama sent Congress a request for a $3.7 billion supplemental appropriation to help deal with the surge of immigrants. The request includes money for extra judges and lawyers to help process immigration cases, as well as additional funds to pay for housing and feeding the new arrivals until they are returned to their countries or granted asylum in the U.S.

Most Democrats in New Mexico's congressional delegation were reluctant to express outright support for the president's request, saying they were still evaluating it and needed more details. But all the Democrats, and Pearce, suggested some kind of supplemental appropriation would be needed.

"It's a huge amount of money," Pearce said. "The main thing is that the president didn't commit any kind of working plan. Show us how you're going to fix the problem. If the money needs to be appropriated, fine. The question is what is it doing, how much efficiency and effectiveness are you doing it with?"

Heinrich expressed reservations about the Cornyn-Cuellar approach, but voiced clear support for the president's budget request.

"It should go through the appropriations process and we should go through each piece of it to make sure it is the appropriate response," Heinrich said. "But I think that making sure we have the resources to process people expeditiously is absolutely appropriate."

Reminded that the price tag on the president's bill approaches $4 billion, Heinrich suggested it is money that must be spent.

"We're going to need to face the facts as they are, not as we would like them to be," he said.

Sen. Tom Udall, also a Democrat, declined to take a position on the president's budget request or the Cornyn-Cuellar bill. He suggested the best solution is contained in a comprehensive immigration reform bill approved by the Senate last year.

"We can talk about all of the proposals we want, but we need to address this situation in a comprehensive way," Udall said, a sentiment echoed by every other Democrat in the delegation. "I think the solution is pretty clear - we need comprehensive immigration reform that secures our borders and clearly defines our laws."

Udall pointed out that a so-called "path to citizenship" provision in the Senate immigration bill that would prevent otherwise law-abiding people who are in the country illegally from being deported

applies only to those who were in the U.S. prior to the Dec. 31, 2011. That means the most recent arrivals would still be turned away if the Senate bill was enacted.

"Since these young people are very recent, they would not be eligible," Udall said.

Udall and other New Mexico lawmakers contend the Senate bill would establish clear new rules for who can obtain legal status in America, which would send a message to would-be immigrants. But Sen. Marco Rubio, a Florida Republican who helped author the bill, disagreed.

"I don't think the immigration bill that was proposed in the Senate would have prevented that from happening," Rubio recently told The Washington Times. "What I think would have prevented that from happening is sufficient border security on the ground that would have discouraged people from making that journey in the first place."

Republican leaders in the House have refused to debate the Senate-passed bill, but Udall said the current border crisis could prompt them to reconsider. Some observers - including **Luján** - contend there are enough votes in the House to pass the Senate bill if House Speaker John Boehner would bring it to a vote.

"When we're in the middle of crisis, people can change their minds," Udall said. "This bill sends a very strong statement about what we want the laws to be. The ball is in the court of the House. We dealt with it."

Up close

Gov. Susana Martinez tours the temporary detention facility in Artesia A6

LOAD-DATE: July 21, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: MATT YORK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS Protesters gather near a juvenile facility in Oracle, Ariz., in an effort to stop a bus load of immigrant children.
PEARCE: Most kids are fleeing poverty
HEINRICH: "We're a nation of laws"
C.CUNNINGHAM/JOURNAL An Albuquerque Journal flash poll and a Washington Post-ABC News poll asked almost identical questions in mid-July about President Barack Obama's handling of the Central American immigration crisis. The Journal flash poll sampled New Mexico registered voters, while the Post-ABC poll sampled adults nationally. These were the results.
COURTESY OF U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT TOP: The Artesia Temporary Facility for Adults with Children is one of several that increase DHS capacity to hold illegal immigrants.
GREG SORBER/JOURNAL BOTTOM: From left, Devinia Gutierrez and Brianna Herrera hold candles at a vigil last week in Albuquerque urging fast-track relief, not deportation.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS CENTER: A U.S. Customs and Border Protection vehicle patrols a rugged single dirt road between McAllen, Texas, and Reynosa, Mexico.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Congressional Documents and Publications

July 18, 2014

LUJAN INTRODUCES LEGISLATION TO PROMOTE RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 417 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District introduced legislation recently that will promote energy savings through increased efficiency standards and increased investments in renewable energy, such as wind, solar, geothermal, hydro, and biomass. The American Renewable Energy and Efficiency Act, introduced by **Lujan** and Rep. Peter Welch of Vermont - both members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, enacts a national renewable energy standard to reduce carbon emissions and drive clean energy deployment in states around the country.

"Promoting the use of renewable energy and increased energy efficiency is not only good for our environment, but it is good for our economy and for consumers," **Lujan** said. "A renewable energy standard will drive the development of the clean energy sector, creating good jobs in communities across the country, especially New Mexico where we are home to abundant renewable resources. A greater emphasis on energy efficiency will also lower energy bills and put more money back in the pockets of hard-working families."

"The United States is lagging behind on energy efficiency and in adopting renewables. Our nation's energy policies are overdue for a rewrite," said Welch. "Our legislation charts a new energy future where energy efficiency and renewable technologies are put to work creating jobs, saving money and improving the environment."

The legislation requires electric utilities to obtain a minimum of 25 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2025. Electric and natural gas utilities will also need to implement energy efficiency programs in order to save the equivalent of 15 percent and 10 percent of sales respectively by 2025.

An analysis of the American Renewable Energy Efficiency Act and similar legislation found the bill would create more than 400,000 jobs, save the average household $39 annually in energy, and reduce carbon emissions by 480 million metric tons by 2025. Companion legislation has been introduced in the Senate by Ed Markey of Massachusetts.

As a member of the Public Regulatory Commission before coming to Congress, **Lujan** worked with his colleagues to develop a renewable portfolio standard to increase renewable energy production by New Mexico utilities and to diversity utilities' renewable portfolios to include solar energy.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-introduces-legislation-to-promote-renewable-energy-and-energy-efficiency/

LOAD-DATE: July 20, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

July 18, 2014 Friday 3:56 AM EST

Lujan Introduces Legislation to Promote Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 412 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District introduced legislation recently that will promote energy savings through increased efficiency standards and increased investments in renewable energy, such as wind, solar, geothermal, hydro, and biomass. The American Renewable Energy and Efficiency Act, introduced by **Lujan** and Rep. Peter Welch of Vermont - both members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, enacts a national renewable energy standard to reduce carbon emissions and drive clean energy deployment in states around the country.

"Promoting the use of renewable energy and increased energy efficiency is not only good for our environment, but it is good for our economy and for consumers," **Lujan** said. "A renewable energy standard will drive the development of the clean energy sector, creating good jobs in communities across the country, especially New Mexico where we are home to abundant renewable resources. A greater emphasis on energy efficiency will also lower energy bills and put more money back in the pockets of hard-working families."

"The United States is lagging behind on energy efficiency and in adopting renewables. Our nation's energy policies are overdue for a rewrite," said Welch. "Our legislation charts a new energy future where energy efficiency and renewable technologies are put to work creating jobs, saving money and improving the environment."

The legislation requires electric utilities to obtain a minimum of 25 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2025. Electric and natural gas utilities will also need to implement energy efficiency programs in order to save the equivalent of 15 percent and 10 percent of sales respectively by 2025.

An analysis of the American Renewable Energy Efficiency Act and similar legislation found the bill would create more than 400,000 jobs, save the average household $39 annually in energy, and reduce carbon emissions by 480 million metric tons by 2025. Companion legislation has been introduced in the Senate by Ed Markey of Massachusetts.

As a member of the Public Regulatory Commission before coming to Congress, **Lujan** worked with his colleagues to develop a renewable portfolio standard to increase renewable energy production by New Mexico utilities and to diversity utilities' renewable portfolios to include solar energy.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140719-4803209 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: July 19, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

54 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

July 17, 2014 Thursday

State may lose in Internet tax fight; Revenue would fall, but users get break

BYLINE: DAN BOYD JOURNAL CAPITOL BUREAU

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C1

LENGTH: 477 words

SANTA FE - A bill making its way through Congress could cost New Mexico state government - and cities and counties statewide - roughly $44 million in annual tax revenue, according to a report from a nonpartisan national think tank.

On the flip side, it would also mean a tax break for thousands of New Mexico residents and businesses by eliminating a monthly tax on Internet access.

New Mexico is one of seven states that levy a tax on Internet access, according to the Washington D.C.-based Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Unlike the sales tax model used by many states that taxes only goods, New Mexico has a gross receipts tax that is imposed on most goods and services.

The "all-inclusive" nature of that tax means Internet service has automatically fallen under the definition of a taxable service, said Richard Anklam, the president and executive director of the New Mexico Tax Research Institute.

"We've already taxed it, and we've always taxed it, so that (tax revenue) is money we'd have to get from somewhere else," Anklam said.

In Gov. Susana Martinez's administration, economists have been studying the issue closely, a Department of Finance and Administration spokesman said Wednesday.

"We would be concerned about any federal legislation that would affect the state budget, and we will continue to monitor this issue for additional developments," DFA spokesman Tim Korte told the Journal.

The bill, which was approved Tuesday via voice vote in the U.S. House of Representatives, would prohibit state and local governments from taxing Internet access. Named the Permanent Internet Tax Freedom Act, it still must be approved by the U.S. Senate before landing on President Barack Obama's desk for final action.

A law first passed in 1998 and renewed several times has barred any new state and local taxes on Internet service. However, taxes already in place - like New Mexico's - have been allowed to continue, a practice that would be halted by the legislation.

Members of New Mexico's congressional delegation are split on the bill.

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., has opposed it over concerns about state revenue impacts. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., has supported it, with a spokesman saying the legislation "encourages greater access to the Internet" and could improve access in rural parts of the state.

Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., the third member of the state's House delegation, also voted in favor of the bill.

New Mexico has about 1.4 million Internet broadband connections, a figure that includes personal and business accounts, according to the Federal Communications Commission. Some accounts, such as those of nonprofit groups, are not taxed.

The $44 million revenue hit estimate for New Mexico released by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities was based on that figure and the state's tax rate, said the study's author, Michael Mazerov.

LOAD-DATE: July 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

55 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Associated Press State & Local

July 17, 2014 Thursday 9:02 PM GMT

GOP Senate candidate lends his campaign $555,000

BYLINE: BARRY MASSEY, Associated Press

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL; POLITICAL NEWS

LENGTH: 490 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) - Democratic Sen. Tom Udall has stockpiled more than $3 million for his re-election bid, but Republican challenger Allen Weh is dipping into personal money to jumpstart his campaign for the general election.

Weh, a former state GOP chairman, has lent his campaign more than a half million dollars in the past three months, allowing him to raise more money than Udall during that time, according to a Federal Election Commission finance report and a fundraising summary released by Weh's campaign.

Udall reported $3.4 million in his campaign account at the end of last month. Weh had a balance of $627,806.

Weh raised $905,266 from April through June, with $555,000 coming from personal loans. His campaign spent about $483,000.

Udall reported total receipts of $890,105 during the past quarter, and his campaign spent about $607,000.

Weh won the GOP nomination in a two-way race in the June primary election. Udall had no primary opponent.

Weh is a retired Marine colonel who owns a charter aircraft and leasing company in Albuquerque.

In the 2nd Congressional District, Democratic challenger Roxanne "Rocky" Lara raised more money in the past three months than Republican incumbent Steve Pearce. Pearce still maintains an overall cash advantage, however.

Pearce reported nearly $1.5 million on hand at the end of last month and Lara had $711,821, according to reports filed with the FEC.

National Democrats have targeted the congressional race in southern New Mexico in hopes of flipping the seat from GOP control.

Lara raised $375,018 from April through June, and Pearce had receipts of $289,201. Both ran unopposed in the June primary election.

Labor union political action committees contributed at least $55,500 to Lara, including $7,500 each from PACs of the International Association of Fire Fighters and the United Food and Commercial Workers.

Pearce's top contributors included the PAC of Union Pacific Corp., which gave $7,000. The company recently opened a large railroad hub in the district near the border community of Santa Teresa.

In the Albuquerque area's 1st Congressional District, Democratic incumbent Michelle **Lujan** Grisham reported a cash balance of $922,790 and Republican Michael Frese had $12,171.

Grisham raised $241,155, including about $52,000 from health care industry PACs. Frese had total receipts of $51,923, including a personal loan of $10,000. Frese, a Corrales business owner, won a two-way primary race. Grisham had no primary opposition.

In northern New Mexico's 3rd District of, Democratic incumbent **Ben Ray Lujan** had nearly $581,565 on hand, and Republican Jefferson Byrd had $9,113.

Lujan raised $242,868, including $39,000 from health care and medical industry PACs. Byrd, who lost to **Lujan** two years ago, collected $22,032, including $2,500 from rancher Thomas Mitchell III, of Albert, and $500 from state Sen. William Sharer, of Farmington.

___

Follow Barry Massey at https://twitter.com/bmasseyAP .

LOAD-DATE: July 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

July 17, 2014 Thursday 12:29 PM EST

Lujan Visits Albuquerque VA Facility, Meets with Acting VA Secretary

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 306 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after visiting the Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center in Albuquerque and meeting with Acting Secretary of the VA Sloan Gibson.

"The Albuquerque VA has experienced serious problems that have significantly impacted the quality and scheduling of care that New Mexico's veterans have received. This mismanagement strikes at the very heart of our commitment to our veterans and must be fixed quickly and thoroughly. Secretary Gibson's visit today provided an important opportunity to convey what New Mexico's veterans have experienced - from unacceptable wait times to care that fails to live up to our commitment.

"I expressed the importance of accountability and transparency at the Albuquerque VA, so that we can take the necessary steps to provide health care that is worthy of the service of these brave men and women. Secretary Gibson assured us that, as members of Congress, we would receive information from the New Mexico VA that is critical to perform our oversight responsibility, and ensuring our veterans receive the care they deserve. It is also essential that whistleblowers who step forward with concerns regarding the treatment of veterans are listened to, and not intimidated and discouraged from speaking up. A culture of intimidation must change, and we need leadership that will embrace those who share their concerns rather than trying to hide or ignore them.

"Finally, I highlighted for the Secretary the importance of seeing that our veterans in rural areas across New Mexico have access to high quality care and the need to address the challenges that are unique to these communities."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140719-4803298 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: July 19, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

July 17, 2014 Thursday 3:12 AM EST

New Mexico Dems: Congressman Ben Ray Lujan Signs on to Constitutional Amendment to Limit Money in Politics

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 250 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he has joined in an effort to limit money in politics by introducing an amendment to the United States Constitution. The constitutional amendment would overturn Supreme Court decisions like Citizens United v. FEC and McCutcheon v. FEC in an effort to reduce the growing influence of money in the political system. The constitutional amendment is the companion to the amendment introduced in the Senate by New Mexico Senator Tom Udall, and passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

"Citizens United opened the floodgates for special-interest corporate money from hidden donors that seeks to influence elections. The McCutcheon decision further enhanced the ability of the wealthy few to unduly influence elections and have an outsized impact that drowns out the voice of the American people," Congressman **Lujan** said. "This amendment would take a critical step toward removing corporate influence in our elections and reaffirm the bedrock principles of our democracy by giving voice back to the people."

According to the Center for Responsive Politics, outside spending in elections tripled between 2008 and 2012 - with 93 percent of the more than $600 million spent in 2012 by Super PACs coming from about 3,300 donors, or .0011 percent of the American population.

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage10PkS-140718-30TacordaCheng-4801661 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: July 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

July 16, 2014

Rangel Joins to Introduce the Democracy is For All Amendment; Rep. Charles B. Rangel (D-NY) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 845 words

Washington, D.C.- Congressman Charles B. Rangel co-introduced the Democracy for All Amendment with U.S. Reps. Ted (FL-21), Donna Edwards (MD-4), and Jim McGovern (MA-2). H. J. Res. 119 is the House companion to S. J. Res. 19, the constitutional amendment slated for a historic vote in the U.S. Senate this year. The Democracy is for All Amendment will reverse highly controversial Supreme Court decisions like Citizens United v. FEC and McCutcheon v. FEC, which have given corporations and the wealthiest donors the right to buy unlimited influence in our elections.

"Supreme Court decisions like Citizens United and McCutcheon have cast a dark shadow over our democracy by bringing us dangerously closer to an electoral system where the voices of everyday Americans are easily drowned out by corporations, shadowy front groups, and a handful of billionaires," said Rangel. "At a time when Americans of every political persuasion want big money out of our elections, the Democracy for All Amendment will restore their authority to pass laws protecting the integrity of our electoral process. By reversing Citizens United and related cases, this amendment will advance the basic principle of one voice, one vote that is so integral to our democracy."

Cosponsors (99): Deutch, Edwards, McGovern, Pelosi, Larson, Becerra, Conyers, Rangel, George Miller, Kaptur, DeFazio, Lewis, Slaughter, Pallone, Engel, McDermott, Serrano, Price, DeLauro, Norton, Waters, Timothy Bishop, Eshoo, Gene Green, Hastings (FL), Farr, Doggett, Doyle, Fattah, Jackson Lee, Lofgren, Blumenauer, Pascrell, Sherman, Meeks, Lee, Robert Brady, Capuano, Crowley, Holt, Schakowsky, Mike Thompson, Clay, Susan A. Davis, Honda, Israel, Langevin, Larsen, Schiff, Grijalva, Ruppersberger, Tim Ryan, Van Hollen, Butterfield, Moore, Wasserman Schultz, Matsui, Cohen, Joe Courtney, Ellison, Hank Johnson, Sarbanes, Welch, Yarmuth, Speier, Fudge, Nolan, Himes, **Ben Ray Lujan**, Schrader, Tonko, Quigley, Garamendi, Shea-Porter, Foster, Cicilline, Richmond, Sewell, Hahn, Bonamici, DelBene, Payne, Grayson, Titus, Beatty, Brownley, Bustos, Gabbard, Denny Heck, Huffman, Kennedy, Kilmer, Kuster, Lowenthal,**Lujan** Grisham, O'Rourke, Pocan, Swalwell, Clark

Background

Since the 2010 Citizens United decision, Americans have witnessed an unprecedented explosion of big money in state and federal elections. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, outside spending tripled between 2008 and 2012, and 93 percent of the more than $600 million spent in 2012 by Super PACs came from about 3,300 donors, or .0011 percent of the American population.

Beyond the explosion of outside spending invited by the Supreme Court's ruling in Citizens United, this decision also dramatically undermined the legitimacy of all campaign finance laws. In his far-reaching opinion for the 5-4 majority, Justice Kennedy held that any election law that goes beyond preventing quid pro quo, bribery-style corruption between candidates and donors risks violating the First Amendment. Unfortunately, in 2014 the Supreme Court only further embraced this narrow understanding of corruption in McCutcheon v. FEC when it invalidated aggregate limits on how much a single donor could spend per election cycle. Writing for the 5-4 majority, Chief Justice Roberts even went so far as to argue that the influence awarded to donors is not a corrupting quid pro quo transaction, but a First Amendment right.

Sponsored in the U.S. Senate by Senator Tom Udall (D-NM), S. J. Res. 19 was amended and passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee on July 10, 2014. The provisions within the Democracy for All Amendment are the product of months of collaboration between the House and Senate sponsors of previously proposed constitutional amendments, constitutional scholars, and grassroots advocacy organizations committed to restoring the integrity of our electoral process. In addition to overturning recent rulings like Citizens United and McCutcheon, the Democracy is for All Amendment also reverses the Supreme Court's controversial holding in Buckley v. Valeo that spending money in elections is a form of speech protected by the First Amendment.

Download a copy of the amendment here: http://go.usa.gov/Xzqk

Section I. To advance democratic self-government and political equality, and to protect the integrity of government and the electoral process, Congress and the States may regulate and set reasonable limits on the raising and spending of money by candidates and others to influence elections.

Section II. Congress and the States shall have power to implement and enforce this article by appropriate legislation, and may distinguish between natural persons and corporations or other artificial entities created by law, including by prohibiting such entities from spending money to influence elections.

Section III. Nothing in this article shall be construed to grant Congress or the States the power to abridge the freedom of the press.

Read this original document at: http://rangel.house.gov/press-release/rangel-joins-introduce-democracy-all-amendment

LOAD-DATE: July 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

July 16, 2014 Wednesday

RANGEL JOINS TO INTRODUCE THE DEMOCRACY IS FOR ALL AMENDMENT

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 705 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New York Rep. Charles B. Rangel:

Congressman Charles B. Rangel co-introduced the Democracy for All Amendment with U.S. Reps. Ted (FL-21), Donna Edwards (MD-4), and Jim McGovern (MA-2). H. J. Res. 119 is the House companion to S. J. Res. 19, the constitutional amendment slated for a historic vote in the U.S. Senate this year. The Democracy is for All Amendment will reverse highly controversial Supreme Court decisions like Citizens United v. FEC and McCutcheon v. FEC, which have given corporations and the wealthiest donors the right to buy unlimited influence in our elections.

"Supreme Court decisions like Citizens United and McCutcheon have cast a dark shadow over our democracy by bringing us dangerously closer to an electoral system where the voices of everyday Americans are easily drowned out by corporations, shadowy front groups, and a handful of billionaires," said Rangel. "At a time when Americans of every political persuasion want big money out of our elections, the Democracy for All Amendment will restore their authority to pass laws protecting the integrity of our electoral process. By reversing Citizens United and related cases, this amendment will advance the basic principle of one voice, one vote that is so integral to our democracy."

Cosponsors (99): Deutch, Edwards, McGovern, Pelosi, Larson, Becerra, Conyers, Rangel, George Miller, Kaptur, DeFazio, Lewis, Slaughter, Pallone, Engel, McDermott, Serrano, Price, DeLauro, Norton, Waters, Timothy Bishop, Eshoo, Gene Green, Hastings (FL), Farr, Doggett, Doyle, Fattah, Jackson Lee, Lofgren, Blumenauer, Pascrell, Sherman, Meeks, Lee, Robert Brady, Capuano, Crowley, Holt, Schakowsky, Mike Thompson, Clay, Susan A. Davis, Honda, Israel, Langevin, Larsen, Schiff, Grijalva, Ruppersberger, Tim Ryan, Van Hollen, Butterfield, Moore, Wasserman Schultz, Matsui, Cohen, Joe Courtney, Ellison, Hank Johnson, Sarbanes, Welch, Yarmuth, Speier, Fudge, Nolan, Himes, **Ben Ray Lujan**, Schrader, Tonko, Quigley, Garamendi, Shea-Porter, Foster, Cicilline, Richmond, Sewell, Hahn, Bonamici, DelBene, Payne, Grayson, Titus, Beatty, Brownley, Bustos, Gabbard, Denny Heck, Huffman, Kennedy, Kilmer, Kuster, Lowenthal,**Lujan** Grisham, O'Rourke, Pocan, Swalwell, Clark

Background

Since the 2010 Citizens United decision, Americans have witnessed an unprecedented explosion of big money in state and federal elections. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, outside spending tripled between 2008 and 2012, and 93 percent of the more than $600 million spent in 2012 by Super PACs came from about 3,300 donors, or .0011 percent of the American population.

Beyond the explosion of outside spending invited by the Supreme Court's ruling in Citizens United, this decision also dramatically undermined the legitimacy of all campaign finance laws. In his far-reaching opinion for the 5-4 majority, Justice Kennedy held that any election law that goes beyond preventing quid pro quo, bribery-style corruption between candidates and donors risks violating the First Amendment. Unfortunately, in 2014 the Supreme Court only further embraced this narrow

understanding of corruption in McCutcheon v. FEC when it invalidated aggregate limits on how much a single donor could spend per election cycle. Writing for the 5-4 majority, Chief Justice Roberts even went so far as to argue that the influence awarded to donors is not a corrupting quid pro quo transaction, but a First Amendment right.

Sponsored in the U.S. Senate by Senator Tom Udall (D-NM), S. J. Res. 19 was amended and passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee on July 10, 2014. The provisions within the Democracy for All Amendment are the product of months of collaboration between the House and Senate sponsors of previously proposed constitutional amendments, constitutional scholars, and grassroots advocacy organizations committed to restoring the integrity of our electoral process. In addition to overturning recent rulings like Citizens United and McCutcheon, the Democracy is for All Amendment also reverses the Supreme Court's controversial holding in Buckley v. Valeo that spending money in elections is a form of speech protected by the First Amendment.

LOAD-DATE: July 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

July 16, 2014 Wednesday 1:35 AM EST

Rangel Joins to Introduce the Democracy is For All Amendment

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 847 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. Charles B. Rangel, D-N.Y. (13th CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman Charles B. Rangel co-introduced the Democracy for All Amendment with U.S. Reps. Ted (FL-21), Donna Edwards (MD-4), and Jim McGovern (MA-2). H. J. Res. 119 is the House companion to S. J. Res. 19, the constitutional amendment slated for a historic vote in the U.S. Senate this year. The Democracy is for All Amendment will reverse highly controversial Supreme Court decisions like Citizens United v. FEC and McCutcheon v. FEC, which have given corporations and the wealthiest donors the right to buy unlimited influence in our elections.

"Supreme Court decisions like Citizens United and McCutcheon have cast a dark shadow over our democracy by bringing us dangerously closer to an electoral system where the voices of everyday Americans are easily drowned out by corporations, shadowy front groups, and a handful of billionaires," said Rangel. "At a time when Americans of every political persuasion want big money out of our elections, the Democracy for All Amendment will restore their authority to pass laws protecting the integrity of our electoral process. By reversing Citizens United and related cases, this

amendment will advance the basic principle of one voice, one vote that is so integral to our democracy."

Cosponsors (99): Deutch, Edwards, McGovern, Pelosi, Larson, Becerra, Conyers, Rangel, George Miller, Kaptur, DeFazio, Lewis, Slaughter, Pallone, Engel, McDermott, Serrano, Price, DeLauro, Norton, Waters, Timothy Bishop, Eshoo, Gene Green, Hastings (FL), Farr, Doggett, Doyle, Fattah, Jackson Lee, Lofgren, Blumenauer, Pascrell, Sherman, Meeks, Lee, Robert Brady, Capuano, Crowley, Holt, Schakowsky, Mike Thompson, Clay, Susan A. Davis, Honda, Israel, Langevin, Larsen, Schiff, Grijalva, Ruppersberger, Tim Ryan, Van Hollen, Butterfield, Moore, Wasserman Schultz, Matsui, Cohen, Joe Courtney, Ellison, Hank Johnson, Sarbanes, Welch, Yarmuth, Speier, Fudge, Nolan, Himes, **Ben Ray Lujan**, Schrader, Tonko, Quigley, Garamendi, Shea-Porter, Foster, Cicilline, Richmond, Sewell, Hahn, Bonamici, DelBene, Payne, Grayson, Titus, Beatty, Brownley, Bustos, Gabbard, Denny Heck, Huffman, Kennedy, Kilmer, Kuster, Lowenthal,**Lujan** Grisham, O'Rourke, Pocan, Swalwell, Clark

Background

Since the 2010 Citizens United decision, Americans have witnessed an unprecedented explosion of big money in state and federal elections. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, outside spending tripled between 2008 and 2012, and 93 percent of the more than $600 million spent in 2012 by Super PACs came from about 3,300 donors, or .0011 percent of the American population.

Beyond the explosion of outside spending invited by the Supreme Court's ruling in Citizens United, this decision also dramatically undermined the legitimacy of all campaign finance laws. In his far-reaching opinion for the 5-4 majority, Justice Kennedy held that any election law that goes beyond preventing quid pro quo, bribery-style corruption between candidates and donors risks violating the First Amendment. Unfortunately, in 2014 the Supreme Court only further embraced this narrow understanding of corruption in McCutcheon v. FEC when it invalidated aggregate limits on how much a single donor could spend per election cycle. Writing for the 5-4 majority, Chief Justice Roberts even went so far as to argue that the influence awarded to donors is not a corrupting quid pro quo transaction, but a First Amendment right.

Sponsored in the U.S. Senate by Senator Tom Udall (D-NM), S. J. Res. 19 was amended and passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee on July 10, 2014. The provisions within the Democracy for All Amendment are the product of months of collaboration between the House and Senate sponsors of previously proposed constitutional amendments, constitutional scholars, and grassroots advocacy organizations committed to restoring the integrity of our electoral process. In addition to overturning recent rulings like Citizens United and McCutcheon, the Democracy is for All Amendment also reverses the Supreme Court's controversial holding in Buckley v. Valeo that spending money in elections is a form of speech protected by the First Amendment.

Download a copy of the amendment here: http://go.usa.gov/Xzqk

Section I. To advance democratic self-government and political equality, and to protect the integrity of government and the electoral process, Congress and the States may regulate and set reasonable limits on the raising and spending of money by candidates and others to influence elections.

Section II. Congress and the States shall have power to implement and enforce this article by appropriate legislation, and may distinguish between natural persons and corporations or other artificial entities created by law, including by prohibiting such entities from spending money to influence elections.

Section III. Nothing in this article shall be construed to grant Congress or the States the power to abridge the freedom of the press.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140717-4799453 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: July 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

July 16, 2014 Wednesday 12:59 AM EST

Rep. Slaughter Introduces Bill to Prohibit Interference In Employees' Birth Control Decisions

BYLINE: by MERLY LAPIG, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 717 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, July 16 -- Rep. Louise McIntosh Slaughter, D-N.Y., has introduced legislation (H.R. 5051) to "ensure that employers cannot interfere in their employees' birth control and other health care decisions."

The bill was introduced on July 9 and has 128 co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. Diana DeGette, D-Colo., Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., Ami Bera, D-Calif., Timothy H. Bishop, D-N.Y., Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., Suzanne Bonamici, D-Ore., Robert A. Brady, D-Pa., Bruce L. Braley, D-Iowa, Julia Brownley, D-Calif., Lois Capps, D-Calif., Kathy Castor, D-Fla., Judy Chu, D-Calif., David N. Cicilline, D-R.I., Katherine M. Clark, D-Mass., Yvette D. Clarke, D-N.Y., Wm. Lacy Clay Jr., D-Mo., Steve Cohen, D-Tenn., Gerald E. Connolly, D-Va., John Conyers Jr., D-Mich., Elijah E. Cummings, D-Md., Danny K. Davis, D-Ill., Peter A. DeFazio, D-Ore., Rosa L. DeLauro, D-Conn., Suzan DelBene, D-Wash., Lloyd Doggett, D-Texas, Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill., Donna F. Edwards, D-Md., Keith Ellison, D-Minn., Elizabeth Esty, D-Conn., Sam Farr, D-Calif., Chaka Fattah, D-Pa., Lois Frankel, D-Fla., Marcia L. Fudge, D-Ohio, Alan Grayson, D-Fla., Janice Hahn, D-Calif., Alcee L Hastings, D-Fla., Michael M. Honda, D-Calif., Steny H. Hoyer, D-Md., Jared Huffman, D-Calif., Steve Israel, D-N.Y., Sheila Jackson-Lee, D-Texas, Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-Texas, Henry C. Johnson, D-Ga., William R. Keating, D-Mass., Joseph P. Kennedy, D-Mass., Derek Kilmer, D-Wash., Ann Kirkpatrick, D-Ariz., Ann McLane Kuster, D-N.H., Barbara Lee, D-Calif., Sander M. Levin, D-Mich., John Lewis, D-Ga., Zoe Lofgren, D-Calif., Alan Lowenthal, D-Calif., Nita M. Lowey, D-N.Y., **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., Dan Maffei, D-N.Y., Carolyn B. Maloney, D-N.Y., Doris Matsui, D-Calif., Carolyn McCarthy, D-N.Y., Betty McCollum, D-Minn., Jim McDermott, D-Wash., James P. McGovern, D-Mass., Grace Meng, D-N.Y., Michael H. Michaud, D-Maine, George Miller, D-Calif., Gwen Moore, D-Wis., James P. Moran, D-Va., Patrick Murphy, D-Fla., Frank Pallone Jr., D-N.J., Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., Ed Perlmutter, D-Colo., Gary C. Peters, D-Mich., Scott Peters, D-Calif., Chellie Pingree, D-Maine, Mark Pocan, D-Wis., Jared Polis, D-Colo., David E. Price, D-N.C., Mike Quigley, D-Ill., Charles B. Rangel, D-N.Y., Lucille Roybal-Allard, D-Calif., Raul Ruiz, D-Calif., Timothy J. Ryan, D-Ohio, Linda T. Sanchez, D-Calif., John Sarbanes, D-Md., Janice D. Schakowsky, D-

Ill., Adam B. Schiff, D-Calif., Brad Schneider, D-Ill., Allyson Y. Schwartz, D-Pa., Robert C. Scott, D-Va., Carol Shea-Porter, D-N.H., Albio Sires, D-N.J., Adam Smith, D-Wash., Jackie Speier, D-Calif., Eric Swalwell, R-Calif., Mark Takano, D-Calif., Mike Thompson, D-Calif., John F. Tierney, D-Mass., Dina Titus, D-Nev., Paul Tonko, D-N.Y., Niki Tsongas, D-Mass., Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., Henry A. Waxman, D-Calif., Peter Welch, D-Vt., Frederica S. Wilson, D-Fla., John A. Yarmuth, D-Ky., Karen Bass, D-Calif., Corrine Brown, D-Fla., G.K. Butterfield, D-N.C., Emanuel Cleaver, D-Mo., Joseph Crowley, D-N.Y., Anna G. Eshoo, D-Calif., Gene Green, D-Texas, Raul M. Grijalva, D-Ariz., Luis V. Gutierrez, D-Ill., Dan Kildee, D-Mich., Grace F. Napolitano, D-Calif., Ed Pastor, D-Ariz., Donald M. Payne Jr., D-N.J., Marc Veasey, D-Texas, Maxine Waters, D-Calif., Jerry McNerney, D-Calif., Brian Higgins, D-N.Y., Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz., Steven Horsford, D-Nev., and Xavier Becerra, D-Calif., and Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton, D-D.C.

The legislation was referred to the House Education and the Workforce Committee, House Energy and Commerce Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/LegislativeData.php?&n=BillText. For more information about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information about Targeted News Service products and services, please contact: Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://targetednews.com.

22LapigM 140716-1168219

LOAD-DATE: July 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

62 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

July 16, 2014 Wednesday

Lujan Signs on to Constitutional Amendment to Limit Money in Politics

LENGTH: 208 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he has joined in an effort to limit money in politics by introducing an amendment to the United States Constitution. The constitutional amendment would overturn Supreme Court decisions like Citizens United v. FEC and McCutcheon v. FEC in an effort to reduce the growing influence of money in the political system. The constitutional amendment is the companion to the amendment introduced in the Senate by New Mexico Senator Tom Udall, and passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

"Citizens United opened the floodgates for special-interest corporate money from hidden donors that seeks to influence elections. The McCutcheon decision further enhanced the ability of the wealthy few to unduly influence elections and have an outsized impact that drowns out the voice of the American people," Congressman **Luján** said. "This amendment would take a critical step toward removing corporate influence in our elections and reaffirm the bedrock principles of our democracy by giving voice back to the people."

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov

LOAD-DATE: July 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

63 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

July 16, 2014 Wednesday

CHC ON UNACCOMPANIED MINORS SITUATION

LENGTH: 1314 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Today, Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) Chairman Rubén Hinojosa (TX-15) and Members of the CHC released the following statements following today's press conference on the unaccompanied minors situation.

CHC Chairman Rubén Hinojosa:"The Congressional Hispanic Caucus stands up in defense of the unaccompanied minors from Central America. This is an issue that is especially concerning to us because these are our kids. The children coming from our neighboring Latin American countries

could be our nieces, nephews, grandkids. As a Caucus, we continue to fight for immigration reform and now, we join together to stand up for these unaccompanied children. We must ensure these children are protected under the law and that we find solutions to this humanitarian issue at hand."

CHC First Vice Chair, Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** (NM-03): "As Congress addresses this important issue of children and families arriving at our border, which is only further exacerbated by the lack of comprehensive immigration reform, we cannot lose sight of the fact that this is a humanitarian crisis. Many of the people fleeing to our southern border are doing so out of fear and desperation due to the threat of violence in their home countries. Yesterday, I met with nuns from New Mexico who have been on the front lines working to provide humanitarian aid to these children, and they told me a story that is tragically common throughout the region, of children being forced to join a gang and a family that was murdered to be made an example of when they tried to stand up to protect their child. As we move forward to address the President's request and the supplemental that will be brought to the House floor, we must not forget the plight of these children and the desperate circumstances they have faced in their home country. We must also work with our neighbors and allies in the region to see how we can help address the root cause of the violence that has gripped these countries."

CHC Second Vice Chair, Congresswoman Linda Sánchez (CA-38):"These children fled their countries through no fault of their own and they deserve their legal rights to due process provided under our current laws. Congress needs to act quickly and approve the supplemental funding that will allow our agencies to enforce our laws. As we near the end of our legislative calendar, I urge my Republican colleagues to get off the political fence and get to work on reforms that address our broken immigration system."

CHC Immigration Task Force Chair Luis V. Gutiérrez (IL-04):"The CHC is unified in supporting the fair treatment of children fleeing violence who are apprehended at our border and we support the President following the law and giving children a meaningful day in court to protect their rights under our laws. At the same time, we are urging the President to act boldly under current law to extend prosecutorial discretion and take other executive actions to fix our broken immigration system now that Republicans have failed to allow legislation to proceed. Clearly Republicans would rather sue the President than help him solve national problems or work with Democrats to serve the American people, and on immigration and the treatment of immigrants - especially children - Republicans will have to contend with the CHC."

Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ): "For Republicans to politicize the heart-wrenching decision to send a child away as opportunistic and a way to take advantage of American law is as cynical a position as I have ever heard. We need to provide the President with the money he needs to handle the refugee crisis on our southern border. At the same time, I will strongly oppose any attempts to roll back current laws designed to protect the ability of these children and families to apply for asylum, trafficking protection and other specialized forms of relief. While not every child will have a valid claim, it is critically important that every child be given the chance to have due process. The bottom line is that we have to attack this problem from an immigration perspective, a foreign policy perspective, a refugee perspective, and a national security perspective. I am concerned and I am angry and it's time to fight back, but right now it's time to address the humanitarian crisis on our border."

Congresswoman Lucille Roybal- Allard (CA-40):"As we try to address the humanitarian crisis on our border, we must not abandon our American ideals or our moral obligation to care for these vulnerable children. We urge the Republican leadership to quickly pass a clean emergency supplemental spending bill and to not undermine the basic legal protections afforded these children under our laws. Short-term political considerations must not come before the long-term interests of children who could be unjustly returned to the violence and death from which they fled."

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez (NY-07):"First and foremost, we must keep in mind these are children. We have a moral responsibility to ensure they receive assistance and are treated in a dignified, humane manner. How we treat the most vulnerable among us reflects on our character as a nation, and we must rise to the occasion to address this crisis."

Congresswoman Grace F. Napolitano (CA-32): "Congress, Republicans included, has voted three times since 2002 to include protection for refugees of violence. America is still in financial crisis, yet we have always been the beacon of hope for the oppressed around the world. Children must be protected not only by us but by their own governments, and we must go after the criminals who are threatening, killing, maiming, and trafficking them. It is critical that we follow the rule of law and our own immigration laws with compassion for these children who have been forced to flee their home countries."

Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez (CA-46),a senior member of the House Homeland Security Committee: "This is not a 'border security' problem. This is a complex humanitarian crisis that is a result of dire situations in these children's home countries: escalating gang violence, weak government institutions, a lack of social services and economic opportunity. But how poorly this is being addressed on our side is a result of our broken immigration system and we cannot brush this under the rug any longer."

Congressman Tony Cárdenas (CA-29):"This is not about enforcing immigration laws, because these are not immigrants seeking to come to America. They are refugee children seeking asylum from their war-torn countries, where they fear for their lives. America has always been the land where the persecuted could seek protection. This is who we are as a nation. The children at our southern border deserve our protection, they deserve due process, and if sending them home would put them in danger, they deserve sanctuary."

Congressman Joe Garcia (FL-26): "These children are but a symptom of a very broken immigration system that has failed our country for decades. We must focus our attention on the bigger picture - passing comprehensive immigration reform - and in the meantime, treat these children with the compassion they morally and legally deserve."

Congressman Juan Vargas (CA-51):"Our nation is facing a humanitarian crisis in which we have an opportunity to demonstrate the best values of our society. It is our duty and international obligation to provide due process for the children and families fleeing persecution and violence in their home countries. We must come together and treat them with dignity, compassion, respect and love. As we consider approving additional funds in response to this situation, we must protect a child's right to due process under existing law."

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov

LOAD-DATE: July 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

July 16, 2014 Wednesday

Lujan Calls for Needed Funding for Environmental Cleanup at LANL and to Restore Operations at WIPP

LENGTH: 441 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of House of Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor today in an exchange with the Chairman of the House Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee, Rep. Mike Simpson. **Luján** encouraged appropriate funding for environmental cleanup at Los Alamos National Laboratory and to restore operations at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The exchange occurred during debate on the Fiscal Year 2015 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act. Below are their remarks.

Mr. **Lujan**: Mr. Chairman, for over 70 years our national laboratories have worked to ensure the security of our nation. We have a responsibility to be good stewards of the environment in relation to the historic and ongoing radiological work at these laboratories. At Los Alamos, there are legal obligations, including the 3706 Campaign to remove Trans-Uranic, or TrU, Waste and the broader 2005 Consent Order between the Department of Energy (DOE) and the State of New Mexico, to remediate legacy waste at Los Alamos.

Two major wild fires near Los Alamos National Lab have highlighted the importance of removing above-ground waste from this facility. DOE was nearing completion of the 3706 campaign when the nation's only repository for TrU waste, the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, experienced first a fire and then a radiological release.

As we work to restore WIPP operations, we must ensure that our national laboratories have the resources to meet their legal obligations for environmental remediation and also recognize our moral obligation to these communities who have served our great nation. It is with this intention that I request the Chair to work with me and Representatives from other affected communities as this bill moves forward to conference to ensure that adequate and appropriate funds are available, not only for restoration operations of WIPP, but also for legally mandated environmental remediation efforts at Los Alamos and other affected national laboratories.

I thank you for the time to address this important issue and look forward to working with you to find a solution.

Mr. Simpson: I'd like to thank the gentleman from New Mexico for his continued advocacy of the cleanup program at Los Alamos. I look forward to working with you on ensuring adequate funding is available to support the Department of Energy's cleanup program, including the cleanup work at Los Alamos and the restoration of operations at WIPP. And I thank the gentleman.

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov

LOAD-DATE: July 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

July 15, 2014

LUJAN SIGNS ON TO CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO LIMIT MONEY IN POLITICS;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 250 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he has joined in an effort to limit money in politics by introducing an amendment to the United States Constitution. The constitutional amendment would overturn Supreme Court decisions like Citizens United v. FEC and McCutcheon v. FEC in an effort to reduce the growing influence of money in the political system. The constitutional amendment is the companion to the amendment introduced in the Senate by New Mexico Senator Tom Udall, and passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

"Citizens United opened the floodgates for special-interest corporate money from hidden donors that seeks to influence elections. The McCutcheon decision further enhanced the ability of the wealthy few to unduly influence elections and have an outsized impact that drowns out the voice of the American people," Congressman **Lujan** said. "This amendment would take a critical step toward removing corporate influence in our elections and reaffirm the bedrock principles of our democracy by giving voice back to the people."

According to the Center for Responsive Politics, outside spending in elections tripled between 2008 and 2012 - with 93 percent of the more than $600 million spent in 2012 by Super PACs coming from about 3,300 donors, or .0011 percent of the American population.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-signs-on-to-constitutional-amendment-to-limit-money-in-politics/

LOAD-DATE: July 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

July 15, 2014 Tuesday 3:58 AM EST

Lujan Signs on to Constitutional Amendment to Limit Money in Politics

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 247 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he has joined in an effort to limit money in politics by introducing an amendment to the United States Constitution. The constitutional amendment would overturn Supreme Court decisions like Citizens United v. FEC and McCutcheon v. FEC in an effort to reduce the growing influence of money in the political system. The constitutional amendment is the companion to the amendment introduced in the Senate by New Mexico Senator Tom Udall, and passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

"Citizens United opened the floodgates for special-interest corporate money from hidden donors that seeks to influence elections. The McCutcheon decision further enhanced the ability of the wealthy few to unduly influence elections and have an outsized impact that drowns out the voice of the American people," Congressman **Lujan** said. "This amendment would take a critical step toward removing corporate influence in our elections and reaffirm the bedrock principles of our democracy by giving voice back to the people."

According to the Center for Responsive Politics, outside spending in elections tripled between 2008 and 2012 - with 93 percent of the more than $600 million spent in 2012 by Super PACs coming from about 3,300 donors, or .0011 percent of the American population.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140716-4798495 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: July 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

July 14, 2014 Monday

New bill could eliminate gross receipts tax on NM Internet service

BYLINE: Dan Mayfield

LENGTH: 332 words

New Mexico could lose almost $44 million in tax revenue annually if Congress passes the new Permanent Internet Tax Freedom Act.

The House of Representatives is scheduled to vote this week on the bill, which would remove all sales taxes from Internet service.

In most of the country, it's not a big deal. But New Mexico is one of just seven states that tax Internet service.

"New Mexico has one of the broadest sales tax bases in the country, and so it wasn't that New Mexico sort of intentionally went out and started taxing it. It's broad and you tax services, unless explicitly exempted," said Michael Mazerov, the author of a new report for the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, which shows what states will lose if the bill passes. The CBPP is a thinktank in Washington, D.C., that studies tax policies.

If the bill does not pass, states would be allowed to tax Internet services when a previous bill, the Internet Tax Freedom Act, expires on Nov. 1.

New Mexico's taxation of Internet service has been grandfathered into to the previous bill.

The Permanent Internet Tax Freedom Act, Mazerov told Business First, would cause New Mexico to lose $43.9 million in gross receipts tax revenue from the state's 1.4 million broadband connections. New Mexico charges a 5.1 percent gross receipts tax.

A spokesperson for Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham's office said it is looking into the bill. Representative **Ben Ray Lujan's** office did not respond to a request for comment.

"There is a question about how much price matters. This is a costly and inefficient way to subsidize the Internet," Mazerov said. "In New Mexico, you're used to paying sales tax on things."

The PITFA, however, passed the house Judicial Committee last week by a large margin.

Want Albuquerque news in your inbox? Click here to sign up for our email newsletters.

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: July 14, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

July 12, 2014 Saturday

SGR heads to D.C.

SECTION: TODAY'S NEWS

LENGTH: 169 words

This past week, Rep. Stephanie Garcia Richard (D-Los Alamos, Santa Fe, Sandoval and Rio Arriba) traveled to Washington D.C. to meet with New Mexico's federal delegation and discuss LANL funding and NNSA procurement policies. In her meetings with Senators Tom Udall and Martin Henrich and Representatives **Ben Ray Lujan**, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and Steve Pearce, Garcia Richard stressed the region's concerns that the NNSA is wanting LANL and other NNSA facilities to use the NNSA Supply Chain Management Center (SCMC) for commodity purchases under unequal and non-competitive terms. This NNSA directive bypasses the normal competitive LANL RFP process and drives LANL purchases away from local and regional contractors to out-of-state firms. Garcia Richard asked the Congressional delegation to support a proposal to have NNSA/DOE provide resources and guidelines for a regional business cooperative that will allow New Mexico based contractors to become competitive and participate in the NNSA SCMC procurement system.

LOAD-DATE: July 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal: Blogs (New Mexico)

July 10, 2014 Thursday

VA stiff-arms NM delegation's information request

BYLINE: Michael Coleman, JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU PUBLISHED: THURSDAY, JULY 10, 2014 AT 3:57 PM

SECTION: INSIDE THE BELTWAY

LENGTH: 830 words

.....

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. - New Mexico's congressional delegation is demanding answers from the Veterans Administration after Albuquerque VA officials told congressional staffers this week that they must submit federal Freedom of Information Act requests to learn more about VA health care policies.

All five delegation members - Democratic Sens. Martin Heinrich and Tom Udall, Democratic Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and **Ben Ray Lujan**, and Republican Rep. Steve Pearce - signed a letter to Sloan D. Gibson, the acting VA secretary on Thursday. The letter said the Albuquerque VA's insistence that members of Congress file official requests for information showed "an alarming ignorance or an utter disregard" for congressional oversight.

The letter stems from a conference call on Monday among staffers for the New Mexico congressional delegation and top staff at the Albuquerque VA, including interim Director Dr. James Robbins. Ongoing problems at the Albuquerque VA Hospital, punctuated by the June 30 death of Jim Napoleon Garcia, a Vietnam War veteran who suffered a heart attack in the hospital's cafeteria on June 30 and died after waiting for an ambulance to arrive, prompted the conference call. The Department of Veterans Affairs remains under intense scrutiny for widespread reports of long delays for treatment and medical appointments and of veterans dying while on waiting lists.

"We have frequently asked the VA Hospital to provide us with its written policies and practices related to scheduling, patient wait time, bonus and performance award system, and general management issues including how schedulers are trained," the letter said. "However, VA Hospital staff has repeatedly denied this information to us and most recently told our offices that we must file Freedom of Information Act requests for all written VA Hospital documentation. Such responses tremendously impede our constitutional responsibility to oversee the faithful execution of the laws we pass."

After Garcia collapsed at the Albuquerque VA, an onlooker called 911 but VA staff did not mobilize an on-site VA Hospital EMS team to provide emergency medical services, the letter states.

"According to the VA, staff acted in accordance with an April 4, 2014 Medical Center Memorandum, which defines VA Hospital policy during medical emergencies on campus," the delegation's letter said. "However, when congressional staff asked for copies of the Medical Center Memo, VA Hospital staff withheld this material and asserted that the only way to obtain this information would be to file a FOIA request."

Officials at the Albuquerque VA did not respond to a request for comment from the Journal on Thursday.

The congressional letter asks the VA to explain its policy "for training VA Hospital staff in responding to congressional inquiries."

"Is it a common practice to condition disclosure of such information on a congressional office first filing a FOIA request," the letter asks.

It also asks for clarity on why it won't release the Medical Center Memo outlining its procedures for an on-site medical emergency, as well as other records pertaining to the ongoing VA crisis in scheduling appointments.

"If you are unable to comply with these requests, please explain how this is consistent with VA standards for sharing information with Congress and the millions of veterans served by the VA," the letter said.

According to a document obtained by the Journal last week, a policy instituted in 2010 and signed by then-director George Marnell directs the VA medical center Code Blue Team to respond to medical emergencies in six buildings on the 88-acre property off of San Pedro SE. The buildings include the main hospital in Building 41, but the cafeteria or canteen aren't mentioned.

Code Blue Team members include a physician, an intensive care unit nurse, a health technician, a nursing supervisor, an anesthesiologist, a respiratory therapist and a pharmacist, if needed.

The policy goes on to state: "For medical emergencies out of the Code Blue Team response areas, the Albuquerque EMS system via 911 will be activated. Outpatients or non-patients responded to by Albuquerque EMS who have suffered a cardiac and/or respiratory arrest will be transported to the VA medical center's emergency department, the policy adds. Outpatients or non-patients who haven't suffered a cardiopulmonary arrest will be transported per Albuquerque EMS protocols. And all medical emergencies involving children regardless of the location on the VA Medical Center campus are to be dealt with by Albuquerque EMS via a 911 call.

The policy requires medical center staff who witness a life-threatening event to give CPR or emergency aid regardless of the location. Staff members are to remain with the individual until emergency help arrives.

LOAD-DATE: July 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

70 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

July 9, 2014 Wednesday

Gov. blames Obama for border crisis; Martinez also faults Congress for federal 'failure of leadership'

BYLINE: Copyright © 2014 Albuquerque Journal BY DAN BOYD JOURNAL CAPITOL BUREAU

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 652 words

SANTA FE - Gov. Susana Martinez says President Barack Obama and Congress are to blame for the wave of Central American immigrants - many of them unaccompanied children - that has prompted the opening of temporary housing facilities, including one in southeastern New Mexico.

Martinez said the crisis is, at least in part, the byproduct of mixed signals on the federal level.

"Immigrants flood across the border - or parents drop their children there - expecting the federal government to just throw up its hands and let them in. That's not an immigration policy - that's a failure of leadership," the governor said. "We will continue to push the federal government for regular communication and proper planning relating to the operation of this makeshift detention facility in southeast New Mexico."

Since the federal government announced its plan for dealing with the influx of immigrants, the first-term Republican governor has spoken with U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials to convey security concerns and keep track of developments, a spokesman said.

She has not visited the facility but sent her public safety chief, Greg Fouratt, to tour the converted Border Patrol training center in Artesia where women with children who entered the country illegally are being housed.

"The immigration situation we face today is a direct failure of gridlocked Washington lawmakers and President Obama," Martinez said in a statement to the Journal.

"I share the frustration that people throughout the state, and in the Artesia area, are feeling," Martinez added. "In fact, what has been unfolding in border states represents the human consequence of Washington's dysfunction."

Late last month, ICE began housing detained female immigrants traveling with children at the converted Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Artesia.

Artesia Mayor Phillip Burch , after meeting with federal officials Tuesday, said there are now 217 immigrants being held at the center, which he said has a maximum projected capacity of 672 people.

Most of the individuals are expected to eventually be deported to their home countries, which are typically Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador. Some could remain in the United States, if petitions for asylum are granted.

Martinez, the nation's first female Hispanic governor, has touted the need for federal immigration reform. Some of her own policies in New Mexico - especially her push to repeal the law that allows foreign nationals in the country illegally to obtain driver's licenses - have drawn criticism from immigrant advocacy groups. Democratic members of New Mexico's congressional delegation have criticized leaders of the Republican-controlled U.S. House of Representatives for not holding a vote on a Senate-passed bill that would make changes to the nation's immigration system.

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., recently told the Journal that Martinez should lobby House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, and other Republicans to put the bill to a vote.

Meanwhile, Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., said he was encouraged by Obama's plan to use his executive authority to circumvent Congress on the issue.

Obama has instructed top-ranking aides to present him with possible executive actions he could take by the end of this summer.

Artesia residents have voiced mixed feelings about the converted training facility being used as a detention center.

Many of the 400 people who attended a town hall meeting last week spoke in opposition to the plan, with concerns ranging from the possible spread of disease to taxpayer costs, according to local news reports.

"I think right now it's a mixed bag (of opinions)," Burch said in a Tuesday interview. "It ranges from concern to anger to 'What can we do to help?'"

Burch, who spoke with Martinez last week, said there have been no reports of detained immigrants trying to escape from the Artesia center.

LOAD-DATE: July 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: ERIC GAY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS Immigrants from Honduras and El Salvador who crossed the U.S. border illegally were stopped in Granjeno, Texas, on June 25. President Barack Obama asked Congress for $3.7 billion Tuesday to cope with the immigration crisis.
OBAMA: Adds meeting to fundraising trip
MARTINEZ: Cites "Washington's dysfunction"

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Congressional Documents and Publications

July 9, 2014

CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS STATEMENT ON JULIAN CASTRO CONFIRMATION

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 793 words

July 9, 2014

Contact: Jasmine Mora CHC Communications Director 202-225-2410

CHC ON JULIAN CASTRO CONFIRMATION

Washington, DC- Today, Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) Chairman Ruben Hinojosa (TX-15) and Members of the CHC released the following statements on the Senate's confirmation of San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro to serve as the next Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Senate confirmed Mr. Castro with a final vote of 71 to 26.

CHC Chairman Ruben Hinojosa: "Today's confirmation vote is a proud moment for our state of Texas, the Latino community, and our entire country. Mayor Castro will soon become the third Cabinet-level Latino, joining Secretary of Labor Tom Perez and Small Business Administrator Maria Contreras-Sweet. We congratulate Mayor Castro and his family on today's vote and look forward to his swearing-in ceremony."

CHC First Vice Chair, Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** (NM-03): "I congratulate Julian Castro and applaud the Senate for taking action on his nomination to serve as Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Julian Castroandapos;s strong record of leadership and commitment to expanding opportunity for hard-working families will serve him well in this important

role. He brings a passion for public service and will be a fierce advocate for the middle class as he works to implement policies that build stronger communities across our country."

CHC Whip, Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grishman (NM-01): "Congratulations to Secretary Castro on his appointment to HUD. Throughout his career, he has been a tireless advocate for fair and affordable housing who understands the role of diversity in urban development, and I look forward to him bringing that same level of excellence to HUD. Many in my home state of New Mexico are still struggling with the impacts of the housing crisis that triggered the recession, and I look forward to working with Secretary Castro to help homeowners stay in their homes and develop our communities."

Congresswoman Lucille Roybal- Allard (CA-40): "I was honored to be present in the U.S. Senate today to witness the confirmation of Julian Castro as our nationandapos;s new Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. As the mayor of a large American city and as a Latino, Secretary Castro will bring a unique perspective to the important housing and economic development issues facing our nation in the ongoing recovery. I am confident Secretary Castro will be a thoughtful and effective manager of these housing and economic challenges, as well as a superb advocate for the needs of Latinos, and all Americans, in the Presidentandapos;s Cabinet."

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velazquez (NY-07): "Mayor Castro brings to HUD the background, vision and skills necessary to advance the agencyandapos;s mission of making housing more affordable and our communities more livable."

Congresswoman Grace F. Napolitano (CA-32): "We congratulate Secretary Julian Castro on his spectacular achievements and look forward to working with him to address our nation's housing needs, including veterans' homelessness. Secretary Castro will be a welcome addition to the Administration and our nation."

Congressman Henry Cuellar (TX-28): "I congratulate Mayor Castro for his successful confirmation as our next Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. I am pleased to see a fellow Texan join the Administration and I know Mayor Castro will serve with distinction. I look forward to working with him here in Washington and wish him all the best."

Congressman Tony Cardenas (CA-29): "Mayor Castro has been given a tremendous task, and I am confident that he is the right man to handle it. As a former real estate broker, I fully understand the challenges present in our housing market. Housing drives our economy and creates tremendous numbers of jobs, but it also can be a light shone into the shadows of our nation. Too many Americans live in fear, unsure where they will sleep each night. I trust that Mayor Castro will work with his department to not only improve the housing situation in this nation, but to help encourage a solution to the poverty and homelessness that has laid low so many Americans."

Congressman Joe Garcia (FL-26): "Mayor Julian Castro is well-deserving of this appointment and will be an invaluable member of the Presidentandapos;s Cabinet. Over the last several years, Julian has proven his ability to successfully lead his community and I have no doubt he will do the same in his new post."

Congressman Pete P. Gallego (TX-23): "Today, Julian Castro proves to little boys and girls, Latino and non-Latino alike, that dreams can come true. Congratulations, Mr. Secretary, and best of luck. As my mom would say, andapos;Que dios te bendiga.andapos;"

LOAD-DATE: July 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COH

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

July 9, 2014

LUJAN CALLS FOR NEEDED FUNDING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANUP AT LANL AND TO RESTORE OPERATIONS AT WIPP; Secures Commitment from Subcommittee Chair to Work with Him on Critical Issues to New Mexico; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 443 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor today in an exchange with the Chairman of the House Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee, Rep. Mike Simpson. **Lujan** encouraged appropriate funding for environmental cleanup at Los Alamos National Laboratory and to restore operations at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The exchange occurred during debate on the Fiscal Year 2015 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act. Below are their remarks.

Mr. **Lujan**: Mr. Chairman, for over 70 years our national laboratories have worked to ensure the security of our nation. We have a responsibility to be good stewards of the environment in relation to the historic and ongoing radiological work at these laboratories. At Los Alamos, there are legal obligations, including the 3706 Campaign to remove Trans-Uranic, or TrU, Waste and the broader 2005 Consent Order between the Department of Energy (DOE) and the State of New Mexico, to remediate legacy waste at Los Alamos.

Two major wild fires near Los Alamos National Lab have highlighted the importance of removing above-ground waste from this facility. DOE was nearing completion of the 3706 campaign when the nation's only repository for TrU waste, the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, experienced first a fire and then a radiological release.

As we work to restore WIPP operations, we must ensure that our national laboratories have the resources to meet their legal obligations for environmental remediation and also recognize our moral obligation to these communities who have served our great nation. It is with this intention that I request the Chair to work with me and Representatives from other affected communities as this bill moves forward to conference to ensure that adequate and appropriate funds are available, not only for restoration operations of WIPP, but also for legally mandated environmental remediation efforts at Los Alamos and other affected national laboratories.

I thank you for the time to address this important issue and look forward to working with you to find a solution.

Mr. Simpson: I'd like to thank the gentleman from New Mexico for his continued advocacy of the cleanup program at Los Alamos. I look forward to working with you on ensuring adequate funding is available to support the Department of Energy's cleanup program, including the cleanup work at Los Alamos and the restoration of operations at WIPP. And I thank the gentleman.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-calls-for-needed-funding-for-environmental-cleanup-at-lanl-and-to-restore-operations-at-wipp/

LOAD-DATE: July 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

July 9, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN CALLS FOR NEEDED FUNDING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANUP AT LANL AND TO RESTORE OPERATIONS AT WIPP

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 427 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor today in an exchange with the Chairman of the House Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee, Rep. Mike Simpson. **Lujan** encouraged appropriate funding for environmental cleanup at Los Alamos National Laboratory and to restore operations at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The exchange occurred during debate on the Fiscal Year 2015 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act. Below are their remarks.

Mr. **Lujan**: Mr. Chairman, for over 70 years our national laboratories have worked to ensure the security of our nation. We have a responsibility to be good stewards of the environment in relation to the historic and ongoing radiological work at these laboratories. At Los Alamos, there are legal obligations, including the 3706 Campaign to remove Trans-Uranic, or TrU, Waste and the broader 2005 Consent Order between the Department of Energy (DOE) and the State of New Mexico, to remediate legacy waste at Los Alamos.

Two major wild fires near Los Alamos National Lab have highlighted the importance of removing above-ground waste from this facility. DOE was nearing completion of the 3706 campaign when the nation's only repository for TrU waste, the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, experienced first a fire and then a radiological release.

As we work to restore WIPP operations, we must ensure that our national laboratories have the resources to meet their legal obligations for environmental remediation and also recognize our moral obligation to these communities who have served our great nation. It is with this intention that I

request the Chair to work with me and Representatives from other affected communities as this bill moves forward to conference to ensure that adequate and appropriate funds are available, not only for restoration operations of WIPP, but also for legally mandated environmental remediation efforts at Los Alamos and other affected national laboratories.

I thank you for the time to address this important issue and look forward to working with you to find a solution.

Mr. Simpson: I'd like to thank the gentleman from New Mexico for his continued advocacy of the cleanup program at Los Alamos. I look forward to working with you on ensuring adequate funding is available to support the Department of Energy's cleanup program, including the cleanup work at Los Alamos and the restoration of operations at WIPP. And I thank the gentleman.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: July 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

74 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

July 9, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS NEED TO RECOVER FUNDING FOR RIO RANCHO AND OTHER COMMUNITIES WORKING WITH ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 554 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District offered an amendment to the Energy and Water Appropriations bill today in an effort to highlight the importance of increasing funding for accounts within the Army Corps of Engineers' budget so that it can reimburse local governments for infrastructure projects.**Lujan** withdrew the amendment after securing a commitment from Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee Chair Mike Simpson to work on this important issue with him. Below are **Lujan's** remarks.

"Mr. Chairman, I rise to amend the Energy and Water Appropriations bill to increase the Construction Account by $15 million to ensure local governments, like the City of Rio Rancho, the County of Bernalillo, and the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, get reimbursed for work they have done

in conjunction with the Army Corps of Engineers. The Army Corps of Engineers works with local governments in New Mexico to construct levies, implement flood control measures, and other important infrastructure for the safety of the public.

"More specifically, the City of Rio Rancho entered into a reimbursement contract with the Army Corps of Engineers and has not been paid back for several years due to the lack of appropriations. The same goes for the County of Bernalillo, the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, and other communities across the United States. This delay in reimbursement has led to interruptions in financing for other city projects and also has the potential to hurt the credit rating of these entities if they do not recover these funds via reimbursement, as stated in their contracts with the federal government.

"By increasing the dollar amount in this account, which includes a number of programs and accounts that are critical to local governments - like engineering, construction, technical assistance, flood control, and environmental infrastructure - we can get these entities reimbursed and get these liabilities off the books of the Army Corps of Engineers and get other projects going.

"According to the Congressional Budget Office this increase has zero impact on the budget, and in fact would save money by reducing the liability for the federal government.

"Mr. Chairman, local governments have been left holding an IOU from the federal government for doing work based on good faith written agreements with the Army Corps of Engineers.

"Mr. Chairman, I understand there may be opposition from some of my colleagues, but I am hoping that I can persuade the Chairman [Simpson] to support me in this effort.

"Under Section 593 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1999, the City of Rio Rancho and other local governments entered into agreements with the Army Corps of Engineers. When city and local governments enter into reimbursement contracts they expect to be reimbursed. They have annual budgets with the expectations they will get paid back. Congress should live up to these obligations in the authority given to the agency by Congress.

"And Mr. Chairman, I understand the constraints that the subcommittee dealt with the allocations given to them, but we need to make sure we are working to make these local governments whole with agreements and contracts with the federal government."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: July 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

July 9, 2014 Wednesday 3:51 AM EST

Lujan Calls for Needed Funding for Environmental Cleanup at LANL and to Restore Operations at WIPP

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 436 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor today in an exchange with the Chairman of the House Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee, Rep. Mike Simpson. **Lujan** encouraged appropriate funding for environmental cleanup at Los Alamos National Laboratory and to restore operations at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The exchange occurred during debate on the Fiscal Year 2015 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act. Below are their remarks.

Mr. **Lujan**: Mr. Chairman, for over 70 years our national laboratories have worked to ensure the security of our nation. We have a responsibility to be good stewards of the environment in relation to the historic and ongoing radiological work at these laboratories. At Los Alamos, there are legal obligations, including the 3706 Campaign to remove Trans-Uranic, or TrU, Waste and the broader 2005 Consent Order between the Department of Energy (DOE) and the State of New Mexico, to remediate legacy waste at Los Alamos.

Two major wild fires near Los Alamos National Lab have highlighted the importance of removing above-ground waste from this facility. DOE was nearing completion of the 3706 campaign when the nation's only repository for TrU waste, the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, experienced first a fire and then a radiological release.

As we work to restore WIPP operations, we must ensure that our national laboratories have the resources to meet their legal obligations for environmental remediation and also recognize our moral obligation to these communities who have served our great nation. It is with this intention that I request the Chair to work with me and Representatives from other affected communities as this bill moves forward to conference to ensure that adequate and appropriate funds are available, not only for restoration operations of WIPP, but also for legally mandated environmental remediation efforts at Los Alamos and other affected national laboratories.

I thank you for the time to address this important issue and look forward to working with you to find a solution.

Mr. Simpson: I'd like to thank the gentleman from New Mexico for his continued advocacy of the cleanup program at Los Alamos. I look forward to working with you on ensuring adequate funding is available to support the Department of Energy's cleanup program, including the cleanup work at Los Alamos and the restoration of operations at WIPP. And I thank the gentleman.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140710-4792865 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: July 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

July 8, 2014 Tuesday

Susana feasts on Dems' state chair

BYLINE: Hal Rhodes

SECTION: COLUMNS

LENGTH: 602 words

Unless every last New Mexico Democrat with any influence whatsoever has suddenly fallen victim to persistent and pervasive masochism, Sam Bregman's days as state party chairman are numbered.

Aren't they? Doesn't everything we know about politics and the logic thereof dictate that he must either leave his post voluntarily or face pressure from those top state Democrats capable of rational election year thought to resign his chairmanship?

The miracle is that prominent Democrats up for election or reelection this year - Tom Udall, **Ben Ray Luján**, Michele **Luján** Grisham, Hector Balderas, the whole lot of them, including Gary King - haven't already quietly taken Bregman by the neck and given him the boot.

Admittedly the metaphor is mixed. But Bregman has become the main course in the buffet of campaign hash Susana Martinez has been serving New Mexico voters since primary election day when she walked away with her party's nomination for a second term as governor.

Who knows what's fair and what's not in today's political climate?

A case can be made for the proposition that Gary King has been a dandy attorney general during his two terms in that post. Nonetheless, Susana (or her fat cat donors) has spent whole barrels of money on TV advertisements advancing the claim that Bregman once dismissed King as among the worst AGs in state history.

The ad popped up on New Mexicans television screens virtually with the close of primary election day polls and it subsequently played so often that many viewers could lip sync it verbatim.

Bregman has responded to the effect that the remark came from someone else and, besides, it was made in the heat of a legal dust-up in his capacity as a private attorney.

Make of that what you will.

More recently the Democratic chairman found himself making fresh front-page news after a gaggle of former Martinez aides and confreres slapped him (among others) with a federal suit for conspiracy to distribute those now-infamous hacked Martinez emails, about which the governor has raised such a ruckus.

An ex-Martinez campaign manager has pled guilty to the hacking, but apparently the governor and her operatives want to milk every last drop of political blood it can out this contretemps before letting it go.

Why Martinez or her campaign would want to keep her emails in the headlines is another question.

The portraits that emerged from those portions of these communiqués, which have been made public, hardly show Martinez and her political advisors to their best advantage. This is a governor who discourses with a salty tongue and a wobbly understanding of a wide range of matters involving state affairs. Her male campaign cohorts, in turn, come across as long on attitude, short on thought, full of themselves, borderline foul-mouth.

None of this is the least surprising to veteran political journalists familiar with campaigns and campaigners.

Off-the-campaign trail, however, rank and file voters probably find it off-putting, which is why most politicians try to keep it out of public view.

But not Martinez. Her snit about these pilfered emails has become a top issue in her campaign. What Bregman did or did not do with those emails is something that will presumably be determined in a federal court.

It hardly ranks among the truly important questions - jobs going elsewhere, workers going elsewhere, the whole litany of economic stagnation in the state - facing New Mexico voters this year.

It is, however, a useful distraction for a governor running for reelection in hard times. So you have to wonder how much longer Democratic Chairman Bregman can hang on.

LOAD-DATE: July 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

77 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

July 8, 2014 Tuesday

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS $500,000 FOR NEW MEXICO THROUGH THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 276 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted today more than $500,000 in funding for the state of New Mexico through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). These resources will help fund outdoor recreation and conservation projects as part of a $43 million investment in all 50 states, the territories, and the District of Columbia.

"New Mexico is blessed with precious lands that are a part of our culture and way of life," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Ensuring the protection and preservation of our land and water is essential and the Land and Water Conservation Fund provides important resources that help create more opportunities for our communities to enjoy the great outdoors. In addition, investments in outdoor recreation strengthen an important sector that contributes to New Mexico's economy and creates jobs in our communities."

For the past 50 years, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has helped increase access to outdoor recreation resources by providing funds to federal, state, and local governments to purchase land, water, and wetlands. The primary source of revenue to LWCF is from federal oil and gas leases on the Outer Continental Shelf. Over the past five decades, New Mexico has received nearly $250 million that have helped fund projects in the Santa Fe National Forest, the Chaco Culture National Historical Park, and the Bandelier National Monument. This year, New Mexico is receiving $507,107. A recent analysis found that every $1 invested in land acquisition through LWCF generated a $4 return on the investment.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: July 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

July 8, 2014 Tuesday 9:06 AM EST

Lujan Highlights $500,000 for New Mexico Through the Land and Water Conservation Fund

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 285 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted today more than $500,000 in funding for the state of New Mexico through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). These resources will help fund outdoor recreation and conservation projects as part of a $43 million investment in all 50 states, the territories, and the District of Columbia.

"New Mexico is blessed with precious lands that are a part of our culture and way of life," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Ensuring the protection and preservation of our land and water is essential and the Land and Water Conservation Fund provides important resources that help create more opportunities for our communities to enjoy the great outdoors. In addition, investments in outdoor recreation strengthen an important sector that contributes to New Mexico's economy and creates jobs in our communities."

For the past 50 years, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has helped increase access to outdoor recreation resources by providing funds to federal, state, and local governments to purchase land, water, and wetlands. The primary source of revenue to LWCF is from federal oil and gas leases on the Outer Continental Shelf. Over the past five decades, New Mexico has received nearly $250 million that have helped fund projects in the Santa Fe National Forest, the Chaco Culture National Historical Park, and the Bandelier National Monument. This year, New Mexico is receiving $507,107. A recent analysis found that every $1 invested in land acquisition through LWCF generated a $4 return on the investment.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140710-4793287 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: July 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

July 1, 2014 Tuesday

Obama says he'll go it alone on immigration; 2 members of NM delegation critical

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN AND LAUREN VILLAGRAN JOURNAL STAFF WRITERS

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. A3

LENGTH: 880 words

WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama's request Monday for $2 billion in emergency funding to help stem an immigration crisis on the Mexican border was described as "just another Band-Aid" by a Democratic New Mexico lawmaker, while the congressional delegation's lone Republican accused the president of "exploiting" the crisis.

In addition to the funding request of Congress, Obama said Monday that he will bypass Republicans in Congress and move to change immigration policy where he can through executive actions. The president said he will refocus immigration enforcement onto a Mexican border that has seen a tide of

children crossing illegally from Central America. That means devoting more resources to deporting the most recent border crossers and those who pose a threat to public safety and national security.

"I take executive action only when we have a serious problem, a serious issue, and Congress chooses to do nothing," Obama said at the White House. "And in this situation, the failure of House Republicans to pass a darn bill is bad for our security, it's bad for our economy and it's bad for our future."

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., said the president's plan won't solve the nation's immigration problem in the long term. She also urged House Republicans to take up an immigration reform bill passed by the Senate last year.

"The president's request for more funding is just another Band-Aid on our broken immigration system," **Lujan** Grisham said. "We need to put more pressure on the Republican leadership to do the right thing and allow an up-or-down vote. I'm pleased that Gov. Martinez expressed an interest last week in the immigration reform debate. I think she could be particularly helpful, and I would urge the governor to lobby Speaker Boehner and her fellow Republicans in Congress to put comprehensive immigration reform to a vote."

Meanwhile, Rep. Steve Pearce, a New Mexico Republican appointed to a special congressional working group to help handle the border crisis, said the president's $2 billion request was "staggering."

"President Obama is exploiting the humanitarian crisis at our southern border," Pearce said. "This emergency does not give Obama an excuse to abuse his executive authority and circumvent Congress once again. The problem at our southern border is a tragedy, caused by the president's own executive orders that gave false hope to children and their families. They are now suffering in crowded border facilities, with some women and children being processed as detainees in southern New Mexico."

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., said he was "encouraged" by Obama's talk of using executive authority to circumvent a Congress that appears hopelessly gridlocked on the subject of immigration reform.

"I am encouraged that President Obama has pledged to enact solutions available to him through executive action," **Luján** said. "I look forward to his administration's recommendations to ensure our borders are secure while providing flexibility for those who would be eligible for a pathway to citizenship under current legislative proposals."

Obama has instructed Homeland Security Department Secretary Jeh Johnson and Attorney General Eric Holder to present him with executive actions he can take without congressional approval by the end of the summer.

In responding to the influx of unaccompanied children, Obama plans to concentrate immigration resources on the border areas. The move will reduce the number of deportations in the country's interior by stressing enforcement action on individuals who are either recent unlawful border crossers or who present a national security, public safety or border security threat.

The decision coincides with a White House request to Congress for new powers to deport newly arrived immigrant children traveling without their parents.

ICE began housing detained adult migrants traveling with children at a converted Border Patrol training facility in New Mexico on Friday. The temporary detention center, which has a capacity of 700, is now holding 168 people, an ICE official said.

The administration's proposal to expedite removal proceedings for unaccompanied minors angered some proponents of immigrant rights. Under current law, minors from countries that don't share a

border with the U.S. are automatically afforded a hearing to assess whether they are eligible for asylum or other relief from deportation.

The administration's proposal will have children screened by a Border Patrol agent upon their arrival, at a time when they "are hungry, tired, confused and not familiar with our immigration system," said Wendy Kind, president of Kids in Need of Defense, or KIND. "This is grossly unfair and fails to recognize their capacity as children to navigate our immigration system."

Melysa Sperber, director of the Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking, said the expedited screenings "are not child-friendly or child-appropriate" and that children with a legitimate fear of violence or threats in their home countries "will slip through the cracks."

"We need to ensure that due process protections are afforded to these children in a real way," she said, including ensuring they receive legal representation.

Michael Coleman reported from

Washington, and Lauren Villagran

reported from Las Cruces.

LOAD-DATE: July 1, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: BOEHNER: **Lujan** Grisham wants a vote set
LUJAN GRISHAM: "Just another Band-Aid"
PEARCE: Calls $2 billion request "staggering"
JACQUELYN MARTIN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS President Barack Obama, accompanied by Vice President Joe Biden in the White House Rose Garden on Monday, announces he intends to use executive action on immigration issues.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

80 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

June 30, 2014

LUJAN STATEMENT ON IMMIGRATION REFORM; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 301 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on President Obama's speech on immigration reform and the

announcement that Speaker John Boehner will not allow the House to act on comprehensive immigration reform this year.

"It is shameful that the Republican House leadership has failed to act on immigration reform and has now confirmed that they have no intention of doing so. Over a year ago, after working on a bipartisan good-faith compromise, Senate Democrats and Republicans were able to come together to pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill. It has since languished in the House - alongside a House Democratic proposal modeled on the Senate version - with no action by Speaker Boehner and the Republican leadership. Despite their empty rhetoric, House Republicans have remained the one road block to passing much-needed reform that strengthens our economy and our security.

"I agree with the President that Congress must act if we are to finally fix our broken immigration system once and for all. And while it is deeply disappointing that House Republicans are refusing to listen to a broad majority of Americans who support comprehensive immigration reform, I am encouraged that President Obama has pledged to the enact solutions available to him through executive action. I look forward to his Administration's recommendations to ensure our borders are secure while providing flexibility for those who would be eligible for a pathway to citizenship under current legislative proposals - particularly DREAMers, who want to come out of the shadows and contribute to the only home that many of them have ever known."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-immigration-reform/

LOAD-DATE: July 1, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

June 30, 2014 Monday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON IMMIGRATION REFORM

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 294 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on President Obama's speech on immigration reform and the announcement that Speaker John Boehner will not allow the House to act on comprehensive immigration reform this year.

"It is shameful that the Republican House leadership has failed to act on immigration reform and has now confirmed that they have no intention of doing so. Over a year ago, after working on a bipartisan good-faith compromise, Senate Democrats and Republicans were able to come together to pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill. It has since languished in the House - alongside a House Democratic proposal modeled on the Senate version - with no action by Speaker Boehner and the Republican leadership. Despite their empty rhetoric, House Republicans have remained the one road block to passing much-needed reform that strengthens our economy and our security.

"I agree with the President that Congress must act if we are to finally fix our broken immigration system once and for all. And while it is deeply disappointing that House Republicans are refusing to listen to a broad majority of Americans who support comprehensive immigration reform, I am encouraged that President Obama has pledged to the enact solutions available to him through executive action. I look forward to his Administration's recommendations to ensure our borders are secure while providing flexibility for those who would be eligible for a pathway to citizenship under current legislative proposals - particularly DREAMers, who want to come out of the shadows and contribute to the only home that many of them have ever known."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: July 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

June 30, 2014 Monday 8:49 PM EST

Lujan Statement on Immigration Reform

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 303 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on President Obama's speech on immigration reform and the announcement that Speaker John Boehner will not allow the House to act on comprehensive immigration reform this year.

"It is shameful that the Republican House leadership has failed to act on immigration reform and has now confirmed that they have no intention of doing so. Over a year ago, after working on a bipartisan good-faith compromise, Senate Democrats and Republicans were able to come together to pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill. It has since languished in the House - alongside a House Democratic proposal modeled on the Senate version - with no action by Speaker Boehner and the

Republican leadership. Despite their empty rhetoric, House Republicans have remained the one road block to passing much-needed reform that strengthens our economy and our security.

"I agree with the President that Congress must act if we are to finally fix our broken immigration system once and for all. And while it is deeply disappointing that House Republicans are refusing to listen to a broad majority of Americans who support comprehensive immigration reform, I am encouraged that President Obama has pledged to the enact solutions available to him through executive action. I look forward to his Administration's recommendations to ensure our borders are secure while providing flexibility for those who would be eligible for a pathway to citizenship under current legislative proposals - particularly DREAMers, who want to come out of the shadows and contribute to the only home that many of them have ever known."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140701-4783326 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: June 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

June 26, 2014

CHC On 1-Year Anniversary Of Senate Immigration Bill Passage; Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 1302 words

Washington, DC- Today, Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) Chairman Ruben Hinojosa (TX-15) and Members of the CHC released the following statements on the one-year anniversary of the Senate's passage of S. 744, the comprehensive immigration reform bill. The Senate passed this legislation with a final vote of 68-32 on June 27, 2013.

CHC Chairman Ruben Hinojosa: "One year ago, we all expressed optimism that this Congress would be the one that fixed our broken immigration system, but our Republican colleagues in the House have refused to act. The passage of the Senate immigration bill showed us that it is possible for Republicans and Democrats to come together to solve some of our nation's most pressing problems. The Senate has done its job and it is critical that we in the House now do our job. Now is the time to pass comprehensive immigration reform."

CHC First Vice Chair, Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** (NM-03): "One year ago, Democrats and Republicans in the Senate worked together to pass comprehensive immigration reform that is good

for our economy, strengthens our security, and recognizes the contributions that immigrants make to our country. Over the past year, House Republicans failed to even bring an immigration bill up for a vote. Earlier this year, Republican Leadership outlined their 'principles for immigration reform,' yet failed to introduce a bill based on these principles. Instead of bringing up comprehensive legislation that spurs economic growth and lowers the deficit, we have seen attacks on DREAMers and excuses for inaction. Democrats and Republicans in the Senate have acted. Democrats in the House support reform and have also introduced a bill. A broad coalition - from the high tech sector to law enforcement, the faith community to agriculture - backs reform. The American people overwhelmingly favor a comprehensive bill. The only ones standing in the way are House Republicans. It's time to do what is right for our country and bring comprehensive immigration reform up for a vote."

CHC Second Vice Chair, Congresswoman Linda T. Sanchez (CA-38): "It is incredibly frustrating that House Republicans continue to ignore our broken immigration system. Their inaction has very real human and economic costs. More than 11 million people who want to pay taxes and contribute to our great country are stuck in limbo. Each day that Republicans continue to delay action, is a day that approximately 1,100 families get separated. Passing comprehensive immigration reform would allow us to capitalize on the potential to create 159,000 new jobs and collect $1.25 billion in revenue over the next decade. It's time for Speaker Boehner to cut the excuses- our country deserves a vote."

CHC Whip, Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grishman (NM-01): "A year ago, the Senate did its job by passing a bipartisan immigration bill, and since then Republican leadership has sat on its hands. House Republicans have stalled any and all efforts to pass immigration reform. The time to act is now. Republicans need to join Democrats and work toward a comprehensive solution that will fix our broken immigration system, create jobs, and build a stronger economy."

Congressman Xavier Becerra (CA-34), Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus: "Republicans in the House haven't listened to their Republican colleagues in the Senate. And it's certainly clear that they're not listening to the American people who overwhelmingly want us to fix this broken immigration system. House Republicans have a choice: they can do this the American way, by passing commonsense immigration reform, or they can do this the Tea Party way. We hope House Republicans choose the American way to do business and fix our broken immigration system."

CHC Immigration Task Force Chair, Congressman Luis V. Gutierrez (IL-04): "We offered to work with Republicans and we have been willing to compromise to pass a bill that enhances border security, facilitates legal immigration, clears backlogs for those waiting to come legally, implements E-Verify, and gets undocumented immigrants into the system and on-the-books. But we need a dance partner to work in a bipartisan manner and so far, Republicans have refused to take any action and are threatening to sue the President if he does. We have got to refocus our resources on deporting criminals and keeping out threats, but Republicans are standing in the way."

Senator Robert Menendez (D-NY), one of the authors of the Senate's comprehensive immigration reform bill: "We are at the end of the line, it looks as though the Republicans are giving up on our last chance to bring 11 million people out of the shadows. One year later - after hundreds of rallies, thousands of advocacy meetings, and hundreds of thousands of families being torn apart - immigration reform sits languishing in the House of Representatives while the country waits, 11 million people wait, and the toll from Republican inaction compounds. I truly hope our Republican colleagues in the House don't forget their immigrant heritage. I hope they understand exactly what the cost of their inaction is, and what it will mean to stand on the wrong side of history just to score political points in a handful of the most conservative districts in the country. The clock is ticking away, and while history is not on their side, the lives of millions are in their hands."

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velazquez (NY-07): "It has been one year since the Senate passed immigration reform legislation, yet House Republicans continue stalling, making excuses and failing to act. It is time to reform our nation's broken immigration system in a way that honors families, fuels innovation and strengthens our economy for all Americans."

Congressman Tony Cardenas (CA-29): "Today, we recognize the courage of action shown in the Senate to fix our clearly broken immigration system and bring millions of families out of the shadows.

Meanwhile, Republicans in the House are ignoring the vast majority of Americans, who want comprehensive reform. They are ignoring $900 billion in deficit relief that immigration reform would provide. They are ignoring the 120,000 jobs that could have been created this year. Most of all, however, they are ignoring the American Dream. Millions of families are in this country, working hard, and crying out for a chance to pay a fine, learn English and help rebuild our nation. To not even have a debate on this critical legislation, one year on, is a complete lack of leadership by the majority of our House."

Congressman Joe Garcia (FL-26), author of H.R. 15: "It is disappointing that in 365 days, this body has done nothing but find excuses" said Garcia. "We need to stop with the finger-pointing and start the governing. If we had passed immigration reform, we would have taken care of the people who are already here and directed resources to the criminals, traffickers, and people who wish to do this nation harm. We would have a comprehensive strategy at the border, so that we could stop throwing money at the problem and militarizing border communities. And we would have an immigration system that meets the needs of our economy, instead of ceding ground to competing nations."

Congressman Juan Vargas: (CA-51): "An overwhelming coalition of religious, community, and business leaders all agree that our nation can't wait any longer for immigration reform. The Senate did their part, working tirelessly to send a bipartisan Comprehensive Immigration Reform bill to the House, yet Republican leadership has chosen to do nothing for one full year. We must fix our broken immigration system. Now is the time to come together and bring Comprehensive Immigration Reform to the floor for a vote."

Read this original document at: http://lujangrisham.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=386149

LOAD-DATE: June 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

June 26, 2014

LUJAN MARKS ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF PASSAGE OF SENATE IMMIGRATION BILL WITH CALL FOR ACTION IN THE HOUSE; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 296 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor today to mark the one-year anniversary of the Senate's passage of comprehensive immigration reform and call for action in the House. Below are his remarks.

"Mr. Speaker, one year ago tomorrow the Senate passed bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform. Democrats and Republicans worked together to pass a bill that is good for our economy, strengthens our security, and recognizes the contributions that immigrants make to our country. This bill represents a good-faith compromise by our Senate colleagues to find common ground.

"Over the past year, House Republicans failed to even bring an immigration bill up for a vote. Earlier this year Republican leadership outlined their 'principles for immigration reform, yet failed to introduce a bill based on these principles. They have claimed they want to pass reform, but their actions fail to match the rhetoric. Instead of bringing up comprehensive legislation that spurs economic growth and lowers the deficit, we have seen attacks on DREAMers and excuses for inaction.

"Mr. Speaker, Democrats and Republicans in the Senate have acted. Democrats in the House support reform and have also introduced a bill. A broad coalition - from the high tech sector to law enforcement, the faith community to agriculture - backs reform. The American people overwhelmingly favor a comprehensive bill. The only ones standing in the way are House Republicans. It's time to do what is right for our country and bring comprehensive immigration reform up for a vote now."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-marks-oneyear-anniversary-of-passage-of-senate-immigration-bill-with-call-for-action-in-the-house/

LOAD-DATE: June 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

June 26, 2014 Thursday

LUJAN MARKS ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF PASSAGE OF SENATE IMMIGRATION BILL WITH CALL FOR ACTION IN THE HOUSE

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 279 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor today to mark the one-year anniversary of the Senate's passage of comprehensive immigration reform and call for action in the House. Below are his remarks.

"Mr. Speaker, one year ago tomorrow the Senate passed bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform. Democrats and Republicans worked together to pass a bill that is good for our economy, strengthens our security, and recognizes the contributions that immigrants make to our country. This bill represents a good-faith compromise by our Senate colleagues to find common ground.

"Over the past year, House Republicans failed to even bring an immigration bill up for a vote. Earlier this year Republican leadership outlined their "principles for immigration reform, yet failed to introduce a bill based on these principles. They have claimed they want to pass reform, but their actions fail to match the rhetoric. Instead of bringing up comprehensive legislation that spurs economic growth and lowers the deficit, we have seen attacks on DREAMers and excuses for inaction.

"Mr. Speaker, Democrats and Republicans in the Senate have acted. Democrats in the House support reform and have also introduced a bill. A broad coalition - from the high tech sector to law enforcement, the faith community to agriculture - backs reform. The American people overwhelmingly favor a comprehensive bill. The only ones standing in the way are House Republicans. It's time to do what is right for our country and bring comprehensive immigration reform up for a vote now."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: June 29, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

June 26, 2014 Thursday 3:40 AM EST

Lujan Marks One-Year Anniversary of Passage of Senate Immigration Bill With Call for Action in the House

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 287 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor today to mark the one-year anniversary of the Senate's passage of comprehensive immigration reform and call for action in the House. Below are his remarks.

"Mr. Speaker, one year ago tomorrow the Senate passed bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform. Democrats and Republicans worked together to pass a bill that is good for our economy, strengthens our security, and recognizes the contributions that immigrants make to our country. This bill represents a good-faith compromise by our Senate colleagues to find common ground.

"Over the past year, House Republicans failed to even bring an immigration bill up for a vote. Earlier this year Republican leadership outlined their 'principles for immigration reform, yet failed to introduce a bill based on these principles. They have claimed they want to pass reform, but their actions fail to match the rhetoric. Instead of bringing up comprehensive legislation that spurs economic growth and lowers the deficit, we have seen attacks on DREAMers and excuses for inaction.

"Mr. Speaker, Democrats and Republicans in the Senate have acted. Democrats in the House support reform and have also introduced a bill. A broad coalition - from the high tech sector to law enforcement, the faith community to agriculture - backs reform. The American people overwhelmingly favor a comprehensive bill. The only ones standing in the way are House Republicans. It's time to do what is right for our country and bring comprehensive immigration reform up for a vote now."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140627-4781192 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: June 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

87 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

June 25, 2014

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS $37 MILLION IN PILT PAYMENTS FOR NEW MEXICO COUNTIES;
3rd District Counties Receiving Nearly $12 Million;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 404 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted today more than $37 million that New Mexico counties are receiving through the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program for Fiscal Year 2014. Department of Interior Secretary Sally Jewel announced that 32 local governments throughout New Mexico are receiving $37,677,905 - $3 million more than last year - through the program that compensates counties and local governments for non-taxable federal land in their jurisdictions.

"The PILT program provides vital resources for New Mexico's rural counties that help support efforts to build schools, improve roads, and hire first responders," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Our communities are home to a significant amount of federal lands, which impacts the amount of revenue local governments can take in. PILT funds help offset this while contributing to our counties' ability to provide important services."

Local governments that contain nontaxable federal lands and provide vital government services - such as public safety, housing, social services and transportation - are eligible for the PILT program. PILT compensates these jurisdictions - which provide significant support for national parks, wildlife refuges and recreation areas - for their support and foregone tax revenue from these federal lands.

Using a formula provided in statute, the annual PILT payments to local governments are computed based on the number of acres of federal entitlement land within each county or jurisdiction and the population of that county or jurisdiction. The lands include the National Forest and National Parks Systems, those managed by the Bureau of Land Management, those affected by Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation water resources development projects, and others. A breakdown of PILT payments by county in the Third District is below and a full breakdown for all New Mexico counties is available at www.doi.gov/pilt.

CD3 County FY2014 Payment

Bernalillo $200,973

Colfax $158,022

Harding $120,607

Los Alamos $85,962

McKinley $883,217

Mora $222,494

Quay $4,623

Rio Arriba $2,195,446

Roosevelt $27,568

San Juan $2,208,656

San Miguel $810,475

Sandoval $2,382,945

Santa Fe $698,926

Taos $1,654,881

Union $151,090

3rd District Total $11,805,885

New Mexico Total $37,677,905

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-highlights-37-million-in-pilt-payments-for-new-mexico-counties/

LOAD-DATE: June 26, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

88 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Portales, News-Tribune (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

June 25, 2014 Wednesday

College students could qualify for lower loan payments

BYLINE: Lillian Bowe, The Portales News-Tribune, N.M.

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 426 words

June 25--Kamarie Schmidt recently graduated from Eastern New Mexico University and in order to pay for her degree, she had to take out student loans.

Schmidt, a native of Farwell who earned her degrees in music education and instrumental performance saxophone, said even though she is going to graduate school in the fall, paying off the loans is still an issue for her.

"When I finish graduate school, I have six months until I have to pay it off, but it's still there," Schmidt said.

After an executive order was signed by President Barack Obama earlier this month, Schmidt and 2,100 other ENMU students who take out loans annually, could qualify to pay off their loan at 10 percent of their disposable income. If the loan is not paid off after 20 years, the rest will be forgiven.

Before this executive order, with the Pay As You Earn program, only newer borrowers were eligible. By 2015, borrowers that took loans before October 2007 or stopped borrowing by October 2011 will be eligible.

According to government officials, an estimate of 5 million people will now qualify for the program.

Schmidt said the plan would help a lot of people, but 10 percent is still a lot for some.

"I think it will help people, but it depends on what career or job you get into. Some people, the 10 percent will still be hard to pay," Schmidt said.

Brent Small, ENMU director of financial aid, champions the addition to the program.

"I think the program will help graduates tremendously," Small said.

Small said it helps graduates who are underemployed or have not found a career in their chosen field.

"The program will help our students in the future who borrow, but it will not affect all that borrow," Small said.

Small said students will have to apply for this payment plan. He thinks some students from ENMU will be eligible.

U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., said the executive order is an important step for helping students repay loans, according to a press release from **Lujan's** office.

"A college education unlocks the doors of opportunity and it is critical that more Americans have the chance to get their degree without taking on a mountain of debt -- debt that is currently holding back a generation of Americans and putting a drag on our economy," said **Lujan**.

According to a White House press release, about two-thirds of college graduates take out loans with students owing an average of more than $23,000 in debt.

___ (c)2014 The Portales News-Tribune (Clovis, N.M.) Visit The Portales News-Tribune (Clovis, N.M.) at www.pntonline.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: June 26, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20140625-PV-College-students-could-qualify-for-lower-loan-payments-0625-20140625

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: PV

Copyright 2014 The Portales

States News Service

June 25, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS $37 MILLION IN PILT PAYMENTS FOR NEW MEXICO COUNTIES

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 393 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted today more than $37 million that New Mexico counties are receiving through the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program for Fiscal Year 2014. Department of Interior Secretary Sally Jewel announced that 32 local governments throughout New Mexico are receiving $37,677,905 - $3 million more than last year - through the program that compensates counties and local governments for non-taxable federal land in their jurisdictions.

"The PILT program provides vital resources for New Mexico's rural counties that help support efforts to build schools, improve roads, and hire first responders," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Our communities are home to a significant amount of federal lands, which impacts the amount of revenue local governments can take in. PILT funds help offset this while contributing to our counties' ability to provide important services."

Local governments that contain nontaxable federal lands and provide vital government services - such as public safety, housing, social services and transportation - are eligible for the PILT program. PILT compensates these jurisdictions - which provide significant support for national parks, wildlife refuges and recreation areas - for their support and foregone tax revenue from these federal lands.

Using a formula provided in statute, the annual PILT payments to local governments are computed based on the number of acres of federal entitlement land within each county or jurisdiction and the population of that county or jurisdiction. The lands include the National Forest and National Parks Systems, those managed by the Bureau of Land Management, those affected by Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation water resources development projects, and others. A breakdown of PILT payments by county in the Third District is below and a full breakdown for all New Mexico counties is available at www.doi.gov/pilt.

CD3 County FY2014 Payment

Bernalillo $200,973

Colfax $158,022

Harding $120,607

Los Alamos $85,962

McKinley $883,217

Mora $222,494

Quay $4,623

Rio Arriba $2,195,446

Roosevelt $27,568

San Juan $2,208,656

San Miguel $810,475

Sandoval $2,382,945

Santa Fe $698,926

Taos $1,654,881

Union $151,090

3rd District Total $11,805,885

New Mexico Total $37,677,905

# # #

LOAD-DATE: June 29, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

June 25, 2014 Wednesday 4:23 AM EST

Lujan Highlights $37 Million in PILT Payments for New Mexico Counties

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 369 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted today more than $37 million that New Mexico counties are receiving through the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program for Fiscal Year 2014. Department of Interior Secretary Sally Jewel announced that 32 local governments throughout New Mexico are receiving $37,677,905 - $3 million more than last year - through the program that compensates counties and local governments for non-taxable federal land in their jurisdictions.

"The PILT program provides vital resources for New Mexico's rural counties that help support efforts to build schools, improve roads, and hire first responders," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Our communities are home to a significant amount of federal lands, which impacts the amount of revenue local governments can take in. PILT funds help offset this while contributing to our counties' ability to provide important services."

Local governments that contain nontaxable federal lands and provide vital government services - such as public safety, housing, social services and transportation - are eligible for the PILT program. PILT compensates these jurisdictions - which provide significant support for national parks, wildlife refuges and recreation areas - for their support and foregone tax revenue from these federal lands.

Using a formula provided in statute, the annual PILT payments to local governments are computed based on the number of acres of federal entitlement land within each county or jurisdiction and the population of that county or jurisdiction. The lands include the National Forest and National Parks Systems, those managed by the Bureau of Land Management, those affected by Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation water resources development projects, and others. A breakdown of PILT payments by county in the Third District is below and a full breakdown for all New Mexico counties is available at www.doi.gov/pilt.

Table omitted.

View table at http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-highlights-37-million-in-pilt-payments-for-new-mexico-counties/.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140626-4779694 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: June 26, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

States News Service

June 20, 2014 Friday

LUJAN WRITES TO DOJ ON PROBLEMS WITH VETERANS TREATMENT AT ALBUQUERQUE VA FACILITY

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 391 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

In the letter, **Lujan** highlights the similarities in problems that have been exposed in Phoenix and in Albuquerque and the fact that DOJ is actively investigating the Phoenix VA facility, and should consider expanding its investigate to Albuquerque if necessary.

Below is the text of the letter:

June 20, 2014

The Honorable Eric Holder

Attorney General

U.S. Department of Justice

950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20530

Dear General Holder,

Last week, Federal Bureau of Investigation Director James Comey confirmed that the FBI Phoenix Division is actively investigating criminal allegations within the Phoenix Veterans Affairs Health Care System. As you are aware, whistle-blowers within this facility have alleged that VA staff has falsified patient scheduling records in order to make them appear shorter and thus obtain financial performance bonuses. Most troubling, these whistle-blowers believe that a number of veterans have passed away before their first appointment due to these fraudulent scheduling procedures.

Following the revelations at the Phoenix facility, additional whistle-blowers at VA health centers around the nation revealed that the problems at the Phoenix facility were widespread throughout the system. At the Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center in Albuquerque, leaked records revealed that more than 1,760 patients who needed a primary care physician were assigned to a medical supervisor who does not treat patients on a "phantom" waiting list. A subsequent audit of this panel revealed that at least 21 of the veterans listed passed away as they awaited medical treatment. In addition, the recent VA national audit found that nearly 3,500 veterans have had to wait more than 30 days for an appointment at this facility.

Due to the similarities in the practices and procedures of the Albuquerque VA Hospital to those in Phoenix, it is my belief that the investigation by the FBI may need to be expanded to include both facilities. I am outraged by the systematic neglect of these veterans by the very health providers who are entrusted with their care, and believe that, should criminal activity be found, it be punished with the fullest extent of the law.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Ben Ray Lujan

Member of Congress

LOAD-DATE: June 23, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Congressional Documents and Publications

June 18, 2014

UDALL, HEINRICH, LUJAN ASK FOREST SERVICE TO RESOLVE CONCERNS RAISED BY ACEQUIA ASSOCIATIONS; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 879 words

WASHINGTON - Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Lujan** sent a letter to U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Chief Thomas Tidwell, asking that he work with them on a collaborative solution to ensure traditional users of Forest Service land can continue to manage and maintain acequias while staying within USFS guidelines.

The lawmakers note in their letter that members of New Mexico's traditional land grants and acequia associations have raised a number of concerns about new USFS requirements, which they say are unnecessarily burdensome and hindering their ability to do routine maintenance and repairs on their systems. The letter specifically mentions a recent dispute between the the Forest Service and the Abeyta-Trujillo Acequia Association near Abiquiu, N.M.

"This apparently new, more inflexible stance from the Forest Service flies in the face of the Service's purported commitment to work more collaboratively with traditional users of the lands, such as land grants and acequias," the lawmakers wrote. "We ask that your office assist in de-escalating the situation and engaging in discussions to find a path forward for reasonable acequia management that will not further strain relationships or lead to litigation."

Acequias, or community ditches, are recognized under New Mexico law as political subdivisions of the state of New Mexico, and many of the state's acequia associations date back to the 17th and 18th centuries. Historically, acequias have served as a primary tool for local governments to distribute and use surface water, and they continue to provide irrigation water for water rights holders. Disputes between acequia associations and the Forest Service have emerged relatively recently, as the Forest Service has required the associations to apply for permits to conduct routine maintenance.

The issue was raised during a meeting earlier this month between members of the congressional delegation staff and the Forest Service. The discussion and recent concerns raised by the acequia associations prompted the lawmakers to seek Tidwell's assistance in finding a permanent resolution.

The full text of the letter is available below and HERE http://www.scribd.com/doc/230252029/June-2014-Letter-to-USFS-Chief-Tidwell:

Thomas L. Tidwell, Chief

U.S. Forest Service

United States Department of Agriculture

1400 Independence Ave., SW

Washington, D.C. 20250-1111

Dear Chief Tidwell:

We write to you to raise concerns about a situation that has come to our attention regarding recent maintenance activities of the Abeyta-Trujillo Acequia Association near Abiquiu, NM. As you know, acequias, or community ditches, are recognized under New Mexico law as political subdivisions of the State of New Mexico. Many of the state's acequia associations have been in existence since the Spanish colonization period of the 17th and 18th centuries, such as the Abeyta-Trujillo Acequia, which was established in 1735. Historically, acequias have been a principal local government unit for the distribution and use of surface water, and they continue to provide irrigation waters for their parciantes, or water rights holders.

It is our understanding that acequias should be able to conduct routine maintenance on these historic channels without unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles such as requiring a new permit every time maintenance is needed. Earlier this month, our offices met with USFS staff to request a facilitated discussion between the Forest Service, the Abeyta-Trujillo Acequia Association, and the New Mexico Acequia Association. The purpose of the discussion has been to clarify any misunderstandings and discuss the conflicting policies regarding the treatment of acequia maintenance. During the meeting with USFS, our staff was informed that the agency had just issued a demand for immediate remediation of recent maintenance activities within the Abeyta-Trujillo ditch. USFS also informed our staff that there would be no facilitated discussion with the Abeyta-Trujillo acequia, and that the agency stands by its demands that if the remediation is not completed by July 7, 2014, the USFS may suspend or revoke the Abeyta-Trujillo Acequia's Special Use Permit.

In recent years, we have received an increasing number of complaints from acequias that need to do routine maintenance and repairs on their system, but that claim the USFS is imposing unnecessarily burdensome requirements. This apparently new, more inflexible stance from the Forest Service flies in the face of the Service's purported commitment to work more collaboratively with traditional users of the lands, such as land grants and acequias. We ask that your office assist in de-escalating the situation and engaging in discussions to find a path forward for reasonable acequia management that will not further strain relationships or lead to litigation.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter, and please let us know how we can be of assistance in resolving this issue.

Sincerely,

TOM UDALL

United States Senator

MARTIN HEINRICH

United States Senator

BEN RAY LUJAN

United States Representative

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/udall-heinrich-**lujan**-ask-forest-service-to-resolve-concerns-raised-by-acequia-associations/

LOAD-DATE: June 19, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

June 15, 2014 Sunday

NM delegation finds political lessons in Cantor's loss

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. B2

LENGTH: 789 words

As Virginia voters headed to the polls last Tuesday, House Majority Leader Eric Cantor met with big money donors at a Washington Starbucks in the morning then spent the afternoon shepherding legislation on the House floor, seemingly unaware that his political career was going down in flames.

In hindsight, Cantor no doubt wishes he had spent the day 90 miles south in Richmond where he could have tried to get more voters to the polls. The majority leader's Election Day disconnect and stunning primary election loss to tea party challenger David Brat quickly became a symbol of his larger problem: Losing touch with his district.

It's a lesson all three of New Mexico's U.S. House members say they already know well. Each is back home this weekend in their districts - as they often are - meeting with constituents and keeping a visible profile.

"You better have a relationship," with constituents, Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, a freshman Democrat, told me Thursday. "They need to trust you and know you and see you as someone who represents them at home. This (Cantor loss) is a pretty clear message to members of Congress that that is the number one important thing."

Rep. Steve Pearce, the delegation's only Republican, concurred:

"It looks like Cantor just lost contact with the district. There was some immigration flashback, but it was more that he just wasn't in the district much. I go home a lot for this very reason. Voters can decide overnight 'you haven't been here much - see ya.' You need to be back and working with the people who elected you."

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** echoed his colleague's remarks, saying, "Members need to be back working in their districts."

As a Republican, Pearce is New Mexico's House member most directly affected by the Cantor loss. Pearce was one of just 12 House Republicans who voted against House Speaker John Boehner's bid to retain the speakership at the outset of the 113th Congress, casting his ballot for Cantor instead.

Pearce told the National Journal in 2012 that his vote against Boehner was "probably the most popular vote I've made, in this district." But he downplayed the significance of his vote for Cantor last week.

"It doesn't have much impact that I voted for Mr. Cantor," Pearce said. "I'm pretty well a protocol guy. It wasn't that I was voicing this great contentment with Mr. Cantor; it was instead saying I think we need a pitching change and the next pitcher in the rotation was this guy. Some people will say I was all aligned with Mr. Cantor and in fact, Mr. Cantor and I have crossed swords quite a bit."

While it might not have a seismic impact on Pearce's political standing, Cantor's loss does deprive him of any immediate strong allies in the House GOP leadership structure.

Pearce said he would have liked to have seen Cantor stay on as majority leader through the end of the year to help move legislation he has pending in the House, especially bill to reauthorize the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act. But instead, Cantor resigned his leadership post effective July 31.

Pearce, who is also the only Republican congressman representing a district on the U.S.-Mexico border, noted that Cantor was trying to thread the needle on immigration and actually get a comprehensive bill completed. Cantor even flirted with the idea of a so-called "path to citizenship" - or amnesty - for children of illegal immigrants who were brought into the country by their parents. In the end, the immigration issue contributed to the majority leader's defeat.

"He was playing footsy with the issue and trying to move it along and keep all the options on the table, but people really do flash when you talk about amnesty," Pearce said. "He got himself into a very difficult messaging situation where he was trying to encourage Republicans to stay on board and keep moving forward but his district was never hearing him say 'amnesty is not the plan and we're not going to do it'. And I think he tried to cure it right at the end but people had already formed an opinion about what he intended. As one of the top three members of the House he has to keep the discussion moving, but he can't move too far from the position of his district."

Lujan said Cantor's lurch to the right on immigration in the closing few weeks of his campaign would have made it hard for the majority leader to come back to Congress and compromise. So, the northern New Mexico Democrat is hopeful that with Cantor gone, immigration reform actually stands a better chance.

"I think it actually improves the opportunity for some kind of piecemeal approach or even a comprehensive bill," **Lujan** said.

E-mail: mcoleman@abqjournal.com Go to www.abqjournal.com/letters to submit a letter to the editor.

LOAD-DATE: June 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

June 14, 2014 Saturday

Delegation discusses economic policies; Congress members speak to Chamber

BYLINE: JAMES MONTELEONE JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C1

LENGTH: 599 words

New Mexico's delegation to the U.S. House -two Democrats and a Republican - outlined differing perspectives on New Mexico's lagging economy during a panel discussion Friday with Albuquerque business leaders.

In his presentation to the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce, Democratic Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** did not mention Republican Gov. Susa-na Martinez by name but took aim at what he characterized as an indecisive state administration. He cited flat-lined job growth while neighboring states have demonstrated economic gains.

While the Martinez administration often has faulted Democratic resistance to change, Republican Rep. Steve Pearce on Friday said the blame falls on a culture of government regulation that risks choking out the entrepreneurial spirit.

"Regulation, taxes (and) uncertainty are probably the three biggest penalties for expansion, growth and job capabilities. ... New Mexico must take a look at what it does in a microcosm of those," said Pearce, the representative of the southern New Mexico 2nd Congressional District.

"Right now it's a very uncertain time, if you look at the Affordable Care Act, if you look at the regulations coming out of the EPA, whatever," Pearce said.

Luján, representing northern New Mexico's 3rd Congressional District, said the Affordable Care Act and EPA regulations have affected other states as well, but other states have managed to create "tens of thousands" of new jobs since the recession. New Mexico, meanwhile, is still working to catch up to the number of jobs in the state before the reces- sion hit.

"What's happening differently in those states than in our state?" **Luján** asked.

He cited Spaceport America and the film industry as examples in which the state's efforts have not been clear or consistent. The New Mexico film industry in particular lagged after the state backed off its investments, **Luján** said, prompting the state to reinstate incentives.

"There was no reason for that except for embarrassing politics," **Luján** said.

Lujan Grisham, central New Mexico's 1st Congressional District representative, took a more middle-of-the-road approach, saying sound government policies are needed to promote business development, such as wider use of public-private partnerships.

"We've got to have the right policies in place that promote businesses. I agree that's something we should be doing. I may not agree that's always tax reform," **Lujan** Grisham said. "... We have to do a much better job with innovation and entrepreneurship."

The congressional representatives also expressed disagreement about negotiations between the Department of Defense and the Arizona company SunZia to allow an alternative energy transmission line to cross a restricted area north of White Sands Missile Range.

Luján praised the plan recently endorsed by the Obama administration to compromise on Department of Defense concerns by requiring that five miles of the line in the restricted test area be buried.

"There's no question (of) the importance of White Sands, but if we could also support a private investment project in the state that's going to export power and create a revenue stream, it's something that should be considered while we protect our assets," **Luján** said.

Pearce criticized the "deal" on the SunZia transmission line, saying the project diminishes the unique testing capabilities of the range and threatens to reduce federal appropriations to White Sands that benefit New Mexico.

"To choose an Arizona corporation's profits over national security and New Mexico jobs was the wrong thing," Pearce said. "We're going to contend with it still."

LOAD-DATE: June 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

95 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Las Cruces Sun-News (New Mexico)

June 14, 2014 Saturday

Voting record for NM Congressional delegation

BYLINE: Las Cruces Sun-News

SECTION: NEWS

LENGTH: 296 words

Voting record for New Mexico's congressional delegation for June 6-13

HR 4412 To authorize the programs of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and for other purposes. (Passed 401-2) Steve Pearce yes, **Ben Ray Lujan** yes, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HR 4810 To direct the secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into contracts for the provision of hospital care and medical services at non-Department of Veterans Affairs facilities for Department of Veterans Affairs patients with extended waiting times for appointments at Department facilities and for other purposes. (Passed 426-0) Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HR 4745 Making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes. (Passed 229-192) Pearce yes, **Lujan** no, **Lujan** Grisham no.

HR 4457 To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the reduced recognition period for built-in gains of S corporations. (Passed 263-155) Pearce yes, **Lujan** no, **Lujan** Grisham no.

H RES 617 Condemning the abduction of female students by armed militants from the terrorist group known as Boko Haram in northeastern provinces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. (Passed 411-2) Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

U.S. SENATE

S 2432 A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for the refinancing of certain federal student loans, and for other purposes motion to invoke cloture on motion to proceed. (Failed 56-38 three-fifths majority needed) Martin Heinrich yes, Tom Udall yes.

HR 3230 as amended; To improve the access of veterans to medical services from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes. (Passed 93-3) Heinrich yes, Udall yes.

LOAD-DATE: June 14, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Las Cruces Sun-News, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

96 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

June 14, 2014 Saturday 12:06 AM EST

Congressional Votes for New Mexico the Week of 06/06 - 06/12/2014

BYLINE: by TARGETED NEWS SERVICE, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 3650 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, June 14 -- There were 12 key votes in the House this week; the House held a total of 41 roll call votes in the week ending Thursday. The Senate held 10 key votes, and 16 roll call votes. The most important House vote was to pass a bill funding the Transportation Department and Housing and Urban Development in fiscal 2015. The most important Senate vote was to pass a bill to reform the Veterans Affairs Department.

Along with roll call votes, the House also passed various legislation by voice vote, including: a resolution (H. Res. 600), sponsored by Rep. Alan Grayson, D-Fla., to urge Afghanistan's government to hold a transparent, secure, and credible presidential election on June 14; the Demanding Accountability for Veterans Act (H.R. 2072), sponsored by Rep. Dan Benishek, R-Mich., to improve the accountability of the Veterans Affairs Secretary to the VA's Inspector General; and the Mortgage Choice Act (H.R. 3211), sponsored by Rep. Bill Huizenga, R-Mich., to improve definitions of the points and fees connected to mortgage transactions included in fee disclosure requirements.

The Senate also passed the Intelligence Authorization Act (H.R. 4681), sponsored by Rep. Mike J. Rogers, R-Mich., to authorize funding for the government's intelligence and intelligence-related activities in fiscal 2014 and fiscal 2015, with the exact funding levels and other details not disclosed to the public.

Here's a look at how area members of Congress voted over the previous week.

HOUSE VOTES:

House Vote 1:

AUTHORIZING SPENDING ON NASA: The House has passed the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act (H.R. 4412), sponsored by Rep. Steven M. Palazzo, R-Miss. The bill would authorize $17.6 billion of fiscal 2014 appropriations for NASA, and require NASA to develop a plan for human exploration of outer space, including Mars. Palazzo called the bill "a serious bipartisan commitment to space exploration at a serious time in our nation's history" and an effort to maintain American leadership in space by establishing a clear direction for that effort. The vote, on June 9, was 401 yeas to 2 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 2:

LIABILITY INSURANCE FOR TRUCKERS: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Steve Daines, R-Mont., to the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 4745). The amendment would bar funding for the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration to implement regulations requiring truck and bus companies to carry an increased amount of liability insurance. Daines said the current $750,000 liability insurance requirement was adequate, and "there is no evidence supporting higher insurance requirements or that coverage levels result in the improved safety performance of a motor carrier." An ame

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 3:

RULES FOR HUD GRANTS: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Paul A. Gosar, R-Ariz., to the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 4745). The amendment would bar funding for the Housing and Urban Development Department to implement its proposed rule, Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, which would impose racial composition and income zoning requirements on communities seeking block grants from HUD. Gosar said the rule would give HUD too much power over local zoning decisions, impose impractical and unrealistic requirements for the demographics of public housing and "increase local taxes, depress property values, and cause further harm to impoverished communities that are actually in need of these funds." An amendment opponent, Rep. Ed Pastor, D-Ariz., said the rule "simply provides communities with more data to comply with their existing duties" set out by the Fair Housing Act. The vote, on June 10, was 219 yeas to 207 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 4:

LICENSE PLATE CAMERAS: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. John Fleming, R-La., to the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations

Act (H.R. 4745). The amendment would bar funding for the purchase of cameras that can automatically collect and store the license plate numbers of ordinary drivers. Fleming said given the ability of the cameras to expand government monitoring of citizens, taxpayers in states that have rejected the license plate cameras should not have to subsidize the use of the cameras in other parts of the country. An amendment opponent, Rep. Tom Latham, R-Iowa, said it could have the unintended consequence of banning agencies from buying cameras for purposes such as airport security monitoring because the cameras could theoretically be used to capture license plate numbers. The vote, on June 10, was 255 yeas to 171 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 5:

ALTERNATIVES TO VA MEDICAL CARE: The House has passed the Veteran Access to Care Act (H.R. 4810), sponsored by Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Fla. The bill would have the Veterans Affairs Department reach contracts with non-VA facilities to provide medical services as necessary to veterans who live more than 40 miles from the nearest VA facility and have not received timely care at VA facilities. Miller said the change would help resolve a national emergency in which more than 57,000 veterans in the VA's health care system are waiting for initial appointments for treatment. Miller added that the bill would "assure that veterans waiting for an appointment or residing far from VA medical facilities are left in the control of their own care and able to choose for themselves where, when, and how they receive the care that the veteran themselves need." The vote, on June 10, was unanimous with 426 yeas.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 6:

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL PROJECT: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Jeff Denham, R-Calif., to the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 4745). The amendment would bar funding for the construction of high-speed rail in California. Denham said the state's high-speed rail project has been halted by judicial rulings and faces cost overruns and mismanagement, and so the federal government should not continue to provide funding. An amendment opponent, Rep. Zoe Lofgren, D-Calif., said "high-speed rail is the most effective and environmentally sustainable way to increase mobility across" California. The vote, on June 10, was 227 yeas to 186 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 7:

FUNDING HUD, TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT: The House has passed the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 4745), sponsored by Rep. Tom Latham, R-Iowa. The bill would provide $57 billion of funding for the Transportation Department and Housing and Urban Development Department in fiscal 2015. The related agencies include Amtrak, the Federal Maritime Commission, National Transportation Safety Board, U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, and Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation. Latham said the bill maintained budgetary discipline while providing necessary services, such as air traffic control monitoring and housing for families in need. A bill opponent, Rep. Nita Lowey, D-N.Y., said it "provides inadequate funding for our country's highway and transit infrastructure," including a $200-million cut in Amtrak's capital budget and less funding for capital investment in public transit projects and affordable housing. The vote, on June 10, was 229 yeas to 192 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 8:

PURCHASING FOOD AID SUPPLIES: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Edward R. Royce, R-Calif., to the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 4800). The amendment would increase funding for the Foreign Agricultural Service, which provides food aid overseas, by $10 million and cut funding for the Agricultural Market Service, which markets and promotes food products, by $15.5 million. Royce said the funding increase would enable the purchase of food in locations that are close to regions with an urgent need for food supplies to relieve famine, with a resulting reduction in the cost and time required to deliver food to famine victims. An amendment opponent, Rep. Stephen Lee Fincher, R-Tenn., said it would redirect taxpayer dollars from domestic farmers to foreign farmers, and food aid funds should be spent on domestic food supplies in order to support "American agriculture, exports, and jobs while increasing goodwill overseas and helping those in need." The vote, on June 11, was 223 yeas to 198 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

NAYS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 9:

WATER CONSERVATION AND DROUGHT: The House has rejected an amendment sponsored by Rep. John Garamendi, D-Calif., to the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 4800). The amendment would have allocated $50 million of Farm Service Agency funds at the Agriculture Department to emergency water conservation programs in California and other states suffering from drought. Garamendi said the funding would allow for the use of new water-conserving technologies that can help farmers in afflicted states save orchards and other crops that would otherwise die off for lack of water. An amendment opponent, Rep. Robert B. Aderholt, R-Ala., said the cut in Farm Service Agency funds would case agency offices around the country to shut down, reducing an important source of local support for farmers and ranchers. The vote, on June 11, was 148 yeas to 276 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

NAYS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 10:

BUSINESS TAX EXPENSING ALLOWANCE: The House has passed the America's Small Business Tax Relief Act (H.R. 4457), sponsored by Rep. Patrick J. Tiberi, R-Ohio. The bill would make the tax code's $500,000 expensing allowance for depreciable business property permanent, and adjust the expensing allowance for inflation in years after 2014. Tiberi said changing the expensive allowance from a temporary to a permanent part of the tax code would give business owners the certainty they need to make investments. A bill opponent, Rep. Steny H. Hoyer, D-Md., said the bill would add to the deficit by cutting tax revenue, and Hoyer added that it was a piecemeal substitute for the comprehensive tax reform that Congress should be working on to put the government's budget on solid footing and make investments in education, infrastructure, and economic growth. The vote, on June 12, was 272 yeas to 144 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 11:

TAXING ASSET SALES BY S CORPORATIONS: The House has passed the Permanent S Corporation Built-in Gains Recognition Period Act (H.R. 4453), sponsored by Rep. David G. Reichert, R-Wash. The bill would modify the tax code to permanently cut the period during which built-in gains from asset sales by S corporations after they have converted from C corporation status are taxable from 10 years to 5 years. Reichert said making the 5-year period permanent would encourage S corporations with aging or unproductive assets to sell those assets and use the proceeds to fund new investments, and also allow other businesses to buy the used assets for their own use. A bill opponent, Rep. Sander M. Levin, D-Mich., said the bill did not replace the loss of tax revenue with offsetting sources of new revenue, and therefore would irresponsibly add to the deficit. The vote, on June 12, was 263 yeas to 155 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 12:

CONDEMNING BOKO HARAM: The House has passed a resolution (H. Res. 617), sponsored by Rep. Frederica S. Wilson, R-Fla., to condemn Boko Haram's ongoing abduction of hundreds of girl student in the northeastern part of Nigeria, as well as other recent violent actions by Boko Haram, and call on President Obama to submit to Congress a strategy to combat Boko Haram and other radical Islamist terrorist groups in Africa. Wilson said the Boko Haram kidnapping was one of many instances of radical Islamic groups attacking girls who seek an education, and "we must continue to do everything we can to bring back these young girls" in Nigeria. The vote, on June 12, was 411 yeas to 2 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

SENATE VOTES:

Senate Vote 1:

VIRGINIA DISTRICT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of M. Hannah Lauck to serve as a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia. A supporter, Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick J. Leahy, D-Vt., cited Lauck's nine years of experience as a magistrate judge in the court and decade of previous experience as an assistant U.S. attorney in the Eastern District of Virginia, as well as her well-qualified rating from the American Bar Association. The vote, on June 10, was unanimous with 90 yeas.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 2:

MASSACHUSETTS DISTRICT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Leo T. Sorokin to serve as a judge on the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts. A supporter, Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick J. Leahy, D-Vt., cited Sorokin's nine years of experience as magistrate judge in the court, including service as chief magistrate judge for the past two years, eight previous years of work as an assistant public defender in the federal courts, and well-qualified rating from the American Bar Association. The vote, on June 10, was unanimous with 91 yeas.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 3:

NEVADA DISTRICT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Richard Franklin Boulware II to serve as a judge on the U.S. District Court for the District of Nevada. A supporter, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nevada, said Boulware, who has been a public defender in the federal courts in Nevada and New York for the past decade, and before that a lawyer at a private law firm, "has

impeccable credentials." An opponent, Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, cited Boulware's partially not qualified rating from the American Bar Association, his experience only in criminal law, and his 12 years of experience in the law as having inadequately prepared him to be a judge. Grassley said: "When I consider the entirety of his record, his lack of experience as an attorney and his zealous advocacy for many controversial policy positions, it is with reluctance that I will vote no on his nomination." The vote, on June 10, was 58 yeas to 35 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 4:

INTEREST ON STUDENT LOANS: The Senate has rejected a cloture motion to end debate on the Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act (S. 2432), sponsored by Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass. The bill would have directed the Education Secretary to establish a program for refinancing federal student loans and penalties on the loans, and fixed the interest rate on the refinanced loans for the duration of the loans. Warren said graduates were suffering the consequences of artificially high interest rates on their student loans, and the resulting burden "is keeping many young people from moving out of their parents' homes, from saving for a down payment, from buying homes, buying cars, starting small businesses, saving for retirement, or making the purchases that grow our economy." An opponent of ending debate, Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., said Democrats had advanced the bill prematurely, from political motives rather than from a desire to solve underlying problems in the system of higher education. The vote to end debate, on June 11, was 56 yeas to 38 nays, with a three-fifths majority required to end debate.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 5:

POINT OF ORDER ON VA REFORM BILL: The Senate has waived a budget point of order raised by Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., against the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act (H.R. 3230). Sessions said the bill authorized an unlimited amount of spending to reform the Veterans Affairs Department and put the spending on an emergency basis, so rather than pay for the spending by cutting waste elsewhere in the budget, the bill would enable more spending with little oversight or accountability. An opponent of the point of order, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., said: "This is an emergency. If it is not an emergency that we have neglected the brave men and women who have served this country and keep us free, than I do not know what an emergency is." The vote to waive the point of order, on June 11, was 75 yeas to 19 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 6:

REFORMING THE VA: The Senate has passed the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act (H.R. 3230), sponsored by Rep. Harold Rogers, R-Ky. The bill would authorize the Veterans Affairs Secretary to fire senior officials at the VA and have the VA reach contracts with non-VA facilities to provide medical services as necessary to veterans who live more than 40 miles from the nearest VA facility and have not received timely care at VA facilities. A supporter, Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., said: "By getting rid of incentives to falsify wait times and make it easier to remove bad managers, we will hold more folks accountable for the care veterans receive. By making it easier to hire medical professionals and allowing more veterans to seek care from outside providers, we will reduce the bottleneck that forces veterans to wait too long for care." The vote, on June 11, was 93 yeas to 3 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 7:

AMBASSADOR TO UNESCO: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Crystal Nix-Hines to serve as the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). No supporters of the nomination spoke on the Senate floor. An opponent, Sen. Dan Coats, R-Ind., criticized Nix-Hines for supporting the Palestinian Authority's membership in UNESCO, which, Coats said, has hurt prospects for reaching a peace settlement in the Middle East by encouraging Palestinian efforts to achieve recognition as a state by appealing directly to the U.N. rather than through negotiations with Israel. Coats added that U.S. law states that the government "will not support any agency that acknowledges and admits Palestine as a recognized state," but Nix-Hines and the Obama administration sought a waiver from the law in the UNESCO case. The vote, on June 12, was 52 yeas to 41 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 8:

FIRST FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD MEMBER: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Lael Brainard to serve as a member of the Federal Reserve System's board of governors for a 14-year term that began on Feb. 1, 2012. A supporter, Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., cited Brainard's experience as Under Secretary for International Affairs at the Treasury Department for the last four years and prior experience as Deputy Director of the National Economic Council and vice president of the Brookings Institution. The vote, on June 12, was 61 yeas to 31 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 9:

SECOND FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD MEMBER: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Jerome H. Powell to serve as a member of the Federal Reserve System's board of governors for a 14-year term that began on Feb. 1, 2014. A supporter, Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., cited Powell's two years of current service on the Fed's board and previous experience as a Treasury Department official during the George H.W. Bush administration. The vote, on June 12, was 67 yeas to 24 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 10:

VICE CHAIR OF FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Stanley Fischer to serve as Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for a four-year term. A supporter, Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-La., said Fischer, who would replace Janet Yellen as Vice Chairman, had extensive experience as chief economist at the World Bank, second-ranking official at the International Monetary Fund, vice president of Citigroup and, most recently, nine years as governor of the Bank of Israel. Landrieu said: "His extensive policymaking experience and expertise make him uniquely qualified to serve in the Fed's number two position and navigate the challenges we face as our economy continues to recover from the worst recession since the Great Depression." The vote, on June 12, was 63 yeas to 24 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

For more information about Targeted News Service products and services, please contact: Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service LLC, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://targetednews.com.

-1165228

LOAD-DATE: June 14, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

97 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

June 12, 2014 Thursday

NM delegation pushes for photonics hub

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 269 words

Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, along with Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, have sent a letter to Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel urging his department to consider an advanced photonics manufacturing hub as it selects the technical focus area for its next manufacturing institute.

"We believe the potential for advanced photonics is enormous and the United States is well positioned to capture both the strategic military value of photonics and the economic benefits of a growing industry," the delegation members wrote. "In New Mexico, the business community, along with the scientific and military community, have already begun to reap the benefits of advanced photonics, and increased investment will only see the dividends provided to the country increase as a result," the delegation wrote.

The Obama Administration launched an initiative in 2013 to create a network of institutes across the country designed to bring together applied research and product development.

In March, the delegation and members of public private partnerships said New Mexico's extensive expertise made it a "natural location" for additional national investment in research and manufacturing of optics and photonics technologies, which are used in robotics, medical imaging, next-generation displays, defense, biometric security and many other fields.

Want Albuquerque news in your inbox? Click here to sign up for our email newsletters

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: June 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Associated Press State & Local

June 12, 2014 Thursday 2:16 PM GMT

New Mexico Dems push for federal photonics lab

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL

LENGTH: 156 words

DATELINE: ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) - New Mexico's Democratic congressional delegation is pushing for a new federal facility to bridge the gap between applied research and product development.

U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham Wednesday wrote Defense Chuck Secretary Chuck Hagel underlining their strong support for the department's initiative to create a network of manufacturing innovation institutes across the country.

They also asked that the next institute be focused on optics and photonics technologies, which are used in robotics, medical imaging, next-generation displays, defense, biometric security and many other fields.

In March, the delegation and members of public private partnerships indicated that New Mexico's extensive expertise makes it a natural location for additional national investment in research and manufacturing of optics and photonics technologies

LOAD-DATE: June 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

June 11, 2014

N.M. Delegation Requests DOD Support for Development of Advanced Photonics Manufacturing Hub; Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 1106 words

WASHINGTON - U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham wrote a letter to Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel underlining their strong support for the Department of Defense's (DoD) manufacturing innovation institute competition, and requesting the DoD choose the development of an advanced photonics manufacturing hub in the United States as they select the technical focus area of their next manufacturing institute.

In the letter, the lawmakers wrote, "Manufacturing in advanced photonics should be a priority for the United States given the technological solutions it can provide for national security, and the economic benefit it will provide to a number of industries. These technologies should be developed and manufactured in the United States, not abroad."

The administration launched an initiative in 2013 to create a network of manufacturing innovation institutes across the country, which would serve as regional hubs to bridge the gap between applied research and product development. By bringing together companies, universities, and federal agencies, the nation can invest in the production of key technologies, such as advanced photonics, and encourage investment and production in the U.S. A recent DoD request for information from industry and academia indicated photonics as one of the technical focus areas currently under consideration for future institutes for manufacturing innovation.

New Mexico is uniquely positioned as a leader in optics and photonics capabilities, which are critical across a broad spectrum of commercial and defense industries. In March, the delegation and members of public private partnerships indicated that New Mexico's extensive expertise makes it a natural location for additional national investment in research and manufacturing of optics and photonics technologies, which are used in robotics, medical imaging, next-generation displays, defense, biometric security and many other fields.

"We believe the potential for advanced photonics is enormous and the United States is well positioned to capture both the strategic military value of photonics and the economic benefits of a growing industry. In New Mexico, the business community, along with the scientific and military community, have already begun to reap the benefits of advanced photonics, and increased investment will only see the dividends provided to the country increase as a result," the delegation wrote.

"We hope the DoD will give advanced photonics its sincere consideration as the next manufacturing innovation institute," the letter concludes.

A copy of the letter is available below and HERE http://www.scribd.com/doc/228849744/Letter-to-Secretary-Hagel-on-Photonics.

June 6, 2014

The Honorable Chuck Hagel

Secretary of Defense

U.S. Department of Defense

1000 Defense Pentagon

Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hagel:

We write in strong support of the Department of Defense's (DoD) manufacturing innovation institute competition and respectfully request that DoD support the development of an advanced photonics manufacturing hub in the United States.

As you know, the manufacturing innovation institute competition will allow for the establishment of public/private manufacturing hubs to bridge the gap between applied research and product development. By bringing together companies, universities, and federal agencies, our nation can co-invest in areas that encourage investment and production of key technologies in the United States such as advanced photonics.

The significance of photonics is increasingly recognized in a number of forums. In 2012, the National Academies National Research Council released a noteworthy report, "Optics and Photonics, Essential Technologies for Our Nation," which emphasized the importance of this technology, and on a global scale, the United Nations proclaimed 2015 as the International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies.

Manufacturing in advanced photonics should be a priority for the United States given the technological solutions it can provide for national security, and the economic benefit it will provide to a number of industries. These technologies should be developed and manufactured in the United States, not abroad. The modern technology surrounding us today - phones, computers, televisions - and the communications technologies that enable these devices to function are all made possible largely by optics and photonics. Other technologies benefit from optics and photonics as well, including advanced manufacturing, robotics, medical imaging, next-generation displays, defense technologies, biometric security, image processing, communications, and many others.

Further research and manufacturing of optics and photonics will benefit U.S. national security, enabling greater advances in defense technologies that improve intelligence capabilities for the warfighter such as the capture of spectral signals from space, and the development of directed energy weapons. These signals technologies are vital for information gathering, data transfer, and even provide non-kinetic military solutions to minimize civilian casualties. Photonics research will lead to improved night vision capabilities and advanced infrared counter measures, increasing the tools available to the warfigher. Photonic technology developed for defense purposes will also serve a dual commercial purpose, enabling advances in image processing, more effective non-invasive health screenings, robotics, and improved sensors for first responders.

We believe the potential for advanced photonics is enormous and the United States is well positioned to capture both the strategic military value of photonics and the economic benefits of a growing industry. In New Mexico, the business community, along with the scientific and military community have already begun to reap the benefits of advanced photonics, and increased investment will only see the dividends provided to the country increase as a result.

Thank you for your leadership in conducting the manufacturing innovation institute competition. We hope the DoD will give advanced photonics its sincere consideration as the next manufacturing innovation institute.

Sincerely,

TOM UDALL

United States Senator

MARTIN HEINRICH

United States Senator

STEVAN PEARCE

United States Representative

BEN RAY LUJAN

United States Representative

MICHELLE **LUJAN** GRISHAM

United States Representative

Cc: The Honorable Elena Broitman

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing and Industrial Base Policy

Read this original document at: http://www.tomudall.senate.gov/?p=press_releaseandid=1687

LOAD-DATE: June 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

100 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

June 9, 2014 Monday

LUJAN: PRESIDENT'S ACTIONS ON STUDENT LOAN DEBT AN IMPORTANT STEP; TIME FOR CONGRESS TO ACT

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 409 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted an executive order signed by President Obama today that takes aim at the growing burden of student loan debt on young Americans. The action will create a new "Pay As You Earn" option for 5 million federal direct student loan borrowers, enabling them to cap their student loan repayments at 10 percent of their income. It

will also promote awareness of repayment options and improve outreach to vulnerable borrowers and improve the information available to students and families. **Lujan** called the President's efforts an important step and called on Congress to take action that will further help millions of people facing tens of thousands of dollars in student loans debt.

"With college costs rising and more and more students and their families taking on debt to afford a college education, we need to address this serious issue," Congressman **Lujan** said. "President Obama's executive order will help borrowers by capping repayments and promoting awareness of repayment options, but it is no replacement for Congressional action. Today, I am cosponsoring legislation that would allow millions of borrowers to refinance their existing student loans at lower rates. A college education unlocks the doors of opportunity and it is critical that more Americans have the chance to get their degree without taking on a mountain of debt - debt that is currently holding back a generation of Americans and putting a drag on our economy."

Lujan signed on to the Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act, which allows federal and private student loan borrowers to refinance their loans at rates currently available to those taking out new federal student loans. Borrowers who are stuck with high interest rates can refinance loans for undergraduate education at 3.86 percent and loans for graduate education at 5.41 percent. A middle-class graduate who borrowed the national average of $30,000 for their undergraduate education could save more than $4,000 in interest payments over the life of the loan.

Currently in New Mexico 234,000 borrowers face $5.3 billion in outstanding student loan debt. The Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act, along with President Obama's executive action, would help address $1.2 trillion in student loans debt nationally, saving families across the country $70 billion.

LOAD-DATE: June 23, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

States News Service

June 9, 2014 Monday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON INTERNAL VA AUDIT SHOWING LONG WAIT TIMES FOR VETERANS SEEKING MEDICAL CARE

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 163 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the release of a Department of Veterans Affairs audit showing that nearly 3,500 veterans have had to wait more than 30 days for an appointment at the VA facility in Albuquerque.

"Today's VA report is deeply disappointing and confirms what we have been hearing from too many veterans in New Mexico. The wait times for veterans seeking the care they have earned is simply too long. The systemic problems that have plagued Albuquerque's VA facility, along with VA facilities across the country, must be addressed swiftly and thoroughly. It is simply unacceptable that in New Mexico new patients have to wait on average 45 days for primary care and 57 days for specialty care. Our brave veterans deserve better and I will continue to fight on their behalf as Congress addresses this critical issue."

LOAD-DATE: June 23, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

June 9, 2014 Monday 2:50 AM EST

Lujan Statement on Internal VA Audit Showing Long Wait Times for Veterans Seeking Medical Care

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 172 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the release of a Department of Veterans Affairs audit showing that nearly 3,500 veterans have had to wait more than 30 days for an appointment at the VA facility in Albuquerque.

"Today's VA report is deeply disappointing and confirms what we have been hearing from too many veterans in New Mexico. The wait times for veterans seeking the care they have earned is simply too long. The systemic problems that have plagued Albuquerque's VA facility, along with VA facilities across the country, must be addressed swiftly and thoroughly. It is simply unacceptable that in New Mexico new patients have to wait on average 45 days for primary care and 57 days for specialty care. Our brave veterans deserve better and I will continue to fight on their behalf as Congress addresses this critical issue."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140611-4763075 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: June 11, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

103 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

June 9, 2014 Monday 2:49 AM EST

Lujan: President's Actions on Student Loan Debt an Important Step; Time for Congress to Act

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 419 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted an executive order signed by President Obama today that takes aim at the growing burden of student loan debt on young Americans. The action will create a new "Pay As You Earn" option for 5 million federal direct student loan borrowers, enabling them to cap their student loan repayments at 10 percent of their income. It will also promote awareness of repayment options and improve outreach to vulnerable borrowers and improve the information available to students and families. **Lujan** called the President's efforts an important step and called on Congress to take action that will further help millions of people facing tens of thousands of dollars in student loans debt.

"With college costs rising and more and more students and their families taking on debt to afford a college education, we need to address this serious issue," Congressman **Lujan** said. "President Obama's executive order will help borrowers by capping repayments and promoting awareness of repayment options, but it is no replacement for Congressional action. Today, I am cosponsoring legislation that would allow millions of borrowers to refinance their existing student loans at lower rates. A college education unlocks the doors of opportunity and it is critical that more Americans have the chance to get their degree without taking on a mountain of debt - debt that is currently holding back a generation of Americans and putting a drag on our economy."

Lujan signed on to the Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act, which allows federal and private student loan borrowers to refinance their loans at rates currently available to those taking out new federal student loans. Borrowers who are stuck with high interest rates can refinance loans for undergraduate education at 3.86 percent and loans for graduate education at 5.41 percent. A middle-class graduate who borrowed the national average of $30,000 for their undergraduate education could save more than $4,000 in interest payments over the life of the loan.

Currently in New Mexico 234,000 borrowers face $5.3 billion in outstanding student loan debt. The Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act, along with President Obama's executive action, would help address $1.2 trillion in student loans debt nationally, saving families across the country $70 billion.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140611-4763069 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: June 11, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

June 5, 2014

LUJAN REQUESTS VA AUDIT OF CURRENT AND PAST CASEWORK THAT COULD HAVE BEEN IMPACTED BY VA MISCONDUCT; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 745 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District sent letters today to Acting Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs Sloan Gibson and Dr. James Robbins, Interim Director of the New Mexico VA Health Care System, requesting that the VA audit casework conducted by **Lujan's** office on behalf of veterans in the district. As a result of recent reports that as many as 3,000 New Mexico veterans were placed on a separate waiting list that resulted in significant delays to receive care, **Lujan** is asking VA officials to review casework that is currently open to determine if the problems plaguing the VA system have impacted these cases. His office is also in the process of reviewing years of past casework that have been closed for any cases in which misconduct by the VA could have played a role in the decisions against his constituents.

"I have serious concerns that the deplorable actions in the Phoenix Health Care System are widespread within the VA system and that Veterans in New Mexico have been impacted by gross misconduct," Congressman **Lujan** wrote in the letter. "Therefore, I am formally requesting an audit on all casework concerning the VA that is currently open with my office. In addition, as my office continues to review casework that has been closed in the past, I also request an audit of questionable cases we discover."

During his time serving the Third District, **Lujan** and his staff have assisted hundreds of veterans who have had difficulty working with the VA, from getting benefits to complaints about long wait times for medical care.

"Constituent service is a top priority and we have had success getting veterans the benefits they have earned with their brave service," **Lujan** said. "However, not every case has resulted in a favorable outcome. If any of these decisions were a result of the gross misconduct that has taken place within the VA system, we need to know and these cases need to be revisited as part of the VA's efforts to address improper actions that have taken place."

"I encourage any veteran who feels that they have been mistreated by the VA to contact my office and share their story," added **Lujan**. "Hearing directly from those impacted by this misconduct will contribute to efforts to get to the bottom of this and ensure that proper changes are made to the VA so that our veterans receive the care they deserve."

Below is the text of **Lujan's** letter to the VA:

June 5, 2014

The Honorable Sloan D. Gibson

Acting Secretary

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

810 Vermont Ave. N.W.

Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Gibson:

Like many of my constituents, I was outraged to see the recently released interim report published by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) regarding the investigation of the Phoenix Health Care System where 1,700 veterans were omitted from within the VA Electronic Waiting List (EWL). Accusations of similar practices have emerged from within the VA system in Albuquerque, New Mexico where there were alleged efforts to disguise high patient demand at the VA, where as many as 3,000 patients who needed a primary care physician were placed in a "phantom" panel.

In light of the report by the OIG, as well as claims arising out of the New Mexico VA, our office is now reviewing our past and present Veterans health care casework to determine if any cases that did not result in a favorable outcome were due to problems discovered within the VA. I have serious concerns that the deplorable actions in the Phoenix Health Care System are widespread within the VA system and that Veterans in New Mexico have been impacted by gross misconduct. Therefore, I am formally requesting an audit on all casework concerning the VA that is currently open with my office. In addition, as my office continues to review casework that has been closed in the past, I also request an audit of questionable cases we discover.

It is essential that the VA act immediately to address any improper actions that have taken place and ensure that our veterans are receiving the care they deserve. Thank you for your attention to this matter and please keep me apprised of all findings and developments regarding this important issue.

Sincerely,

Ben Ray Lujan

Member of Congress

Cc: Dr. James Robbins, Interim Director, New Mexico VA Health Care System

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-requests-va-audit-of-current-and-past-casework-that-could-have-been-impacted-by-va-misconduct/

LOAD-DATE: June 6, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

June 5, 2014 Thursday

LUJAN REQUESTS VA AUDIT OF CURRENT AND PAST CASEWORK THAT COULD HAVE BEEN IMPACTED BY VA MISCONDUCT

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 729 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District sent letters today to Acting Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs Sloan Gibson and Dr. James Robbins, Interim Director of the New Mexico VA Health Care System, requesting that the VA audit casework conducted by **Lujan's** office on behalf of veterans in the district. As a result of recent reports that as many as 3,000 New Mexico veterans were placed on a separate waiting list that resulted in significant delays to receive care, **Lujan** is asking VA officials to review casework that is currently open to determine if the problems plaguing the VA system have impacted these cases. His office is also in the process of reviewing years of past casework that have been closed for any cases in which misconduct by the VA could have played a role in the decisions against his constituents.

"I have serious concerns that the deplorable actions in the Phoenix Health Care System are widespread within the VA system and that Veterans in New Mexico have been impacted by gross misconduct," Congressman **Lujan** wrote in the letter. "Therefore, I am formally requesting an audit on all casework concerning the VA that is currently open with my office. In addition, as my office continues to review casework that has been closed in the past, I also request an audit of questionable cases we discover."

During his time serving the Third District, **Lujan** and his staff have assisted hundreds of veterans who have had difficulty working with the VA, from getting benefits to complaints about long wait times for medical care.

"Constituent service is a top priority and we have had success getting veterans the benefits they have earned with their brave service," **Lujan** said. "However, not every case has resulted in a favorable outcome. If any of these decisions were a result of the gross misconduct that has taken

place within the VA system, we need to know and these cases need to be revisited as part of the VA's efforts to address improper actions that have taken place."

"I encourage any veteran who feels that they have been mistreated by the VA to contact my office and share their story," added **Lujan**. "Hearing directly from those impacted by this misconduct will contribute to efforts to get to the bottom of this and ensure that proper changes are made to the VA so that our veterans receive the care they deserve."

Below is the text of **Lujan's** letter to the VA:

June 5, 2014

The Honorable Sloan D. Gibson

Acting Secretary

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

810 Vermont Ave. N.W.

Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Gibson:

Like many of my constituents, I was outraged to see the recently released interim report published by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) regarding the investigation of the Phoenix Health Care System where 1,700 veterans were omitted from within the VA Electronic Waiting List (EWL). Accusations of similar practices have emerged from within the VA system in Albuquerque, New Mexico where there were alleged efforts to disguise high patient demand at the VA, where as many as 3,000 patients who needed a primary care physician were placed in a "phantom" panel.

In light of the report by the OIG, as well as claims arising out of the New Mexico VA, our office is now reviewing our past and present Veterans health care casework to determine if any cases that did not result in a favorable outcome were due to problems discovered within the VA. I have serious concerns that the deplorable actions in the Phoenix Health Care System are widespread within the VA system and that Veterans in New Mexico have been impacted by gross misconduct. Therefore, I am formally requesting an audit on all casework concerning the VA that is currently open with my office. In addition, as my office continues to review casework that has been closed in the past, I also request an audit of questionable cases we discover.

It is essential that the VA act immediately to address any improper actions that have taken place and ensure that our veterans are receiving the care they deserve. Thank you for your attention to this matter and please keep me apprised of all findings and developments regarding this important issue.

Sincerely,

Ben Ray Lujan

Member of Congress

Cc: Dr. James Robbins, Interim Director, New Mexico VA Health Care System

# # #

LOAD-DATE: June 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Associated Press State & Local

June 4, 2014 Wednesday 3:31 AM GMT

Weh wins GOP nomination for US Senate

BYLINE: JERI CLAUSING, Associated Press

SECTION: POLITICAL NEWS; STATE AND REGIONAL

LENGTH: 635 words

DATELINE: ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) - Retired Marine Col. Allen Weh on Tuesday easily defeated political newcomer David Clements for the unlikely chance to unseat popular Democratic Sen. Tom Udall in November.

The 71-year-old Weh had 64 percent of the vote in unofficial returns from the GOP primary.

A wealthy Albuquerque businessman, Weh spent more than $200,000 of his own money against Clements, a political newcomer with little cash who surprised many by winning 47 percent of delegate support at the state convention earlier this year.

Weh is a former state GOP party chairman who made a run for governor four years ago, coming in second behind Gov. Susana Martinez in a five-way primary.

But despite his veteran status and deep pockets, political watchers have said the GOP has little chance of winning over Udall, a popular former congressman and state attorney general with $3 million cash on hand.

A recent computer model of races conducted for The New York Times says Udall is one of 14 Senate incumbents with a 99 percent chance of retaining their seats. University of New Mexico political science professor Gabriel Sanchez noted that Udall has high approval ratings that will make it difficult for any GOP contender to raise money.

Weh, however, insisted those behind the predictions "just don't understand."

"Things are changing," he said Tuesday night from his election headquarters. "They are going to change this year. And my message is real simple: If you like what's going on in Washington, send Tom Udall back. But if you don't like what's going on, you've got to change the people."

Part of Weh's campaign has been to stress the need for more military veterans over lawyers in the Senate, especially in light of the recent revelations of secret waiting lists and delayed care at Veterans Affairs medical centers around the country. Udall is an attorney.

Weh served two tours in the Vietnam War in the Marines before rising to the rank of colonel and retiring in 1997. He also served in the Persian Gulf War and in Somalia.

On Tuesday night, Weh seized on the Republican anger over the Obama Administration's exchange of five high-level Taliban detainees for Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, a young soldier who walked away from his unit in the mountains of eastern Afghanistan and into five years of captivity by the Taliban.

"I cannot believe what the administration has done in exchanging five hardened killers for what now appears to be an Army deserter," Weh said. "... That's ludicrous. That puts a target on the back and a prison value on the back of every American serviceman and woman serving overseas, every CIA agent, every foreign service officer."

Weh joined the race in January and has raised nearly $600,000, including $217,000 of his own money, according to the latest reports. Clements, an attorney from Las Cruces, started his grass-roots campaign in November, raising and spending about $40,000, the last filings showed.

In other primary races, two political newcomers were vying for the Republican nomination for the 1st Congressional District seat currently held by Democrat Michelle **Lujan** Grisham.

Mike Frese, a 66-year-old scientist and small business owner from Corrales, defeated Richard Priem, a 64-year-old businessman and retired Army veteran from Albuquerque, with 65 percent of the vote.

For the 2nd Congressional seat, Democratic three-term incumbent Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** easily defeated challenger Robert Blanch, an assistant district attorney in Albuquerque, with 87 percent in unofficial returns.

Lujan will face Republican Jefferson Byrd of Tucumcari for a second time in November.

There were no primary races for southern New Mexico's 3rd Congressional District seat currently held by Republican Steve Pearce, who will run against Democratic attorney Roxanne "Rocky" Laura from Carlsbad in November.

LOAD-DATE: June 4, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

Associated Press State & Local

June 4, 2014 Wednesday 3:05 AM GMT

Lujan easily wins CD3 primary; Frese wins in CD1

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL

LENGTH: 165 words

DATELINE: ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** easily defeated a challenger in New Mexico's Democratic primary Tuesday, while Republican Mike Frese of Corrales won the GOP bid for Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham's seat.

In the 2nd Congressional District , Democratic three-term incumbent **Lujan** easily defeated challenger Robert Blanch, an assistant district attorney in Albuquerque, with 84 percent in unofficial returns.

Lujan will face Republican Jefferson Byrd of Tucumcari for a second time in November.

In the GOP primary for the 1st Congressional District, Frese defeated Richard Priem, a 64-year-old businessman and retired Army veteran from Albuquerque, with 64 percent of the vote for the chance to run against **Lujan** Grisham in her first re-election bid in November.

There were no primary races for southern New Mexico's 3rd Congressional District seat currently held by Republican Steve Pearce, who will run against Democratic attorney Roxanne "Rocky" Laura from Carlsbad in November.

LOAD-DATE: June 4, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

June 4, 2014

Udall, Heinrich, Lujan Honor Last Original Navajo Code Talker Chester Nez; Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 416 words

WASHINGTON - Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, and U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** issued the following statements celebrating the life and service of Chester Nez, the last of the

original 29 Navajo Code Talkers, who died Wednesday morning, and honoring the historic role the Native American Code Talkers played in the Allied victory in World War II.

"The passing of Chester Nez is a solemn moment for the Navajo Nation, the state of New Mexico and our country, and my thoughts are with the Nez family," Udall said. "Like the code that helped win two world wars, Chester Nez's commitment to the United States was unbroken. He loved his culture and his country, and when called, he fought to protect both. And because of his service, we enjoy freedoms that have stood the test of time. As we mark Chester's passing, let us honor his memory with a renewed inspiration to preserve our Native languages, and rededicate ourselves to keeping alive the story of our Code Talkers and the patriotic spirit that has always run deep in New Mexico and our nation."

"Chester Nez was a true American hero. His bravery and service will always be remembered," Heinrich said. "Chester, along with 28 other Navajo Code Talkers, used their Native language to develop what would become one of the most indispensable tools in World War II. Serving as a Marine at a young age, Chester's love of country and his commitment to freedom never wavered--neither did his courage. Our nation is forever in his debt. I join all New Mexicans in keeping Chester's family and friends in our thoughts and prayers."

"My thoughts are with the Nez family as we mourn the loss of the last original Navajo Code Talker, Chester Nez. Mr. Nez grew up at a time when speaking his native Navajo was prohibited and punished, yet it did not stop him from holding on to his culture and keeping his language alive," **Lujan** said. "While Mr. Nez has been described as a traditionally modest and humble man who did not talk a lot, he always sought to preserve his language, and helped share the stories of the Code Talkers with younger generations of Navajos so they understand the importance of their language and are encouraged to learn it. While we are saddened by the loss of Chester Nez, we are inspired by his service to our nation and the efforts of all Navajo Code Talkers who played a critical role in World War II. We thank them for their service."

Read this original document at: http://www.tomudall.senate.gov/?p=press_releaseandid=1678

LOAD-DATE: June 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

June 2, 2014 Monday

Hunt is on for elusive voters; NM has history of low primary turnout

BYLINE: James Monteleone Journal Staff Writer

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 958 words

New Mexico primary election candidates are making their final pitches before polling places open Tuesday, with ballots running from U.S. Senate and governor nominations to county sheriff.

But the biggest challenge for candidates might be inspiring voters to get out and participate.

Turnout questions stem from an unusually quiet primary election season that didn't seem to generate much voter excitement.

Top incumbents like Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., and Republican Gov. Susana Martinez are unopposed in their primary bids for re-election. Even the five-way contest for the Democratic governor nomination - the party's nod to take on Martinez for the November general election - was a collection of largely unfamiliar faces and first-time candidates for statewide office. And the Democrats for the most part refrained from engaging one another in debate, uniformly aiming their criticism at Martinez.

Meanwhile, television ads in advance of the primary have been few and far between.

The state's closed primary system, meaning only Democrats and Republicans are eligible to vote, shuts out roughly 22 percent of all voters and specifically those who decline to state a party affiliation or who are registered with a minor party.

The heavier action seems to lie ahead in the general election, and many voters may prefer to sit out the preliminaries in Tuesday's election, according to several New Mexico political pundits.

Early voting turnout

Turnout indications from early, in-person voting were mixed.

Early voting was open around the state through Saturday. In at least one of the state's largest counties, Santa Fe, fewer early voting ballots were cast this year than in the 2010 primary election - the last time New Mexico voters considered candidates for governor.

In Santa Fe County, early voting was down about 7 percent from 2010. About 5,100 early ballots were cast, according to Santa Fe County Clerk Geraldine Salazar. In 2010, more than 5,500 Santa Fe voters cast their ballots early.

In Bernalillo County, however, early voting was up slightly over the 2010 primary.

After trailing behind 2010 early voting numbers for most of the early voting period, a surge of voters turned out to cast ballots on Friday and Saturday, raising the county's total early voting numbers to 6 percent higher than the 2010 primary, Bernalillo County Clerk Maggie Toulouse Oliver said. Nearly 22,500 Bernalillo County voters voted early, compared with about 21,100 early primary votes in 2010, according to the county clerk's office.

Democratic

governor's race "Let's face it: If this was a more exciting race, then we'd probably see higher turnout levels," said political analyst Brian Sanderoff, president of Research & Polling Inc.

In the Democratic governor's race, many voters were still undecided in late May among the five candidates - Gary King, Linda Lopez, Howie Morales, Lawrence Rael and Alan Webber. A statewide Journal Poll conducted May 20-22 found that 29 percent of voters remained undecided, more than the number backing any single candidate.

That indecision may cause previously active voters to wait and see who the nominee will be rather than cast a vote, Sanderoff said.

"If they're still undecided, frankly, a lot of those people aren't going to vote," Sanderoff said. "If they're undecided, what's the motivation to vote other than habit?"

UNM political science professor Gabriel Sanchez said he would be surprised if primary voter turnout exceeded 20 percent of the electorate eligible to vote in Tuesday's election.

New Mexico has historically experienced primary election turnouts around 25 percent.

"A lot of people may think, 'Hey, is this even worth paying attention to?'" Sanchez said.

Also, voter doubts about the Democratic candidates' ability to beat Martinez, who is well-funded and presumed to be popular, could be adding to voter inattention, Sanchez said.

"It sends a signal to a lot of voters that these folks might not be able to be competitive with the governor, so is it worth investing in the campaign?" Sanchez said, referring to the perceived quiet of the Democratic primary election campaign for governor. "That really has a lot to do with it."

The ballot

Offices on Tuesday's primary election ballots include: One of the few heated contests has been for the Democratic nomination for state treasurer. Democrats are choosing between former state Sen. Tim Eichenberg and former Democratic Party Chairman John Wertheim. Republican Rick J. Lopez is unopposed for treasurer in the Republican primary.

U.S. Sen. Tom Udall has no Democratic primary challenger. Udall will face the winner of the Republican U.S. Senate primary race between Albuquerque businessman and retired Marine colonel Allen Weh and former Doña Ana County assistant district attorney David Clements.

For the state's three U.S. House seats, Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** of the 3rd Congressional District is the only incumbent facing a primary challenge. **Luján** has ballot opposition from former Bernalillo County assistant district attorney Robert Blanch in Tuesday's primary.

For the 1st Congressional District seat, Republicans Mike Frese and Richard Priem are running for their party's nomination to challenge Democratic Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham in November.

There are no contested primaries in the 2nd Congressional District. Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., will face Democrat Roxanne "Rocky" Lara of Carlsbad in the general election.

Eighteen of the state's 70 House seats in the state Legislature are contested in Democratic or Republican primary races. The state Senate is not up for election this year. What you need to know

See the Journal's online Voter Guide at ABQjournal.com for links to sample ballots, candidate profiles and primary election news

List of polling places, Page A2

LOAD-DATE: June 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

May 30, 2014 Friday

VA patients in ABQ parked in 'phantom' panel; NM delegation calls for Shinseki's ouster

BYLINE: Colleen Heild and Michael Coleman Journal Staff Writers

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 1083 words

New Mexico's congressional delegation joined the cry Thursday for Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki to resign over revelations that VA medical centers have doctored patient appointment records to hide long patient waits.

Meanwhile, VA records obtained by the Journal show that efforts to disguise high patient demand at the VA in Albuquerque included putting more than 1,760 patients who needed a primary care physician in a "phantom" panel that was assigned to a medical supervisor who didn't actually treat patients.

The computer record shows the patients were parked there - making it appear they had a doctor - until they could be placed with a primary care physician.

Urgent needs were met by sending the patients to a walk-in clinic, emergency room or squeezing them into the schedule of a physician who was seeing patients.

Manipulation of patient appointment records has been a long-standing problem within the VA, with VA inspector general records showing investigations of the practice at medical centers around the country dating back to at least 2005.

But the Journal also learned that during an internal meeting last fall at the Albuquerque VA medical center, a group that included VA schedulers and their supervisors was instructed to follow "new ways" of making appointments for patients.

There was no overt mention of hiding backlogs, but the change was explained as a way of managing the influx of patients.

One of the "new ways" was to alter the "desired date" of appointment in the internal computer system. The change would make it appear that a patient was being seen within the two-week time frame set up by the VA nationally as a target its medical centers ought to achieve - even though the wait times for the appointments could be months.

An alternative was to offer patients an appointment three or four months in advance, and once a patient agreed, the scheduler was to record that advanced date as the patient's "desired date."

VA performance measures set up in 2012 call for patients to be seen with 14 days of their desired date, and executive bonuses have been based in part on how well their medical centers achieve those performance measures.

Calls to resign

In Washington and elsewhere, the drumbeat grew louder Thursday for a major shake-up at the VA.

New Mexico's two Democratic senators, Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, called early in the day for Shinseki to step down. Their statements followed a preliminary report that focused on the Phoenix VA medical center, where at least 1,700 veterans waiting for health care services weren't included on the center's official waiting list.

By Thursday evening, Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, **Ben Ray Luján**, both Democrats, were joined by Republican Rep. Steve Pearce in echoing the call.

Meanwhile, The Associated Press reported that Shinseki spoke privately with lawmakers and met with nearly two dozen veterans groups, assuring them that he takes the reports seriously and is moving swiftly to fix problems. Today, he is to address the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, outlining his plans for corrections.

While initially focused on Phoenix, the investigation described Wednesday by the VA Department's inspector general found broad and deep-seated problems in the sprawling health care system, which provides medical care to about 6.5 million veterans annually.

In New Mexico, more than 64,335 veterans were treated at the Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center in Albuquerque last year, according to a spokeswoman.

TheJournal reported earlier this month that VA whistle-blowers in Albuquerque, as far back as last fall, complained about similar manipulation of patient appointment records. It's unclear what became of that inquiry, but the Raymond G. Murphy center is among those medical centers that are under current scrutiny.

Udall, who is seeking re-election this year, said new leadership at the VA is needed to restore accountability and transparency.

"Independent investigators at the VA are now confirming what I have been saying for weeks; that the problems at the VA are systemic and rooted in a culture that has rewarded cover-ups and cheating to the point of risking the health of our veterans," Udall said in a statement.

Udall plans to submit his own report to the VA inspector general based on information he has received from veterans, their families and others, who have contacted his office about similar problems at the VA in New Mexico.

VA here mum

VA officials in Albuquerque haven't yet responded to Journal requests about how well the Albuquerque health center met its performance goals. Nor have they released the amount of merit-based performance bonuses, if any, that were paid to VA executives in New Mexico in the most recent fiscal year.

VA spokeswoman Sonja Brown said Thursday in an email that the Albuquerque VA health system keeps an electronic wait list, but when asked by the Journal how many patients were on the list she responded, "I don't have this information."

Heinrich, in his prepared statement, said he visited the regional VA center in Albuquerque this week and "many of the veterans that I spoke to there were complimentary of their treatment. But even one veteran slipping through the cracks anywhere in the nation is one too many."

In calling for Shinseki to resign, **Luján** said in a statement that he believes "other VA officials or employees that are responsible for this despicable and disrespectful treatment of our veterans must step down as well."

Lujan Grisham noted in her statement that the VA's inspector general is still reviewing "significant allegations" stemming from the Phoenix inquiry.

But she added, "We can't wait around for more reviews. We need an outside investigation into Albuquerque's VA facility."

In his statement, Pearce thanked Shinseki "for his decades of service to the military."

"Unfortunately, his leadership and administration of the VA has not successfully provided the services and benefits to those he is supposed to serve," Pearce said.

Eleven Senate Democrats had called for Shinseki's resignation since Wednesday, when the VA inspector general report came out, The Associated Press reported. All but Heinrich are on the ballot this fall.

White House press secretary Jay Carney declined to say whether President Barack Obama still has full confidence in Shinseki, who has led the VA since the start of the Obama administration. The president is waiting for a full investigation into the VA before deciding who should be held accountable, Carney said.

LOAD-DATE: May 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

111 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

May 30, 2014 Friday

Sandia land swap very close;
Sandia Pueblo to get 700-acre parcel on west face of Sandias

BYLINE: Copyright © 2014 Albuquerque Journal By Rick Nathanson Journal Staff Writer

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 554 words

It was more than a decade in the making, but a land swap between the U.S. Forest Service and Sandia Pueblo is about to conclude, awaiting only a signature from President Barack Obama.

As a result, a roughly 700-acre parcel of land on the west face of the Sandia Mountains and located near Placitas, will be signed over to Sandia Pueblo.

In turn, the pueblo will exchange about 160 acres of land along the Piedra Lisa Trail, which the Forest Service will maintain as a conservation easement, as well as a 70-acre parcel called the La Luz Tract that butts up to the La Luz Trail.

Under the terms of the federal legislation, none of the lands in the swap may be developed, said Dominic Gabello, chief of staff for Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., primary sponsor of the Sandia Pueblo Settlement Technical Amendment Act, which passed the House on Wednesday.

Co-sponsoring the legislation were Reps. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., and **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. A Senate version of the legislation sponsored by New Mexico Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich passed earlier this year.

The legislation amends the 2003 T'uf Shur Bien Preservation Trust Area Act, enacted into law more 11 years ago to resolve Sandia Pueblo's long-standing claim to 10,000 acres on the west face of the Sandia Mountains. That act allowed for the pueblo to continue using the land for religious purposes and gave it control over some future uses, while title of the land remained with the federal government. It also required the Forest Service to consider the land exchange, which lies outside the preservation trust area.

"Passage of this legislation moves the pueblo closer to securing their sacred lands for future generations," **Lujan** Grisham said in a statement. "Tribal communities across the nation face difficulties accessing and protecting sacred sites that have religious and cultural significance, and whenever possible it is the responsibility of Congress to place these sites under tribal control."

That was a large part of the argument made by Sandia Pueblo Gov. Stuart Paisano and the pueblo's Tribal Council in claiming ownership of the thousands of acres of national forest land in the Sandia Mountains. Those property rights were mistakenly omitted from a federal survey about 150 years ago, Paisano said.

"Sandia Pueblo's overall goal was to preserve and protect the Sandia Mountains from any future development," Paisano said. "That was always our fear."

As added insurance, several years ago the pueblo purchased about 200 acres from a private owner. That land will now be added to the 700 acre parcel in Placitas. In addition, the La Luz Tract, which will now become protected Forest Service land, had previously been in private hands before also being purchased by the pueblo, Paisano said.

"All current Forest Service-approved uses for the Sandia Wilderness designated area will continue," he added. "Nobody who currently uses the land is being excluded, and hasn't been since the original act passed 11 years ago."

Paisano thanked the Forest Service for its cooperation and assistance in working with the pueblo and New Mexico's congressional delegation on the bill.

"It was truly a bipartisan, group effort that seems all too rare in recent years, and the Pueblo extends its sincere thanks to all who were involved and lent their support," he said.

LOAD-DATE: May 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: ADOLPHE PIERRE-LOUIS/JOURNAL Jeff La Fevre, a worker with Sandia Pueblo, rolls out wire for fencing along a piece of property the pueblo owns and that will be added to a larger parcel that the pueblo is receiving in a land swap with the U.S. Forest Service.
C.CUNNINGHAM/JOURNAL
ADOLPHE PIERRE-LOUIS/JOURNAL T.J. Thayer, with Sandia Pueblo, installs fencing along a 200-acre parcel of land that the pueblo purchased from a private owner and will be added to a 700-acre parcel the pueblo is receiving as part of a land swap with the U.S. Forest Service.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

May 30, 2014 Friday

NM still offering your father's primary election

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. A6

LENGTH: 328 words

In New Mexico's primary elections roughly one out of every five registered voters - around 200,000 people - can't vote. It's not because they missed early voting or will be out of town or forgot to get an absentee ballot.

It's because they declined to pledge allegiance to one of two parties and instead registered as "Decline To State."

And while one in four registered Democrats and Republicans are considered young voters - between the ages of 18 and 34 - they accounted for no more than one in 10 votes cast in the 2010 party primaries. According to New Mexico political analyst Brian Sanderoff, president of Research & Polling, the over-50 group accounts for 75 percent of primary election ballots cast.

Like early-bird dinner specials and senior discounts, primary voting in New Mexico is now considered "an over-50 affair," and voter apathy is high. Early voting turnout has been down from the last gubernatorial primary in 2010, with just a few thousand votes cast in each of the state's most populous counties.

That's unfortunate, considering the Democrats have five candidates vying to take on Gov. Susana Martinez in the fall; the Republicans have two who want Sen. Tom Udall's seat, two who want Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham's and two who want Rep. **Ben Ray Luján's**; there's an ugly Democratic contest for treasurer; five Democrats are running for two Public Regulation Commission jobs; and a slew of state House seats, judgeships, county commission posts and sheriff's badges are up for grabs.

It is a vital component of a representative democracy that registered voters ensure they are heard. With two days of early voting left and a full Election Day on Tuesday, there's still time for New Mexicans registered with one of the two major parties to vote.

And there's plenty of time for incumbent and new members of the 2015 Legislature to move the state forward for all voters by finally allowing people, not just parties, a voice in New Mexico's primary elections.

LOAD-DATE: May 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Targeted News Service

May 30, 2014 Friday 11:00 PM EST

Congressional Votes for New Mexico the Week of 05/23 - 05/29/2014

BYLINE: by TARGETED NEWS SERVICE, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 2122 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, May 30 -- There were 12 key votes in the House this week; the House held a total of 29 roll call votes in the week ending Thursday. The Senate was not in session this week. The most important House vote was to pass a bill funding the Departments of Justice and Commerce in fiscal year 2015, as well as science programs and other related agencies.

In addition to roll call votes, the House also passed the Venezuelan Human Rights and Democracy Protection Act (H.R. 4587), sponsored by Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-Fla., to impose sanctions on individuals found responsible for carrying out or ordering human rights abuses against Venezuelan citizens; a bill (H.R. 4028), sponsored by Rep. Grace Meng, D-N.Y., to list the desecration of cemeteries among the violations of the right to religious freedom set out by the International Religious Freedom Act; the Gulf War Health Research Reform Act (H.R. 4261), sponsored by Rep. Mike Coffman, R-Colo., to improve research of the Gulf War Illness and reform the Research Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses; and a bill (H.R. 2527), sponsored by Rep. Dina Titus, D-Nev., to amend the U.S. Code to provide veterans with counseling and treatment for sexual trauma suffered during inactive duty training.

Here's a look at how area members of Congress voted over the previous week.

There were no key votes in the Senate this week.

HOUSE VOTES:

House Vote 1:

RESOLUTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHINA: The House has passed a resolution (H. Res. 599), sponsored by Rep. Christopher H. Smith, R-N.J. The resolution urged China's government to respect the human rights of its citizens and allow open discussion of the Tiananmen Square Massacre in June 1989. Smith said that as the 25th anniversary of the end of the Tiananmen Square protests approaches, "the memory of the dead and those arrested, tortured, and exiled requires us to honor them, respect their noble aspirations for fundamental freedoms, and recommit ourselves to the struggle for freedom and human rights in China." The vote, on May 28, was 379 yeas to 1 nay.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

NOT VOTING: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 2:

DESERT STORM WAR MEMORIAL: The House has passed the National Desert Storm and Desert Shield War Memorial Act (H.R. 503), sponsored by Rep. David P. Roe, R-Tenn. The bill would authorize the National Desert Storm Memorial Association to build the National Desert Storm and Desert Shield Memorial in Washington, D.C., as a memorial to the 1990-1991 Persian Gulf War. Roe said it was important to "establish a monument to honor those who served on active duty in support of Operation Desert Storm or Operation Desert Shield." The vote, on May 28, was unanimous with 370 yeas.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st)

NOT VOTING: Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 3:

WEATHER FORECASTING: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Jim Bridenstine, R-Okla., to the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 4660). The amendment would increase funding for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research by $12 million, with the increase offset by a $12-million cut in funding for the Census Bureau. Bridenstine said increasing spending on weather research "will save countless American lives in the future and allow our citizens to better protect their personal property" by improving forecasts of tornadoes, hurricanes, and other extreme weather events. The vote, on May 29, was 340 yeas to 71 nays.

YEAS: Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st)

House Vote 4:

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Mike Thompson, D-Calif., to the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 4660). The amendment would increase funding for the National Instant Criminal Background Check System by $19.5 million, with the increase offset by spending cuts elsewhere. Thompson said that by improving state submission of data into the background check system, his amendment would help stop dangerous people who otherwise wouldn't pass a background check from buying guns because they are not listed in the system. The vote, on May 29, was 260 yeas to 145 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

NAYS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 5:

SPENDING ON SCIENCE RESEARCH: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Lamar Smith, R-Texas, to the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 4660). The amendment would redirect $15.35 million within the National Science Foundation from being used for research into the social, behavioral, and economic sciences directorate to being used for research into the physical sciences and engineering. Smith said "investments in science are essential if our country is to continue to lead the world in nanotechnology, supercomputing, and other fields that yield new jobs, new businesses, and, in fact, entire new industries," whereas the spending on social, behavioral, and economic sciences has often been wasteful. An amendment opponent, Rep. Chaka Fattah, D-Pa., said redirecting the funding would mean less research into areas such as posttraumatic stress and behavior in the face of disasters that improves and saves lives. The vote, on May 29, was 208 yeas to 201 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 6:

GROWING INDUSTRIAL HEMP: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Suzanne Bonamici, D-Ore., to the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 4660). The amendment would bar funding for the Justice Department to prevent states from implementing their own laws to authorize the growth and use of industrial hemp. Bonamici said her amendment "recognized the importance of industrial hemp as a natural resource, an agricultural commodity, and a versatile component in thousands of commercial products" and the unreasonableness of Justice's efforts to block farmers from growing hemp. An amendment opponent, Rep. Frank R. Wolf, R-Va., said there were no restrictions on the licensed use of domestically produced or traded industrial hemp products, making the amendment unnecessary. The vote, on May 29, was 237 yeas to 170 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

NAYS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 7:

MEDICAL MARIJUANA: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, R-Calif., to the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 4660). The amendment would bar funding for the Justice Department to take action to prevent 29 states from implementing their laws authorizing the use of medical marijuana. Rohrabacher said the amendment acknowledged the right of states to adopt their own laws without interference from the federal government and respected the doctor-patient relationship and freedom of doctors to prescribe medicines they feel their patients need. An amendment opponent, Rep. Andy Harris, R-Md., said the amendment was "the camel's nose under the tent" in that it would support efforts to legalize recreational use of marijuana, and it would harm the Drug Enforcement Administration's efforts to stop the illegal marijuana trade. The vote, on May 29, was 219 yeas to 189 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

NAYS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 8:

CONFIDENTIALITY OF REPORTER SOURCES: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Alan Grayson, D-Fla., to the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 4660). The amendment would bar funding for the Justice Department to take action to compel journalists to testify about information they have received from confidential sources. Grayson said adopting the so-called shield law to protect a reporter's confidential sources would compel the federal government to respect freedom of the press, following the lead of 49 other states that have adopted their own shield laws. An amendment opponent, Rep. Frank R. Wolf, R-Va., said it was not appropriate to insert the amendment into an appropriations bill without notice and without giving Congress the chance to hold hearings on the issue. The vote, on May 29, was 225 yeas to 183 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

NAYS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 9:

MANAGING INTERNET DOMAIN NAMES: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Sean P. Duffy, R-Wis., to the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 4660). The amendment would bar funding to end the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's responsibility for administering the Internet domain name system. Duffy

said shifting responsibility for the system to an international or foreign body, as has been proposed by President Obama, would diminished freedom of speech online by giving authoritarian governments the power to control the Internet. An amendment opponent, Rep. Chaka Fattah, D-Pa., said it "would suggest to countries like China and others that we want to control the Internet versus we want it to be an opportunity for people to gather information, speak freely, and associate freely." The vote, on May 29, was 229 yeas to 178 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 10:

SANCTUARY CITIES AND LAW ENFORCEMENT: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Steve King, R-Iowa, to the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 4660). The amendment would bar the Justice Department from providing funding for law enforcement agencies in cities that have sanctuary policies to shield illegal immigrants from being deported by the federal government. King said Congress had "a responsibility to assert our constitutional and statutory authority" on immigration, and should do so by punishing cities that do not obey federal immigration law. An amendment opponent, Rep. Chaka Fattah, D-Pa., said the amendment would punish sanctuary cities that are "trying to make the best of a very tough situation that the federal government is creating" by failing to reform immigration policies. The vote, on May 29, was 214 yeas to 194 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 11:

GHG EMISSIONS AND TRADE AGREEMENTS: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C., to the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 4660). The amendment would bar funding for reaching trade agreements that limit greenhouse gas emissions. Meadows said emissions limits could cost the U.S. millions of jobs in coming decades, and Congress has already passed legislation blocking cap-and-trade GHG emissions measures, so his amendment "would carry on the will of the House in terms of making sure that we wouldn't use any funds to circumvent the will of Congress." The vote, on May 29, was 226 yeas to 179 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 12:

FUNDING COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE PROGRAMS: The House has passed the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 4660), sponsored by Rep. Frank R. Wolf, R-Va. The bill would provide $51.2 billion to fund the Commerce Department, Justice Department, National Science Foundation, and related agencies in fiscal 2015. Wolf said the funding focused on "fighting crime and terrorism, including a focus on preventing and investigating cyber attacks; and boosting U.S. competitiveness and job creation by investing in exports, manufacturing, science, and space exploration." A bill opponent, Rep. Jim McDermott, D-Wash., criticized the bill's lack of funding for fish hatcheries in Alaska and the Northwest, which he said were necessary to maintain the nation's supply of salmon and other fish. The vote, on May 29, was 321 yeas to 87 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

For more information about Targeted News Service products and services, please contact: Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service LLC, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://targetednews.com.

-1163657

LOAD-DATE: May 31, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Associated Press State & Local

May 29, 2014 Thursday 11:39 PM GMT

NM delegation joins call for Shinseki to resign

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL

LENGTH: 143 words

DATELINE: ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) - New Mexico's congressional delegation is part of the chorus of lawmakers calling for Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki to resign.

Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham say independent investigators have confirmed that problems within the VA are systemic, and President Barack Obama needs to appoint new leadership that can restore accountability and transparency within the VA system.

They say veterans deserve better.

A probe of operations at the Phoenix VA Health Care System found that about 1,700 veterans in need of care were at risk of being lost or forgotten after being kept off an official waiting list. Problems were also found nationwide.

Udall called for an investigation of New Mexico's VA after concerns about waiting times and care were raised in Phoenix.

LOAD-DATE: May 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

Associated Press State & Local

May 29, 2014 Thursday 7:54 PM GMT

Republicans vie to challenge Sen. Tom Udall

BYLINE: JERI CLAUSING, Associated Press

SECTION: POLITICAL NEWS; STATE AND REGIONAL

LENGTH: 634 words

DATELINE: ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) - A pair of Republicans are headed for a showdown in next week's primary seeking the opportunity to challenge Democratic U.S. Sen. Tom Udall, a popular incumbent making his first bid at re-election.

Allen Weh, a 71-year-old retired Marine colonel and wealthy aerospace entrepreneur from Albuquerque, is a veteran of New Mexico politics. A former New Mexico Republican Party Chairman, Weh also made a run for governor four years ago, coming in second behind Gov. Susana Martinez in a five-way primary.

Running against him in Tuesday's primary is 34-year-David Clements of Las Cruces, an attorney and former Dona Ana County GOP chairman making his first run at elected office on a shoestring budget, building grassroots support as he travels the state in a well-used Isuzu truck.

Weh says he is running "because Washington is broken."

"I think where I am in life, instead of kicking back, I felt like I could make a difference," he said in a recent interview. "One man can't solve all the nation's problems, but a person who is really committed to making a difference can effect some positive change."

Weh also said the Senate needs fewer lawyers and more veterans. Udall and Clements are both lawyers.

Clements, who has taken a leave from law to travel the state drumming up support, said he decided to run because "my wife and I, like a lot of people, are jaded. We feel like there is no representation at the federal level."

Both Clements and Weh cite federal spending and the Affordable Care Act as key issues, although they differ on health care. Clements wants a full repeal. Weh says he would be open to tweaking the new law, saying the nation's health care system has been a mess for years.

Clements has been running since October, and has raised and spent about $40,000. Weh joined the race in January and has raised nearly $600,000, including $217,000 of his own money.

Clements has substituted shoe leather for cash, and garnered enough grassroots support to make a surprisingly strong showing at the state GOP's pre-primary convention in April, where he won 47 percent of the ballots.

Whoever wins the primary, however, has a tough uphill battle. A recent computer model of races conducted for The New York Times says Udall is one of 14 Senate incumbents with a 99 percent chance of retaining their seats.

Weh and Clements's response: The New York Times is a long way from New Mexico.

But University of New Mexico political science professor Gabriel Sanchez agrees the candidates have little chance of unseating Udall, a popular former congressman with $3 million cash on hand, even if popular Republican Gov. Susana Martinez wins a big victory in her re-election bid as many expect and that attracts more GOP-leaning voters to the polls.

"First, New Mexicans have shown consistently that their voting behavior differs in federal and state level races, with many instances where the majority of voters supported a GOP presidential candidate but a Democratic governor or other state wide candidate - and vice versa," Sanchez said.

In other primary races, two political newcomers are vying for the Republican nomination for the 1st Congressional District seat currently held by Democrat Michelle **Lujan** Grisham. Richard Priem, a 64-year-old businessman and retired Army veteran from Albuquerque, is running against 66-year-old Mike Frese, a scientist and small business owner from Corrales.

For the 2nd Congressional seat, Democrat Robert Blanch, an assistant district attorney in Albuquerque, is running against fellow Democrat and three-term incumbent Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**.

There are no primary races for southern New Mexico's 3rd Congressional District seat currently held by Republican Steve Pearce, who will run against Democratic attorney Roxanne "Rocky" Laura from Carlsbad in November.

LOAD-DATE: May 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

116 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

May 29, 2014

LUJAN CALLS FOR VA SECRETARY SHINSEKI TO RESIGN; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 159 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today calling for U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki to step down.

"Secretary Eric Shinseki has a long record of service to our nation and has shown a deep commitment to our veterans. However, the fact is there has been serious mistreatment of veterans as a result of systemic problems within the VA. I join Senators Udall and Heinrich in calling for Secretary Shinseki's resignation, but other VA officials or employees that are responsible for this despicable and disrespectful treatment of our veterans must step down as well. Veterans in New Mexico and across the country deserve quality, timely care, and too often they have not received it. We owe it to our veterans to solve these problems quickly."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-calls-for-va-secretary-shinseki-to-resign/

LOAD-DATE: May 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Environment and Energy Daily

May 29, 2014 Thursday

CAMPAIGN 2014: Tuesday primaries to set up battles in three key Western states

SECTION: POLITICS Vol. 10 No. 9

LENGTH: 1651 words

Jennifer Yachnin, E&E reporter

Another intense round of primary contests will take place Tuesday when voters from eight states head to the polls, determining a slate of contests that includes three Western Senate battles. In New Mexico, Sen. Tom Udall (D) will seek a second term, while in South Dakota voters will pick candidates in an open-seat race to replace retiring Sen. Tim Johnson (D). Perhaps the most contentious battle,

though, will happen in Montana, where appointed Sen. John Walsh must win the Democratic nod to defend his seat from likely GOP nominee Rep.

Steve Daines. Here's a look at the upcoming elections in each of those states: Montana Democrats and Republicans were already gearing up for a battle in Big Sky Country -- where GOP presidential nominee Mitt Romney took 55 percent in the 2012 election, while Democrats won a contentious Senate battle -- when President Obama tapped then-Sen. Max Baucus (D) to be U.S. ambassador to China late last year. Montana Gov. Steve Bullock (D) picked then-Lt. Gov. Walsh to serve out the remaining 11 months of Baucus' term. But Walsh's appointment hasn't exactly curtailed the contentious open-seat race that had been expected if Baucus retired as planned. Walsh still faces a primary challenge next week from former Lt. Gov. John Bohlinger and rancher Dirk Adams. And while Republicans largely cleared the field for Daines, not everyone got out of the way. In addition to the freshman lawmaker, state Rep. Champ Edmunds and massage therapist Susan Cundiff are also seeking the GOP nomination. Still, Walsh and Daines -- who have significant cash advantages over their competitors, having raised $1.9 million and $4.1 million, respectively -- have largely focused on attacking each other ahead of the primaries. Similarly, third-party groups have focused solely on the expected nominees, although those organizations have spent just $420,000 in the race to date, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. By comparison, third-party groups pumped $27 million into the 2012 contest between Sen. Jon Tester (D) and then-Rep. Denny Rehberg (R). While Daines claims more funds from the energy and natural resources industries -- he received $271,000 this cycle from donors related to mining, oil and gas, and electric utilities, according to CRP data -- Walsh has received the Montana Conservation Voters' endorsement. Although both candidates have called for the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline, Daines has criticized Walsh for a bill he sponsored that would shift approval of cross-border projects solely to the State Department.

Daines has also slammed the Democratic-controlled Senate as "anti-coal," telling the Associated Press earlier this month: "The Democratic-led Senate has been complicit in supporting President Barack Obama's war on coal, and Montanans don't like it." But in a Democratic debate in Great Falls, Mont., earlier this month, Walsh called for continued coal extraction and North American energy production. "We want to move away from fossil fuel consumption, but it's not going to happen overnight," Walsh said, according to the Great Falls Tribune. Other candidates in Montana's primaries have sought to make a mark by opting for more extreme positions. During the Great Falls debate, Adams sought to position himself as the "environmentalist in this campaign." "I'm the one who opposes the Keystone XL pipeline. I'm the one who says coal is dead, and it is. There is no investment thesis for coal," Adams said. "I'm the guy who talks about climate change on the campaign trail." At a March event in Sidney, Mont., Edmunds called for dismantling U.S. EPA and rejected the idea of climate change. "I would like to see the EPA go away," Edmunds told the Sidney Herald. "They're a bunch of greenies and they're coming up with rules to do away with industries that they don't agree with. They don't like fossil fuels, they don't like coal." He added: "Human-caused and human-affected climate change is not happening." Montana voters will also pick candidates to compete for the state's at-large House seat, which Daines is giving up to seek the Senate seat. Republicans are expected to continue their domination of the state's sole House seat, which the GOP has held since 1996 when Republican Rick Hill won an open-seat race to replace then-Rep. John Williams (D). Leading the field of five Republicans seeking their party's nod are state Sen. Matt Rosendale, former state Senate Minority Leader Corey Stapleton and former state Sen. Ryan Zinke. State Sen. Elsie Arntzen and real estate investor Drew Turiano are also candidates. Among the trio of leading candidates, all offer similar platforms -- including support for KXL -- but have claimed endorsements from different wings of the Republican Party. Rosendale has received support from conservative groups like FreedomWorks and the Tea Party Express, while Zinke has the backing of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and former Sen. Conrad Burns (R). Stapleton is backed by former Gov. Judy Martz (R) but told the Billings Gazette earlier this month: "I haven't really tried to get any" other endorsements. The winner of the GOP nomination will likely face John Lewis, a former top aide to Baucus. Lewis will compete with former state House Speaker and frequent candidate John Driscoll next week for the Democratic nod. South Dakota In South Dakota, a crowd of Republicans is vying for the right to succeed Johnson as the GOP makes picking up the open Senate seat a top priority this cycle. The winner of the five-candidate GOP contest -- which could go to a runoff if no Republican receives more than 35 percent of the vote -- will be favored against former congressional aide Rick Weiland, who is unopposed for the Democratic nomination. Former Gov. Mike Rounds leads the Republican field, using his significant cash advantage to promote his candidacy in a range of positive

ads. Rounds reported $636,000 in the bank in mid-May, after raising nearly $3.1 million at that time. He is widely expected to cinch the GOP nomination. But he must defeat political novice and physician Annette Bosworth. Bosworth reported $348,000 in the bank in mid-May after raising $1.1 million. Other candidates in the race include state Sen. Larry Rhoden and state Rep. Stace Nelson, who each raised about $116,000 in their bids, and attorney Jason Ravnsborg, who has raised $23,000. But the GOP nominee and Weiland will face additional competition in November. Former Sen. Larry Pressler (R) is running an independent bid. According to a recent SurveyUSA poll, conducted for South Dakota-based KSFY News, KOTA-TV and the Aberdeen American News, Rounds leads both Weiland and Pressler in the general election. The poll gave Rounds 44 percent, followed by Weiland with 30 percent and Presser with 17 percent. The survey of 504 likely voters, conducted May 6 to 10, had a 4.5-point margin of error. South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard (R), who is seeking his second term in office, also faces a primary challenge next week but is expected to easily defeat former state Rep. Lora Hubbel (R). Daugaard will likewise be heavily favored in November, when he will face either retired state Wildland Fire Suppression Director Joe Lowe (D) or state Rep. Susan Wismer. South Dakota's at-large House lawmaker Rep. Kristi Noem (R) does not face a primary challenge this cycle.

Land of incumbents New Mexico voters will also head to the polls next week to pick challengers to both Udall and Gov. Susana Martinez (R). Martinez faces no primary competition in the gubernatorial race, but five Democrats will vie on the ballot for the right to face the governor in November. Among the front-runners are state Attorney General Gary King, the son of former Gov. Bruce King; businessman Alan Webber; and former Albuquerque Chief Administrative Officer Lawrence Rael, who made a failed 2010 Democratic primary bid to compete for the lieutenant governor's office. According to an Albuquerque Journal poll released Sunday, nearly a third of voters remained undecided in the Democratic primary. Among those with an opinion, King leads the field with 22 percent, followed by Rael and Webber, tied with 16 percent each. The poll of 631 registered Democrats, conducted May 20 to 22, had a 3.9-point margin of error. But the winner of the Democratic primary will be the underdog against a well-funded Martinez as she seeks a second term. Udall is likewise a heavy favorite as he seeks a second term in the Senate, with most political prognosticators rating his seat safely Democratic. Still, a pair of Republicans is competing for the right to challenge Udall in November: former New Mexico Republican Party Chairman Allen Weh, who lost the 2010 GOP gubernatorial nomination to Martinez, and former Dona Ana County Republican Chairman David Clements. The GOP primary contest has turned combative at times. The Clements campaign accused a Weh aide of hacking its email accounts following the state GOP convention earlier this year, and the Weh campaign has sought to highlight a plagiarism incident in which Clements' website utilized sections of text from Rep. Justin Amash's (R-Mich.) website. Weh boats a significant cash advantage in the GOP race, with $205,000 in his war chest in mid-May after raising $583,000 at that time. Clements had $7,000 in the bank at the end of March but has not filed a campaign finance report since then. But Udall, who leads the Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Superfund, Toxics and Environmental Health, will be able to easily outspend either of his would-be challengers. The New Mexico lawmaker reported $5.8 million in the bank as of mid-May. Among New Mexico's trio of House lawmakers, only Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D) faces a primary challenge next week. But **Luján**, like Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (D) and Steve Pearce (R), is expected to win re-election this fall.

LOAD-DATE: June 26, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Environment and Energy Publishing, LLC

States News Service

May 29, 2014 Thursday

LUJAN CALLS FOR VA SECRETARY SHINSEKI TO RESIGN

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 151 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today calling for U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki to step down.

"Secretary Eric Shinseki has a long record of service to our nation and has shown a deep commitment to our veterans. However, the fact is there has been serious mistreatment of veterans as a result of systemic problems within the VA. I join Senators Udall and Heinrich in calling for Secretary Shinseki's resignation, but other VA officials or employees that are responsible for this despicable and disrespectful treatment of our veterans must step down as well. Veterans in New Mexico and across the country deserve quality, timely care, and too often they have not received it. We owe it to our veterans to solve these problems quickly."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: May 31, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

119 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

May 29, 2014 Thursday 3:05 AM EST

Lujan Calls for VA Secretary Shinseki to Resign

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 160 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today calling for U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki to step down.

"Secretary Eric Shinseki has a long record of service to our nation and has shown a deep commitment to our veterans. However, the fact is there has been serious mistreatment of veterans as a result of systemic problems within the VA. I join Senators Udall and Heinrich in calling for Secretary Shinseki's resignation, but other VA officials or employees that are responsible for this despicable and disrespectful treatment of our veterans must step down as well. Veterans in New Mexico and across the country deserve quality, timely care, and too often they have not received it. We owe it to our veterans to solve these problems quickly."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140530-4751329 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: May 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

120 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Quay County Sun (Tucumcari, New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

May 28, 2014 Wednesday

Tucumcari VFW Post conducts memorial services

BYLINE: Quay County Sun, Tucumcari, N.M.

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 235 words

May 28--A solemn ceremony Monday at the Tucumcari Memorial Park Cemetery honored fallen veterans.

The ceremony was conducted by the Delfido Gonzales Chapter 2528 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Ron Wilmot, who represents U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-New Mexico), read a statement from **Lujan** that said the ceremony this year was marred by news of service delays for veterans seeking treatment at Veterans Administration health facilities. **Lujan's** statement said such treatment should never be allowed.

Tucumcari City Commissioner John Mihm, a veteran, said the ceremony was a fitting way to honor veterans who have served their country.

Fred Porter, commander of VFW Post 2528 said that veterans' service had "made us their debtors."

Because of the veterans, he said, "Our flag flies over free people."

Chaplain Robert Prieto prayed that the U.S. continues to be a land of "freedom, peace and righteousness."

At a luncheon following the ceremony, Julian Vargas, a sixth grader at Tucumcari Middle School, read his prize-winning essay.

"We're called patriots because we don't give up," he said. "We get up and fight again."

To be patriotic, he said, "is to give to the community."

To keep the nation free, he said, Americans must keep up "a passion for where we live."

___ (c)2014 the Quay County Sun (Tucumcari, N.M.) Visit the Quay County Sun (Tucumcari, N.M.) at www.qcsunonline.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: June 4, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20140528-QY-Tucumcari-VFW-Post-conducts-memorial-services-0528-20140528

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: QY

Copyright 2014 Quay County Sun

Congressional Documents and Publications

May 23, 2014

LUJAN STATEMENT ON MEMORIAL DAY; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 511 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today in honor of Memorial Day and the men and women who have served in the Armed Forces. **Lujan** will celebrate Memorial Day on Monday, May 26 in Angel Fire at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial State Park.

"New Mexico has a long and proud tradition of service in our Armed Forces and bravely answering the call of duty when our country needs them most. So many brave men and women have put their country first and made a commitment to protect the values of freedom and liberty that we hold dear.

"My grandfather, Luis **Lujan** was one of these individuals, as he served this great nation in World War II when he left behind six children and his loving wife who was expecting their youngest son. He fought so bravely like all of his brothers in arms, and he returned home to the warm embrace of a loving family that missed him dearly. But sadly, so many brave soldiers were lost on the field of battle. Today we remember these men and all the men and women throughout our history, who in conflicts near and far have protected this nation with everything they had, making the ultimate sacrifice.

"Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said: 'A man who won't die for something is not fit to live.' The men and women who have died for their country were not only fit to live, but they will forever live on as long as we continue to remember their service and honor their sacrifice. Because while we might not know all the stories of heroism that have been displayed, we know that we owe each individual our deepest gratitude and respect.

"On Memorial Day, we also reflect on our veterans and those who continue to serve in harm's way as we pray for their swift and safe return home. And as we do so, it comes at a time when we've heard deeply disturbing reports of mismanagement at VA health clinics.

"When we as a nation ask brave Americans to serve and protect our country, we make a promise that when they answer the call of duty we will provide them with the care they have earned. Any failure to live up to that obligation strikes at the very heart of our commitment to our men and women in uniform and the veterans who have sacrificed so much. It breaks a solemn promise to our veterans and shakes the faith of the American people that our veterans will be treated like the heroes they are.

"There must be swift action to restore that faith by getting to the bottom of any failure to care for our veterans, addressing the backlogs, and taking steps to implement real reforms that will ensure this mismanagement does not occur again. So as we honor the memories, the valor, and the sacrifice of the men and women we have lost, we must also commit to fulfill our promises to those who have returned home.

"To our all our members of the Armed Forces who have died in service to our country, to all the veterans who returned home, and to all those who serve this very day - thank you."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-memorial-day1/

LOAD-DATE: May 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

May 23, 2014 Friday 9:46 PM EST

Lujan Statement on Memorial Day

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 515 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today in honor of Memorial Day and the men and women who have served in the Armed Forces. **Lujan** will celebrate Memorial Day on Monday, May 26 in Angel Fire at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial State Park.

"New Mexico has a long and proud tradition of service in our Armed Forces and bravely answering the call of duty when our country needs them most. So many brave men and women have put their country first and made a commitment to protect the values of freedom and liberty that we hold dear.

"My grandfather, Luis **Lujan** was one of these individuals, as he served this great nation in World War II when he left behind six children and his loving wife who was expecting their youngest son. He fought so bravely like all of his brothers in arms, and he returned home to the warm embrace of a loving family that missed him dearly. But sadly, so many brave soldiers were lost on the field of battle. Today we remember these men and all the men and women throughout our history, who in conflicts near and far have protected this nation with everything they had, making the ultimate sacrifice.

"Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said: 'A man who won't die for something is not fit to live.' The men and women who have died for their country were not only fit to live, but they will forever live on as long as we continue to remember their service and honor their sacrifice. Because while we might not know all the stories of heroism that have been displayed, we know that we owe each individual our deepest gratitude and respect.

"On Memorial Day, we also reflect on our veterans and those who continue to serve in harm's way as we pray for their swift and safe return home. And as we do so, it comes at a time when we've heard deeply disturbing reports of mismanagement at VA health clinics.

"When we as a nation ask brave Americans to serve and protect our country, we make a promise that when they answer the call of duty we will provide them with the care they have earned. Any failure to live up to that obligation strikes at the very heart of our commitment to our men and women in uniform and the veterans who have sacrificed so much. It breaks a solemn promise to our veterans and shakes the faith of the American people that our veterans will be treated like the heroes they are.

"There must be swift action to restore that faith by getting to the bottom of any failure to care for our veterans, addressing the backlogs, and taking steps to implement real reforms that will ensure this mismanagement does not occur again. So as we honor the memories, the valor, and the sacrifice of the men and women we have lost, we must also commit to fulfill our promises to those who have returned home.

"To our all our members of the Armed Forces who have died in service to our country, to all the veterans who returned home, and to all those who serve this very day - thank you."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140524-4746176 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: May 23, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

May 23, 2014 Friday 3:40 AM EST

New Mexico Dems: Congressman Ben Ray Lujan Highlights Tourette Syndrome Month on the House Floor

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 313 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke today on the House floor to bring attention to Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month. **Lujan** shared a letter he received from, Alexander Dennis, a constituents from Rio Rancho who has been working to bring awareness to the disorder. Below are his remarks as prepared.

"Mr. Speaker, last week I had the opportunity to meet with a bright young boy who was diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome and is working to bring attention to this disorder. His passion is an inspiration, and I want to share his own words about the importance of raising awareness:

Dear Congressman **Lujan**,

My name is Alexander Dennis. I live in Rio Rancho, New Mexico and am 14 years old. I grew up with a neurological disorder called Tourette Syndrome. It causes me and about 200,000 others in the United States to make sudden movements and uncontrollable sounds.

This disorder affects me daily and is a lifelong condition. There is no cure for Tourette Syndrome. I have to live daily with painful neck and full body jerks. Others with this disorder have different severity levels and different types of movements. It is noticeable to others but I do not know that I am doing the movements sometimes.

There are not many doctors that are experienced with Tourette Syndrome and it took me four years to be properly diagnosed.

May 15 through June 15 is Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month and I am writing to you because I am working to raise awareness to the challenges people that have this syndrome face. Any help that you can give will be greatly appreciated by me and all that suffer from this disorder. Thank you.

"Thank you Alexander for your voice, and I look forward to working with you on this issue."

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage10PkS-140524-TacordaCheng-4747032 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: May 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

May 22, 2014

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS TOURETTE SYNDROME AWARENESS MONTH ON THE HOUSE FLOOR;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 313 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke today on the House floor to bring attention to Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month. **Lujan** shared a letter he received from, Alexander Dennis, a constituents from Rio Rancho who has been working to bring awareness to the disorder. Below are his remarks as prepared.

"Mr. Speaker, last week I had the opportunity to meet with a bright young boy who was diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome and is working to bring attention to this disorder. His passion is an inspiration, and I want to share his own words about the importance of raising awareness:

Dear Congressman **Lujan**,

My name is Alexander Dennis. I live in Rio Rancho, New Mexico and am 14 years old. I grew up with a neurological disorder called Tourette Syndrome. It causes me and about 200,000 others in the United States to make sudden movements and uncontrollable sounds.

This disorder affects me daily and is a lifelong condition. There is no cure for Tourette Syndrome. I have to live daily with painful neck and full body jerks. Others with this disorder have different

severity levels and different types of movements. It is noticeable to others but I do not know that I am doing the movements sometimes.

There are not many doctors that are experienced with Tourette Syndrome and it took me four years to be properly diagnosed.

May 15 through June 15 is Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month and I am writing to you because I am working to raise awareness to the challenges people that have this syndrome face. Any help that you can give will be greatly appreciated by me and all that suffer from this disorder. Thank you.

"Thank you Alexander for your voice, and I look forward to working with you on this issue."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-highlights-tourette-syndrome-awareness-month-on-the-house-floor/

LOAD-DATE: May 23, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

May 22, 2014 Thursday 9:07 PM EST

Lujan Highlights Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month on the House Floor

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 310 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke today on the House floor to bring attention to Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month. **Lujan** shared a letter he received from, Alexander Dennis, a constituents from Rio Rancho who has been working to bring awareness to the disorder. Below are his remarks as prepared.

"Mr. Speaker, last week I had the opportunity to meet with a bright young boy who was diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome and is working to bring attention to this disorder. His passion is an inspiration, and I want to share his own words about the importance of raising awareness:

Dear Congressman **Lujan**,

My name is Alexander Dennis. I live in Rio Rancho, New Mexico and am 14 years old. I grew up with a neurological disorder called Tourette Syndrome. It causes me and about 200,000 others in the United States to make sudden movements and uncontrollable sounds.

This disorder affects me daily and is a lifelong condition. There is no cure for Tourette Syndrome. I have to live daily with painful neck and full body jerks. Others with this disorder have different severity levels and different types of movements. It is noticeable to others but I do not know that I am doing the movements sometimes.

There are not many doctors that are experienced with Tourette Syndrome and it took me four years to be properly diagnosed.

May 15 through June 15 is Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month and I am writing to you because I am working to raise awareness to the challenges people that have this syndrome face. Any help that you can give will be greatly appreciated by me and all that suffer from this disorder. Thank you.

"Thank you Alexander for your voice, and I look forward to working with you on this issue."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140523-4744201 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: May 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

May 21, 2014

CHC Members on President Obama's Designation of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument; National Monument Will Honor Latino History, Generate Economic Benefits for Local Economies; Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 595 words

Washington, D.C. - Members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus today released the following statement in response to President Obama's announcement that he will use his authority under the

1906 Antiquities Act to establish the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument. The monument, located in Las Cruces, New Mexico, will help tell the story of Latinos in American history and protect unique natural resources for the nation's benefit.

The designation is expected to promote economic growth in the local community through tourism and outdoor recreation.

Rep. Raul M. Grijalva of Arizona, the ranking member of the House Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation, congratulated President Obama on the announcement and highlighted its importance for everyone interested in Hispanic American history.

"The Organ Mountains tell the story of centuries of conflict, boundary disputes and reconciliations with Mexico," Grijalva said. "Many Latino families in the Southwest trace their roots to the region, and its natural beauty continues to draw people today. Designating this sensitive area as a national monument means the Organ Mountains will inspire and be enjoyed by generations of Americans to come, and I couldn't be happier to support President Obama's decision."

"New Mexico is blessed with majestic lands and the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks are a tremendous example of the beauty of our great state," said Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico. "The people of New Mexico have a special connection with these precious lands and the monument designation will ensure that not only the land but our culture and way of life will be protected for years to come. Thanks to the efforts of so many stakeholders in southern New Mexico who have worked hard to advocate for this designation, the Organ Mountains will attract more visitors, provide a boost to tourism, and strengthen the local economy."

"I am very pleased with the designation of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks as a national monument. This national treasure is not only central in preserving the region's biodiversity, but it is also key in protecting New Mexico's rich history and diverse culture for future generations," said Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham of New Mexico. "Preserving this land will protect New Mexico's tourism and outdoor economy, while also spurring economic development and job growth in the state. This new monument is an investment in New Mexico's communities and future generations."

According to a 2013 economic studyby BBC Research and Consulting, protecting the Organ Mountains would generate $7.4 million in new economic activity annually and double the number of jobs supported by outdoor recreation and tourism in the area. Furthermore, a 2006 study by the National Parks and Conservation Association revealed each federal dollar invested in national parks generates at least four dollars of economic value to the public.

President Obama has previously designated monuments honoring the contributions of Latinos to American society using the Antiquities Act. This includes the Cesar E. Chavez National Monument in California, Chavez' home and the headquarters of the United Farm Workers of America since the early 1970s when Chavez was its president.

Raul M. Grijalva, who also serves as a co-chair of the National Landscape Conservation System Caucus, sent a letter to President Obama thanking him for the significant contribution to the National Conservation Lands.

Read this original document at: http://lujangrisham.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=380778

LOAD-DATE: May 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

May 21, 2014

LUJAN STATEMENT ON REPORTS OF MISMANAGEMENT AT VA MEDICAL CENTERS; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 220 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on reports of mismanagement at Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers. **Lujan** recently sent a letter to Secretary Shinseki expressing concerns with these reports and excessive wait times for veterans in New Mexico seeking health care services from the VA.

"When we as a nation ask brave Americans to serve and protect our county, we make a promise that when they answer the call of duty we will provide them with the care they have earned. The deeply disturbing reports of mismanagement at VA medical clinics strike at the very heart of our commitment to our men and women in uniform and the veterans who have sacrificed so much. It breaks a solemn promise to our veterans and shakes the faith of the American people that our veterans will be treated like the heroes they are.

"The administration and VA must act swiftly to restore that faith by thoroughly investigating and getting to the bottom of any failure to care for our veterans, addressing the backlogs, and taking steps to implement real reforms that will ensure this mismanagement does not occur again."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan.**house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-reports-of-mismanagement-at-va-medical-centers/

LOAD-DATE: May 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Political Transcript Wire

May 21, 2014 Wednesday

REP. GREG WALDEN HOLDS A HEARING ON FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION OVERSIGHT

LENGTH: 22005 words

(CORRECTED COPY)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY HOLDS A HEARING ON FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION OVERSIGHT

MAY 20, 2014

SPEAKERS: REP. GREG WALDEN, R-ORE. CHAIRMAN REP. BOB LATTA, R-OHIO REP. LEE TERRY, R-NEB. REP. JOHN SHIMKUS, R-ILL. REP. MIKE ROGERS, R-MICH. REP. MARSHA BLACKBURN, R-TENN. REP. BRETT GUTHRIE, R-KY. REP. ADAM KINZINGER, R-ILL. REP. STEVE SCALISE, R-LA. REP. LEONARD LANCE, R-N.J. REP. CORY GARDNER, R-COLO. REP. MIKE POMPEO, R-KAN. REP. BILLY LONG, R-MO. REP. RENEE ELLMERS, R-N.C. REP. JOE L. BARTON, R-TEXAS EX OFFICIO REP. FRED UPTON, R-MICH. EX OFFICIO

REP. ANNA G. ESHOO, D-CALIF., RANKING MEMBER REP. BOBBY L. RUSH, D-ILL. REP. DIANA DEGETTE, D-COLO. REP. MIKE DOYLE, D-PA. REP. DORIS MATSUI, D-CALIF. REP. FRANK PALLONE JR., D-N.J. REP. JOHN D. DINGELL, D-MICH. REP. BRUCE BRALEY, D-IOWA REP. PETER WELCH, D-VT. REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M. REP. JIM MATHESON, D-UTAH REP. HENRY A. WAXMAN, D-CALIF. EX OFFICIO

REP. G.K. BUTTERFIELD, D-N.C.

WITNESS: THOMAS E. WHEELER, CHAIRMAN, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

[*] WALDEN: We'll call to order the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology and certainly want to welcome our members and our witness, the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission. Mr. Wheeler, we're delighted that you would make time to come and spend with us on this important day, with so much going on in the telecommunications world.

Six months ago this subcommittee met for the very first time with the current complement of FCC commissioners, and welcomed Mr. Wheeler as the new chairman. Today, and let me welcome Mr. Wheeler back, we meet to review the record of action and selective inaction that the commission has taken under the first six months of your leadership. Unfortunately, given some of the most recent actions out of the commission, I fear that we may be heading into some rough waters.

When we last met, I offered two pieces of advice to Chairman Wheeler, and his colleagues. First, I urged them to heed the words of Congress, where it was - has spoken and reject calls to act in ways contrary to Congressional intent. Second, I urged them to bear in mind that even seemingly small changes in the Federal Communications Commission rules can have significant impact on the marketplace. I called upon all the members of the commission to discharge their duties with transparency, accountability and a long view of the technological landscape. In sum, my advice was that they must approach their duties with humility and restraint.

Unfortunately, recent actions have hinted that my advice was ignored. In December, we had yet to know that the DC Circuit Court of Appeals would once again reject the commission's attempt to regulate the Internet and could only speculate as to whether the commission under Chairman Wheeler's lead would mount a third attempt. Sadly, we now know the answer. Not only is Chairman Wheeler leading us down this path again, the item the commission adopted last week tees up the long dead idea that the Internet is a common carrier.

This reinvigorated willingness to consider regulating the Internet under Title II of the Communications Act, rules that find their roots in the 19th century railroad regulation, and were designed to regulate the world of telephone monopoly, harking back to a world in which twisted copper was the only portal for consumers, the communications network and voice the only service. The modern communications landscape bears no resemblance to the world Title II was meant to regulate, and application of Title II to the Internet is, at best, a poor fit. Worse still, the practical consequences of reclassification are to give the bureaucrats at the FCC the authority to second guess business decisions and to regulate ever possible aspect of the Internet.

We should all pause and consider the prospect of the FCC as a rate setting authority over Internet access and what that means for innovation in the telephone network of yesteryear. We should also be aware that this path opens a door for states to regulate the Internet. Contrary to any intended effect, the reclassification of broadband service under Title II will harm consumers, halt job creation, curtail innovation and stifle investment.

In sum, at a time when the commission at Congress' direction is taking steps toward even greater growth and innovation across Internet access platforms, the commission is simultaneously contemplating rules that undermine those very efforts and compromise the fundamental approaches of both the Clinton and Bush Administrations that laid the foundation for the Internet that we know today.

It's troubling that some of the actions taken under Chairman Wheeler's watch, the selective inaction of the FCC is equally troubling. Although required under the Telecommunications Act, the Federal Communications Commission has failed to complete its quadrennial review of the limitations on ownership of broadcast properties. It's been six years, six years, since the commission last fulfilled this statutory mandate. Rather than focus on ensuring that the rules reflect reality, however, the chairman has now announced that the commission would essentially scrap the 2010 quadrennial review and begin in earnest its 2014 quadrennial review.

Now, notwithstanding this stale record, the FCC also moved forward to make major changes to the regulations that govern media ownership anyway. It adopted changes to its attribution rules that determine how to count stations toward the local television ownership rule, the FCC also stated that it would begin counting certain shared service agreements toward the local ownership cap. In order to comply with local ownership rules, these pronouncements will likely force broadcasters to divest stations and unwind shared service agreements that are beneficial to ensuring local content in the smaller markets. These changes do not bring benefits to the communities served by these broadcasters, drawing into question how this change could serve the public interest.

Finally, FCC process reform has been an ongoing priority of our subcommittee. It's an issue my colleagues and I are deeply invested in, as demonstrated by the unanimous passage in the House of the bipartisan Federal Communications Commission Process Reform Act on March 11th of this year. Unfortunately, after the events of the past few months I'm sad to say I continue to be troubled by the FCC's seemingly flawed process.

In March the FCC chose to restrict license transfers involving certain shared service agreements which had long been blessed - implicitly blessed by the commission. This action was not debated by the commissioners, nor was it subject to any kind of vote. Rather, it was announced by the chief of the media bureau as a fait accompli.

Recent press reports also allege the chairman's office withheld presentation of revisions to the Open Internet Notice of Proposed Rulemaking from Republicans for as long as 24 hours, after having provided the material to the Democratic commissioners and to the press during the run up to the May 15th FCC Open Meeting. The concern raised by these reports is only compounded by revelations that a substantially revised draft of another item scheduled for vote at the open meeting was not presented to other offices until the closing minutes of the evening before.

According to Commissioner Pai's dissent from the commission's mobile spectrum holdings item, his office received the revised item fewer than 12 hours before the open meeting and the item contained more than 3,000 revisions. So, I find myself channeling Commissioner Rosenworcel, who

said of the Open Internet NPRM, that the quote, "Process that got us this rule making today is flawed." Closed quote. Committee has opined in the past that withholding of a revised draft item from other members of the commission until the 11th hour precludes the scrutiny and analysis necessary for ease in decision making. It's my hope that these occurrences were anomalies. Perhaps Chairman Wheeler will want to commit today to providing his fellow commissioners with adequate and equal time to review proposed orders and rules.

The transformative impact of the evolution of technology from a long - analog to digital, from narrow band to broadband, has forever altered our lives. The evolution continues and the commission has before it the issues I just mentioned and many more, all significant in their impacts on our lives and the economy. Stated in your written testimony, you're eager to build on the progress of the last six months going forward, and I hope working together we can move forward in a direction that protects the success, this critical sector of the economy has enjoyed and facilitates its continued growth and job creation unencumbered by over regulatory overreach.

With that, I yield back, and I recognize my friend and colleague from California, Miss Eshoo, the Ranking Member of the subcommittee for her opening statement.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning to all of my colleagues and welcome back to the committee, Chairman Wheeler. Before we do a - a deep dive into the specifics of the chairman's proposal as well as so many other major issues that are before the FCC, I - I think that it would be well for us to step back and appreciate what I believe is one of the most consequential inventions in human history. This was dreamed of and built by disruptors. It's an American story, it's a product of American genius, the Internet. One word, but it is - it really it takes one's breath away in terms of the arc of history.

It's not only an invention, it has reshaped lives, economies here and around the world, and our thinking and our debate today really should be viewed, I think, through the prism of a critical step that we're taking now in the 21st Century. The Internet is a continuum of change. It's accessible. It's open. And its innovations continue. They empower individuals, entire fields of learning, growing not only our economy but economies around the world, and serving humanity in countless ways. All of this has taken place and here we are, in the second decade of the 21st Century.

So, this is huge. This is huge. This is not what is behind door number one, door number two, door number three, where the price is right. This is not some guessing game. This is huge. This is something, these decisions are going to affect every single American going forward, just as it has in the past and it will continue to. So, all of us, regulators, innovators, consumers, legislators, we have to get this right. The stakes are very high and American cannot lose. It's been our leadership that has advanced the digital age. And, now is not the time and, actually, I don't think there should be ever a time to unravel the values that have really been the hallmarks and the bulwarks of the Internet.

So, the question is: how do we seize the future? At least in my view that's what the question is. I know what I want to see continue: openness, free, accessible, these are also the hallmarks of our democracy. And that's what this has been such an extraordinary export of - of our country.

I know what I don't want. I don't want this to become an auction, selling off the best in bits and pieces, where some pay for faster lanes. Others can't pay, they get stuck in the slow lane. Some giant company blocking content and others discriminating so that they can sell their stuff to keep the other guy's stuff stymied. That's not a very pretty description, but it's a street description of what can be at hand.

I want every day to be essentially the Fourth of July for American innovation. So, that it just keeps bursting. It just keeps bursting. And I see it every day in my Congressional district. Looking forward 10 years. 25 years, 50 years, I want this to continue and we should all be thinking on a grand scale, because this growth and this economic driver should be for everyone. We need smart, savvy regulations - regulatory decision, we need a Congress that's engaged in this, and a Congress that's vigilant, and I plan to be.

So, what should the FCC do? I think, and all the articles you read, there's a debate: should it be 706 or should it be Title II? I think that we have to have a clear eyed understanding of what has made the Internet what it is today and what basic values need to be protected and preserved. And then what that is going to look like. And there's more, on top of all of this. Can anyone here today piece together the effects of a Comcast Time Warner merger and an AT&T DirecTV merger on consumers and a free and Open Internet? These are massive decisions, and massive pieces that are moving forward. And what's going to happen to innovation?

Mr. Chairman, Chairman Walden, I urge you to convene a hearing to examine these issues here. I think they deserve to be examined and to be debated and questions asked. So, as I said earlier, every person in the country will be affected by the outcome of these decisions that are before the commission and before us. And, so I look forward to questioning Chairman Wheeler today.

I also ask for unanimous consent that two letters, two very important letters be entered into the record. One, signed by more than a hundred venture capitalists and angel investors who support simple, strong, enforceable rules against online discrimination and access fees. And the other, signed by more than 100 Internet companies, small and large. Mostly small. That support a free and Open Internet.

WALDEN: Without objection.

ESHOO: And I don't know if I have any time remaining. No. I think I've gone over. Well, with that, I'll yield back what I don't have.

WALDEN: Thank the gentlelady for her opening statement and the letters. We'll now turn to the full committee chairman, Mr. Fred Upton, from Michigan for opening comments.

UPTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Oversight is a critical part of this committee's work to foster a smaller, more nimble government for the innovation age. We've held lots of hearings, with all of the FCC's commissioners to address issues of national importance, to keep a close eye on the budget, and to ensure that commission process focusing on promoting jobs and innovation, and today's oversight hearing with Chairman Wheeler will continue that discussion to ensure that the FCC works in a way that benefits consumers, industry and certainly the economy. And I thank you for coming today.

There's a lot to discuss. In the six months since Mr. Wheeler was confirmed as char he has addressed a number of items, including media ownership, the IP transition, universal service and just this past week, of course, the incentive auctions and net neutrality. While I appreciate the chairman's leadership, on one of these I have serious concerns with some others.

As an initial matter, Chairman Wheeler started off his chairmanship with a review of FCC procedure, an issue that this subcommittee has spent lots of time working to reform in a bipartisan manner. But, I was disappointed to see some of the process failures that occurred last week. Media reports of an Open Meeting item being circulated to commissioners as late as midnight the evening before the vote on one item, in what seems to be partisan sharing of items with Democrats as much as 24 hours before sharing them with Republicans on another is particularly concerning. Regardless of political affiliation, commissioners must be given adequate and equal time to consider the items on which they're going to vote. Let us all hope that such incidents of favoritism and selective sharing are isolated and not emblematic of the chairman's new operating procedure.

Additionally, I continue to be concerned with the commission's ongoing defiance of its statutory obligations to complete the 2010 quadrennial review of media ownership rules. Despite the commission's woefully outdated record on this issue, it has nonetheless moved forward with changes that effectively bar joint sales agreements and change commission treatment of shared service agreements under its media attribution rules. These actions, in the absence of the statutorily required media ownership review, do raise significant questions about the commission's commitment to making decisions informed by facts and utilizing sound process.

And, lastly, I am troubled by the chairman's insistence on attempting to regulate the Internet under rules that were informed by 19th Century railroad regs, and adopted to regulate the monopoly telephone network of the past. The Internet has indeed flourished under the current light touch regulatory scheme, and subjecting to burdensome regs is a leap in the wrong direction. Title II is inappropriate for the Internet, and attempting to reclassify it would be harmful to consumers, businesses and the future of the Internet as we know it. Nobody wants telephone service to look like it did in 1984, and we certainly shouldn't wish for our Internet access to return to that rotary phone era either. The communications sector is vital to our national economy and commission auction - action on even small items can have broad impact. I thank Chairman Wheeler for being here today. Look forward to working together toward a bipartisan, measured, transparent and responsible actions that do benefit consumers, job creation and our economy. And I yield my balance of my time to be split between Mr. Latta and Mr. Barton.

LATTA: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman for yielding and Chairman Walden I appreciate you holding this hearing today, and welcome Chairman Wheeler. Thanks for being here.

The communications and technology industry is heralded as a vibrant, dynamic and productive sector of our economy. This is not by accident, as networks and services transition to IP based platforms, they've had the flexibility to grow, advance and evolve in large part because they have not been subjected to the stifling hand of legacy government regulation. We've pursued a light touch regulatory approach to the Internet ecosystem, because we've seen time and again, that it serves as a catalyst for increased investment, innovation, job creation and competition.

As I look forward to develop policies that would further this growth, we'd be remiss to overlook the significance of how regulatory restraint has been fundamental - a fundamental component of the industry's success. That's why I'm concerned with some of the proposals emerging from the FCC, particularly in consideration of reclassifying broadband Internet access service, telecommunications service under Title II of the Communications Act. This policy would be an extreme exercise of government overreach and likely result in failed websites, downgraded and poor customer service, less choice and flexibility for consumers, businesses and stifling of innovation through regulation.

Unwanted attempts to manufacture and shape markets outcomes propose solutions in search of problems impose antiquated regulation will frustrate future progress and innovation. I intend to introduce legislation that prevents the FCC from following through on this misguided regulatory proposal. Mr. Chairman, with that I yield back the balance of my time. And I yield to Mr. Barton.

BARTON: (AUDIO GAP) We just welcomed Chairman Wheeler and the question before the committee today are we soon going to be calling him Mr. Wheeler Dealer? With that, I - I'll put my statement in the record in the interest of time, and yield back to the chairman.

WALDEN: Thank you, Chairman. Gentleman yields back. Now turn to the gentleman from California, Mr. Waxman for opening comments.

WAXMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to welcome back Chairman Wheeler. The Federal Communications Commission had a historic week last week. You are tackling some of the most complex and pressing issues in the communications sector today.

In 2012, Congress gave the FCC a big job: create the world's first incentive auction to ensure that beachfront, low band spectrum is put to its highest economic value, and you established the ground rules for this crucial auction last week. You had a hard job, because you needed to balance four potential - potentially conflicting objectives. One, maximizing the amount of spectrum made available for auction. Two, promote competition. Three, create bands of unlicensed spectrum to spur innovation. And, four, raise money. It appears you hit this one out of the ballpark.

I particularly want to commend you for your work to advance unlicensed spectrum. Your plan will create three channels of beachfront, unlicensed spectrum throughout the nation. The vision of new, super Wi-Fi can now become a reality.

I also want to commend you for promoting competition, by reserving spectrum for competitive carriers. It would be an enormous setback for innovation and consumers if the incentive auction turns the wireless market into a duopoly, dominated by Verizon and AT&T. This auction is the best, and possibly the last, chance the FCC has to invigorate competition.

I would have preferred if you reserved even more spectrum for competitive carriers, but I recognize the pressures you are under and your need to secure three votes. By the way, you may hear arguments today from Republicans on this committee that you lack the authority to promote competition. These claims are nonsense and contradict the express language of the statute.

Last week you also launched the FCC's third attempt in eight years to protect the Open Internet. You didn't hit this one out of the park, but you didn't need to, either. You made a wide decision to solicit comment on a wide range of options. As I wrote you, this time has come to - wrote you, the time has come to end the legal gymnastics and stop the lobbying games being played by the big broadband providers.

In 2010, Verizon, AT&T and Comcast pled with the FCC not to use its undisputed authority under Title II of the Communications Act. And, then, after FCC did what they wanted, Verizon sued the agency for lacking authority when the FCC agreed with the company. This time, you need a different approach. You should use your Title II authority as a backstop authority to protect the Open Internet. If you want to proceed under Section 706, as your main legal theory that's fine. But you shouldn't water down the Open Internet rules to fit Section 706. Instead, you should get the substance right, and invoke Title II as an independent basis of authority.

The FCC has already lost two rulings in court over the Open Internet. You don't have to choose between weak rules and a weak legal case. You can issue strong rules, and have a strong legal case, if you use a belt and suspender approach to the next rule making. I look forward to exploring this issue with you further in the question period. In the meantime, I want to yield the balance of my time to my friend and colleague, Congresswoman Matsui.

MATSUI: Thank you very much, Ranking Member Waxman, for yielding me time and welcome, Chairman Wheeler. The FCC certainly has a lot on its plate. The commission is considering net neutrality rules, rules on the broadcast incentive auction, the AWS-III auction, USF and E- Rate reforms in two very significant mergers. I'm confident the FCC will be able to demonstrate that it can walk and chew gum at the same time.

This subcommittee should also do its part. For one, I join in calling for the chairman to hold oversight hearings on the two proposed mergers between Comcast and Time Warner. And on AT&T and DirecTV. Both are some of the largest mergers in our nation's telecommunications history. Americans, including many in my district of Sacramento, are seeing the trends towards consolidation, content and peering deals, and how they hear phrases like, paid prioritization, and wondering what is going on? What does all this mean for them, for competition and for the economy?

It has been encouraging that so many Americans are speaking up in support of protecting an Open Internet. I was one who thought the FCC should have taken more time to deliberate on what net neutrality rules the commission should propose. But we are where we are. The proposal has certainly improved over the last few weeks. It is still far from perfect. I support a ban on paid prioritization deals. We can't afford a two tiered Internet system.

I look forward from hearing from you today, and I yield back the balance of my time.

WALDEN: Gentlelady yields back the balance of her time. And with that, you've heard from us, or at least a few of us up here, Mr. Chairman. Now, we're delighted to have you here, and we look forward to your - your opening statement and comments. And thank you, again, for the work you're doing. Go ahead.

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the - of the committee. As you've pointed out, it's been about six months since we last sat down. And what I wanted to do was to highlight some of

the things that we have done in that period, and then engage in a dialogue with you with whatever topics that you would like to address.

As has been evidenced by a lot of these comments up here, one of the principal responsibilities of - of the commission is dealing with the spectrum crunch. And we have taken a significant step forward in terms of getting more spectrum out to the market. We had the H Block auction, which raised a billion and a half dollars for 10 MHz spectrum. We have opened a new 100MHz swath in the 5GHz band, which is already being referred to as gigabyte Wi-Fi, because of the incredible throughput that it enables.

We have begun a proceeding on spectrum sharing in 3.5 GHz, and we announced yesterday that in accord with the mandate of this committee and Congress to auction off AWS-III spectrum. That we will begin the auction on November 13th, and we will finish as per your mandate February - we will license February 22, 2015.

We have also, as some of the committee had noted established a new set of mobile spectrum holding rules, which have been praised by everybody from public interest groups to small operators, to large operators as - as was commented by Mr. Waxman, hitting the ball out of the park. And we have begun the incentive auction process. It's - you mandated us as - as you've said, with a non-trivial task. And we have - we have taken the first important steps to that.

On the question of universal service and what's going on there, we have fulfilled the pledge that I made to this committee last time we were together, to eliminate the infamous quantile regression analysis. And, we're seeking comments on what its replacement should be. We have funded the Connect America fund to provide connectivity to five million more Americans who do not have access to broadband today. That's about a third of the total, and a significant bite out of - out of that. And we're seeking input on multiple additional issues: throughput standards, should we, as - as technology increases and bandwidth increases, do we need to think about higher bandwidth that is supported by the Connect America fund? How do we best deal with the mobile component of broadband delivery in Connect America? And how best to support broadband for rate of return carriers? Those are all proceedings that we have underway.

We have - we have made some significant strides, also, in the area of public safety. We took a good chunk out of the FirstNet $7.5 billion with the H-Band auction. Expect, obviously, that the AWS-III auction will do more and I wouldn't be surprised if we show up at the incentive auction having met the requirement, or at least taking a huge bite out of the requirement for funding FirstNet.

We had a rule making on text to 911, you know, phones aren't used just for talking anymore, but texting and - and so if you want to text to an emergency service provider, we had a rule making on that, the major carriers stepped up and literally in the last couple of days, they all met their goals for implementation on that, which is a terrific step forward. And we've also initiated a further notice on location accuracy, because as wireless usage increases and particularly as it replaces what's - wired line connections inside, and as GPS usage has increased, there's been a fascinating reality that location accuracy has actually declined. And, we've got a notice going on how do we address that, because that's literally a matter of life and death.

As you mentioned we began the 2014 quadrennial review on media issues with a - an expedited delivery date. We closed a loophole that was being exploited to get around the ownership rules, using joint services agreement, and we brought competition back to the retransmission consent negotiations. We have also continued to press on the reform issues that so many of you and I share in common as being important.

Last time we were together, I told you we stood up a task force to deal with this. That task force came back with 154 recommendations. About three quarters of those are now well along their way to being in process. They kind of break into two parts. There are procedural issues that you might associate with administrative procedure act, and things like this. And there's also just how do you make the agency more efficient?

And last week, as many have discussed, we opened a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on preserving and protecting the Open Internet. It's important to recognize that there are no protections for an Open Internet in place today. The January court decision affirmed the commission's authority under Section 706 to deal with the Open Internet, and identified what I call a road map for how to achieve that. And what I have proposed in a method that follows that road map.

I understand that there is a great debate on this issue. I heard the debate here this morning. Between those who say there is no need and those who say it ought to be a regulated utility. What we have tried to do is to follow the court's direction, the road map, the blueprint, and to come up with a proposal that stops blocking, that prohibits anything that degrades a consumer's access, including prioritization. That asks a broader question about prioritization as to whether it should be banned outright, and if so, how, and then engages in the discussion that we've heard already this morning about Title II versus 706, and collecting a broad scope of learned information on that.

I've consistently said that there is only one Internet. There's not a fast Internet and a slow Internet. There's not special service Internet and non. There is one Internet, and the - when the consumer buys access to the Internet, they are buying access to the full Internet. And that's what our rules attempt to protect. This has become a debate among legal approaches - about legal approaches.

It's a healthy debate. It's a debate that our Notice of Proposed Rulemaking furthers with multiple requests for input, but my position has been similar to that of the Consumer Federation of America, and that is that we ought to explore the powers that are granted in the '96 act, specifically Section 706, keep asking how Title II fits in, but develop a regulatory policy that looks forward not backward, because what we need is a regulatory plan for the 21st Century. And I look forward to discussing that with you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee.

WALDEN: Mr. Wheeler, chairman, thank you for being here. We appreciate your work, and - and your willingness to come and spend some time with us and - and respond to our questions.

I want to pick up on the Middle Class Tax Relief Act, which as you know, was designed to create a forum where broadcasters could volunteer their spectrum up for auction, for mobile broadband use. Never been done quite like proposed, and you've got, we - we all knew that going in, but it seemed like a good balance. The critical term in all of this was that the broadcasters would volunteer to put their spectrum up, they wouldn't be forced into it. That was the agreement. Yet, many of the actions that we've seen coming out of the commission would lead some to believe that the FCC might be bulling broadcasters into giving up spectrum without providing hard data and clear models so that the broadcasters can thoroughly and thoughtfully deliberate and choose to participate or not in this first of its kind auction.

Let me tell you what I'm - I'm thinking here. For example, the joint sales agreements that are now outlawed. These agreements essentially offer broadcasters a viable business model in small markets that would otherwise suffer from lack of service. You're considering the attribution value of UHF stations, such that more broadcasters could end up in violation of that the national cap under the broadcast ownership rule, and the FCC has failed to process broadcasters' petitions for allocation changes from VHF to UHF, even though the petitions were filed prior to Middle Class Tax Relief Act.

And, finally, you're seeking to use a modified version of OET-69. I'm hearing about this to repack broadcasters. This will likely result in reduced coverage for broadcasters that choose to stay in the business, making the business itself less viable. So ,the very people you're trying to incent to put spectrum, so that it'll be available for auction, I think are - are concerned about where the commission's headed in a number of areas. Can you explain to me how these actions will actually encourage broadcasters to participate in this auction?

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the goal here, that we have been trying to follow, is - is not to discourage or to encourage, but to follow through with our responsibilities. And - and that means enforcing and updating our rules ...

WALDEN: Do you think any of these, though, do you think any of these things I've just cited encourage broadcasters to participate more? If you don't have broadcasters showing up with spectrum ...

WHEELER: So, I -I, as I said, Mr. Chairman, I -I don't think that we have an important, as you said, an important and historic role. This is an incentive auction.

WALDEN: I'm aware of that. Yes.

WHEELER: What we have tried to do in the mobile spectrum holdings rule, for instance, is to encourage broadcasters -encourage, I'm sorry, wireless carriers to buy, which creates the incentive. The interesting thing, there was a -a report by one of the Wall Street analysts last week who said we expect the greatest risk to this auction, broadcasters not showing up, just dropped. Because the fact that AT&T suggested that they're ready to bid between $9 and $18 billion ...

WALDEN: Right.

WHEELER: ...for 20 to 40MHz, this analyst said should send positive signals to broadcasters. So, our goal is to...

WALDEN: All right ...

WHEELER: ...is to create this marketplace and we're not trying to take regulatory action ...

WALDEN: All right, well ...

WHEELER: in -in unrelated areas that would ...

WALDEN: But you are taking lots of regulatory actions, and it does have an effect on the marketplace. I mean, those two are facts. (AUDIO GAP) If -if we don't have these broadcasters coming to the table voluntarily, there won't be spectrum available. So, I want to steal a line from the distinguished gentleman from Michigan, and that this one I refer to as Mr. Dingle, to see if I can get, just sort of some yes or nos here. Will you commit that the FCC will not score television stations based on their (AUDIO GAP). That's yes, actually. That you will commit that you will not score it. Will you commit the FCC, is that correct?

WHEELER: Yes.

WALDEN: Yes. You will commit the FCC will ensure that broadcasters' cost to reallocate are covered by the $1.75 billion relocation fund?

WHEELER: We believe that that fund will be adequate. That's - that's ....

WALDEN: OK.

WHEELER: ...that's what Congress told us to spend. Period.

WALDEN: And will you commit to completing frequency coordination with Canada and Mexico before the auction? WHEELER: I think the issue there is what is the term complete? As you know on the DTV transition it never came down to actual signing on paper, but we understood where each other were, and I am very confident that we will be at that kind of a point.

WALDEN: Because that's critical. And will you commit to revoking only those low powered TV and translator licenses that are necessary to complete the auction?

WHEELER: Yes.

WALDEN: Thank you. And, I think I'm out of time. So, with that, I would now yield to the gentlelady, my friend from California, Miss Eshoo.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A lot of things to discuss, but I want to bore down on, or bore into some of the particulars on your recent proposal relative to -to the Internet, on net neutrality. I've argued, many advocates for net neutrality have argued that paid prioritization represents a fundamental departure from the Internet as we know it. I -I'm just kind of restating what is obvious, but I think that when you have hundreds of thousands of people communicating from across the country to you on it, that it is -that it's important to raise. Now, as a policy, not as a legal question, do you think that paid prioritization should be blocked outright?

WHEELER: So, I have said, Congresswoman, that I don't believe there ought to have and have nots.

ESHOO: No, no, just answer my question.

WHEELER: That -- that -that ...

ESHOO: Just tell me. Do you think that it should be blocked outright?

WHEELER: We have asked that question in the rulemaking. And - and what I have said is that I believe that under Section 706, anything that is anti-competitive or anti-consumer is competitively unreasonable and therefore can and should be blocked. And that becomes the trigger for how you deal with paid prioritization.

ESHOO: Yes, now what happens ...

WHEELER: On the question of per se that you asked...

ESHOO: Yes.

WHEELER: ...we've specifically asked how and whether.

ESHOO: Now, what happens if the FCC determines that there's no outright -no way to outright -create an outright ban, and these paid agreements under 706, where does that leave you? Where does that leave the country?

WHEELER: So - so when the court gave us our instructions, they talked about what they called the virtuous cycle, and that is that - that content drives the need for conduit, which then creates the opportunity for content. And that this cycle is what it is our responsibility to protect. And that's - that's what 706 authorizes us to protect. And so what my proposal is is that we take them up on that. And we say if there is something that interferes with that virtuous cycle, which I believe paid prioritization does, that then we can move against it.

ESHOO: Yes. All right. But, now let's move over to Title II. Title II is described, it depends on who's describing it, it's either a scourge --it's been compared to the early railroad regulations in our country - to being the flip side, you know, the savior title. I talked about in my opening statement about the - the - one of the imprimaturs of the Internet has been consistent innovation. And, while there are those that, and I understand why people would move to Title II, because they want the Internet protected, and these values are -they're worth protecting. But I also believe that there is room for, in Title II, for heavy handed regulation, and I don't think that, well, let me put it this way, I think that we need a light but strengthful legal touch in this. Because the values are so essential, and people across the country, and in the world, I mean, I'm hearing from people from different parts of the world as well, are calling for these protections. How would you envision - how would you handle constraint under Title II?

WHEELER: Well ...

ESHOO: In terms of being the chief regulator?

WHEELER: So, as you know ...

ESHOO: Have you given thought to this?

WHEELER: Pardon me?

ESHOO: Have you given thought to this?

WHEELER: Yes, ma'am.

ESHOO: OK.

WHEELER: And -and as you know ...

ESHOO: As some people say share it with me.

WHEELER: As you know Title II, there is nothing in Title II that prohibits paid prioritization. As a matter of fact we have all kinds of paid prioritization exists ...

ESHOO: You're ...

WHEELER: ...today.

ESHOO: You're worrying me by bringing that up first. But anyway, go ahead.

WHEELER: So -so that, no, because it goes to you, I think, the root question of yours which is how do you forbear from that?

ESHOO: Yes.

WHEELER: OK? And - and so - so it is possible to go through and say, yes, we will not do this, we will not do this, we will not do this. In the - in the wireless context, interestingly enough, Congress created that - created wireless as a common carrier, but then specifically said but this doesn't apply, and this doesn't apply, and this doesn't apply.

ESHOO: Yes.

WHEELER: We can do that as a commission, as well. It has been proposed that that's an approach to take. There are also those who throw up their hands and ooh in great concern over that because they say, OK, well this commission may do this, but what about the next commission? And you can't bind a future commission by making those kinds of - of determinations. So, what we have done in this NPRM is to ask the specific question about here's Section 706, here's Title II, let's compare them and contrast them with each other, and tell us what the pluses and minuses and the best ways to get through this are? And I think that leads us to the kind of answer that you're asking for today.

WALDEN: The gentlelady's time's expired. We'll go now to the gentlelady from Tennessee, Miss Blackburn, the Vice Chair of the full committee, for her questions.

BLACKBURN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And Mr. Wheeler, we thank you for taking the time to come and be with us. You've got a feisty term going over there, at the FCC, and in Tennessee we would say you're kicking up a little dust. And, it's causing concern.

Many of our content creators have a tremendous amount of concern about your approach, and many of our health care innovators, who are looking at apps in telemedicine concepts and things of that nature, are also expressing concern. And I think that probably your actions have inserted a good bit of uncertainty into the innovation sector that is looking at how we best utilize all things Internet to - for quality of life and access for economic development for health care, for - for innovation and I've got just a couple of simple questions for you.

First of all, on cost benefit analysis, and I thank you that last night your team sent a letter over to us on that question, but what concerns me was that in the letter you say that this is just a tool. Cost benefit analysis is just one of many tools that would go into your decision. And your NPRM does not include an initial cost benefit analysis, and your predecessor, Mr. Genachowski, in this committee came before us and assured us he was going to use this and I'm actually going to read you his statement that he gave to us. He said, during my tenure I brought particular focus to this process, including the - by directing the early involvement of our chief economist and the analytical process of rulemaking, and by having FCC staff consult with the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs on best practices in conducting cost benefit analysis. And I - I think it is an incredibly important component of this, to look at what the cost of net neutrality rules would be to the consumer, and also to industry, so I want to know from you: are you going to give us a commitment right now that you will conduct a thorough and extensive cost benefit analysis of the actual cost to the consumer and to industry on these rules?

WHEELER: Thank you, Ms. Blackburn, I agree that cost benefit analysis are crucial to decision making. And in this rulemaking we specifically ask what are the costs of one approach or another? And what are the benefits, one or another? So that we can collect that information and have that kind of analysis. I agree with the importance of cost benefit analysis.

BLACKBURN: OK. Let me ask you this, also. You know, the commission's fund really comes from those that are regulated by the FCC, but we have some that are not. They're impacted by this, but they are not regulated and paying those fees, so in the net neutrality context, for example, companies like Google and Netflix want the FCC to act on their behalf, and petition or visit the agency, if you will, in support of those efforts, but they free ride because they are not paying the fees and bearing that part of the regulatory burden. So, since they seem so ready and willing to rely on regulation to help them, with their business models, how would you recommend that those entities share in the cost, pay their part of the costs, funding the agency?

WHEELER: With all respect, that's above my pay grade. That's a decision that - that this committee and the Congress can make in setting those rules ...

BLACKBURN: I'm asking for what your recommendation would be? They come and they lobby you, and ...

WHEELER: So ...

BLACKBURN: ...and they're pushing the net neutrality rules, and while they may like what you are saying, because they want you to step in, we have a lot of people out there who are paying the fees that are not in favor of what you are doing, and we have a lot of innovators who are not in favor of what you are doing, and your door has the name chairman on it, so I'm asking what is your perspective?

WHEELER: So, our - our effort in all of this is to represent the American people, not company a or company b. We have been told by the Congress, from whom we can collect regulatory fees and we do. If there is a decision that we should collect regulatory fees from somebody else, that's something we obviously will take. If there is a decision that we should expand regulatory authority over other entities, that's obviously something we should do. But that is a decision that is out of our hands.

BLACKBURN: I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back. The chairman recognizes the gentlelady from California, Miss Matsui, for her questions. MATSUI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Wheeler, I'd like to understand, given the success of the Internet and the absence of prioritization, precisely what types of paid prioritization you believe will speed the deployment and adoption of broadband Internet access services? Given that paid prioritization agreements would be used as a barrier of entry to startup and small business, what prioritization arrangements, specifically, will be better for the Internet than the no prioritization norm we have today?

WHEELER: What we are trying to do in this item is to say that anything that affects that virtuous cycle that the court talked about, and I talked about before, is not appropriate. Is unlawful. And that would include paid prioritization. Now, the court told us to look at this on a case by case basis. We have asked the question in the rulemaking as to whether we should look at it generically, and say it's all out. And we're soliciting comments on that. But, you know, the concept of paid prioritization when I buy Internet access, I am buying the full pipe. I am buying access to everything that's out there, and if somebody comes along and says, oh, no, you can't get this unless you pay more, that's unreasonable, and should be banned. If somebody comes along and says to a content provider, you can't get on unless you pay more, that's unreasonable and that would not be permitted.

MATSUI: OK, well. You know, as for my part, other than public - public safety, I believe paid prioritization should be banned. I also think another concern here is the last mile equivalent we're seeing in peering. The fact that there's so much uncertainty with paid prioritization is troublesome. If this concept moves forward, we could inadvertently block the next Google or Amazon from the market without even knowing it. I'm concerned that your hands may be tied here. Even if the commission wanted to ban anti-competitive paid prioritization deals, you may not have the authority or tools to do so.

Chairman Wheeler, if you were to explain to my constituents what is occurring in the market right now with the two mergers, content and peering agreements, and now paid prioritization could be legitimized under a commercially reasonable standard. What would you tell them? Not just what it means for them, but also for competition and for economy as a whole

WHEELER: I would tell them that I felt that paid prioritization was commercially unreasonable, and therefore could be dealt with. And, that, on the question of peering, that that is a separate issue that the commission needs to look at and will be looking at. But I would emphasize that I am strong supporter of the Open Internet.

And I would also tell them a story that when I was an entrepreneur, I was shut out of cable systems, because they were closed networks. And, I would come with a new product and couldn't get on. And, then when I was a venture capitalist, before taking this job, that the companies that I was backing had to have access to the Internet, could only succeed if they had access to the Internet. So, I would say to them that I believe in an Open Internet. I've experienced closed networks and the harm they cause to innovation, and that I want to protect and preserve an Open Internet.

MATSUI: you know, I think this is a very critical time. When I have ordinary people, probably (ph) off the street, coming to me and asking me about all these things they've heard, because people today really depend on the Internet. Ordinary citizens, the entrepreneurs who are concerned about this, and who else we know - we may not know out there. So, it's very concerning to all of us that there is a potential that we may have a situation where we won't have an Open Internet. And I would also like you to consider some of these mergers. I mean, we feel like we're kind of in the Wild West of the digital economy now. And now with mergers coming forward. Can you commit to us, these large mergers that are before us, they may be different from each other, but can you commit to us here that the FCC will carefully scrutinize these deals? With a focus toward public interest?

WHEELER: Without hesitation. And with complete affirmation.

MATSUI: OK, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: Chair now recognizes former chairman of the full committee, Mr. Barton, for his questions.

BARTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to echo the last question you asked Chairman Wheeler about low powered television. You and I are working on a bill, hopefully, to give them some protection. We understand that under current law they - they - they don't have standing when they repackage, but we hope to give them some at least priority or some help if and when we do do these repackaging of the spectrums. So I wanted to commend you for that last question.

I've listened Chairman Wheeler, to my friends on the Democratic side repeatedly talk about the Open Internet and whether you should try to regulate it under Section 706 or Title II. I think you're asking a false question. The Internet is open.

The question is what does the FCC do in terms of monitoring to make sure that it stays open? And, the analogy I'm going to use is not perfect, but I think it is instructive and educational. The airways that we fly back and forth from Washington to our districts are open, but they are regulated and monitored for a number of reasons by the FAA. If I call up American Airlines, and I say, I want to go from Washington -Reagan to DFW, they quote me a price, let's say it's $350 one way. But when I show up with my ticket, I get one seat on that plane. I don't' get to take a hundred of my friends, and put them on the plane with me because I happen to buy the ticket first, and show up first.

BARTON: So, it's obvious that it would be great for $350 if I could fill the plane.

But we allow the airlines to price by volume. You want one ticket, it's $350. You want two tickets, it's $700. Maybe if you want to buy the whole plane, they do give you a discount. It's only $250, but we don't let the first person to buy the ticket use the whole plane for $350.

And for all the bold talk about open access, what people are really trying to do is, you know, I want to pay a minimum price and get all this broadband, and I want to download everything from Netflix, and I don't want to pay if I download every movie they rent, or vice versa.

Netflix pays a basic price, and they can service 10 million people, instead of whatever it would be. So, you know, this -- this -- the broadband providers who have spent billions and billions of dollars, and have -- have networked this country and provided access through the competitive market principles, are not going to somehow, all of a sudden decide, as long as the FCC, which under your chairmanship, makes sure that it stays a competitive model.

They're -- they're going to continue to provide an open internet, but they may want to provide based on volume of use, some sort of a pricing system that allocates that it isn't a limited spectrum.

I see no reason to try to shoehorn some sort of a regulatory approach into either Title II, or Section 706, you know. Explain to me why my approach, which is what we've been doing and which works, is the wrong approach.

WHEELER: Let me see if I can respond to both parts of your question. First, on LPTV, we -- as I said to the chairman, we do not want to move those who don't have to be moved as part of it.

We also believe that there is opportunities to go to digital and the new efficiencies that that brings, just like it did in the -- in the Class A stations. And thirdly, we're opening a new rulemaking to specifically deal with that. So because we agree with the importance of low power and -- and translators.

To your -- to the second part of your question, let me take the chairman's hat off, and put my consumer hat on for a second, because two weekends ago, I called my ISP, and increased my capacity, because I wanted faster true plan (ph). And they said for another $10 a month, we'll give you another, what turned out to be like, 20 MB. That's a marketplace transaction. That's something that's accepted now. That is not something that is part of the open internet rules.

What the open internet rules are trying to say, is that when I buy that capacity, I've bought that ride to every place on the internet, that somebody can't turn around and say oh, but you can't get that, or somebody can't turn around and say well, you can deliver that, Tom, but you've got to pay me an extra fee.

And so the concept of the open internet is that I have bought this broad pathway, and I have the right to use it, unfettered, in a -- on an open basis, and that's what we're trying to deliver in this rulemaking.

BARTON: I'm not -- my time's expired. I'm not trying to oppose that, but if you want -- you're looking at it from the consumer standpoint, that everybody should have access, but if you are a provider of content, you should be willing to pay more based on the number of items you're going to put at any given time on the open internet, so that everybody has access to it.

Because if you have a constrained pipeline, somebody has to make a decision how you put things into the pipeline, whether it's the airplane, or whether it's the airways, or the internet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

WALDEN: Gentleman yields back, the chair now recognizes the former chairman on the Democratic side, Mr. Waxman.

CHAIRMAN HENRY WAXMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Wheeler, I commended your leadership earlier in my opening statement, about the spectrum auction, so I want to ask questions about a different subject, and that's net neutrality.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

WAXMAN: I commend you for tackling this issue, and for seeking comment on a broad range of issues, but I have serious concerns about some proposals that have been discussed. You've said that there would be presumption against broadband providers like Verizon, AT&T, and Comcast, entering into arrangements that give exclusive advantage, to their affiliates. Is that right?

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

WAXMAN: OK. What I don't understand, is why this presumption against exclusive arrangements would be limited to affiliates. Suppose Netflix entered into an exclusive arrangement with AT&T or Comcast for faster speeds for its videos that block competitors like Amazon Prime, from getting similar service.

I think that would be a serious threat to competition and an open internet, yet your proposal does not create a presumption against these exclusive arrangements. Why would you allow any exclusive arrangement that guarantees some content providers faster speeds than competitors can access?

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Waxman. This goes to the -- back to this virtuous (ph) cycle that the court talked about, and you know, it was interesting, yesterday in the Wall Street Journal, there was an article that interviewed a bunch of infrastructure manufacturers about the impact on that neutrality.

And they flat out said that if you offer fast lanes for some, you're going to degrade service for others. And I think that's at the heart of what you're talking about here. That would be commercially unreasonable under our proposal.

WAXMAN: OK. The problem with exclusive arrangements is they would let some companies block their competition from similar advantages. In markets where there are -- there is no, or only limited choices of broadband providers, that would stifle openness and competition.

I just want to say to you that I'm opposed to any form of paid prioritization. Paid prioritization divides the internet into the haves and the have-nots, and it will entrench the big companies at the expense of startups.

My understanding is that you've asked comment on a multi-factor test for determining whether -- determining when paid prioritization is permissible, and when it would be prohibited. My concern is that this will create a lot of ambiguity, and a lot of litigation.

I believe right lines would be much better for the market, and for innovation, so I'm going to ask you to consider a presumption against all paid prioritization as you develop final rules. Will you -- will you agree to consider this option?

WHEELER: Absolutely, and we have asked in the NPRM (ph) specifically whether, and if so, how do you accomplish it? So that is -- that is a ripe debate that is in the NPRM right now, sir.

WAXMAN: My understanding is that the reason you had proposed a complicated, multi-factored test, is concern about the court ruling. And I agree that if you're limited to acting under section 706, your options could be limited.

But if you are not limited to Section 706, you could establish a presumption against paid prioritization under Title II, and that's why it's so important for us -- for you to use your Title II authority as back stop authority.

You don't have to settle for a weak open internet rules if you exercise your full powers. And I'm glad you're looking at that possibility. Let me close by thanking you for seeking comment on the back stop proposal in the proposal adopted last week.

I'm committed to working with you to ensure the commission adopts strong and open internet protections for consumers and innovators, while encouraging continued investment in the online content and services we all rely on and enjoy today. I think it's important that we get the substance right. We tried three times, we meaning you, at the FCC, because of the concern that the consumer have full access to what is on the internet, and full access to be able to use the internet to its greatest and maximum potential, and I would hate to see that net neutrality in any way be diminished if we have an opportunity under the law, as we look at it, to make sure that we get the substance right.

WALDEN: Thank you.

WAXMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back his time, and now turn to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio, the vice chair of the subcommittee, Mr. Latta.

LATTA: Well thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and again, Chairman Wheeler, thanks very much again for being here. There has been some discussion on Title II, and I'd like to follow up on some of that questioning.

Central premise of Title II regulation always been that the regulation was a substitute for competition. And two parts with a question, then. What types of findings have the commission made to justify entertaining the idea of Title II regulation of the internet?

And then do you believe the SEC should have to make a specific showing that of a market failure reform proposing rate regulation, or reporting requirements, that are the precursor to rate regulation?

WHEELER: So again, this -- these are the kinds of questions that we have tried assiduously not to decide on, but to ask about in this rulemaking. We're going to have to make a decision on exactly those questions at some point in time.

But what we want to achieve, is a record that gives everybody the opportunity to opine on that, so that we can be appropriately informed.

LATTA: Well let me ask you, what's your time line on that, then?

WHEELER: So we've got 60 days for comments, and then 45 days for reply comments.

LATTA: OK, so are you saying then that you're not ruling out rate regulation?

WHEELER: I'm saying we have asked the question about Title II, and -- and the full panoply of Title II. Yes, sir.

LATTA: OK, well -- let me ask you this, what have you been hearing from the community thus far, especially when you're saying that you are asking those questions, what have you -- what have you been hearing out there?

WHEELER: Excuse me. Well we have -- we've heard very little on the record thus far. There has been a great outpouring of people speaking to us through the press, people speaking to us through letters, and this sort of thing.

And as I indicated at the outset, there are two, diametrically opposed positions. One is that you should not do anything, and the other is that it should go all the way to being regulated like a public utility.

And our job is to find that which is best for consumers and best for encouraging investment in the internet, which itself is best for consumers.

LATTA: Let me go on with this question, while you've resolved some of the issues in the 5 GHz rulemaking, there are number of issues outstanding that have the potential to open up another 195 MHz of spectrum for unlicensed use. What is the FCC's and your plan for tackling the open issues?

WHEELER: In the 5 GHz?

LATTA: Right.

WHEELER: So there's -- there's -- actually think about 5 GHz, and 3 bytes. The first byte we've -- we've dealt with. That's the lower end of 5 GHz. In the middle component of 5 GHz, there are lots of national defense kind of activities, radar, and this sort of thing.

And the question is how can you work out sharing arrangements there? And we're working with those parties. On the upper end, is where you have spectrum that has been identified for intelligent traffic, ITFS, kinds of activities.

And that is based around the 802.11 standard. There are strong feelings about the need to protect that. I believe that it's possible to work together to meet both sets of needs, since it's based around a common 802.11 standard.

LATTA: Yeah, and in my remaining time, let me ask this last question, the SEC's 2011 universal service transformation, or transformation order, requires phone companies to set minimum prices that they can charge their consumers if they -- if the provider wants to continue receiving the same amount of funds from the US (inaudible) to support the high cost of the business.

So as a result, many of our rural consumers, the lot that I represent out there, will see the rate forward (ph) go from $14 to about $20.46. And while the communications act requires rural rates to be reasonably comparable to rates in urban areas, as affordable, reasonably comparable does not necessarily mean that the rural rate should be exactly the same as the urban rate when the rural customer might be able to call, only a few thousand people locally want urban call many times more than that.

And then should the rate be the same in the rural areas where the average income is significantly lower than it might in fact not be as affordable. The rate floor continues to be a concern for many of our telecommunications providers in my district, and other servicing rural America, where I understand that the SEC has agree to phase in the increase at $2.00 per year, and proposed a start date until -- or postponed that start date until after 2015.

Can you explain why the FCC interprets the reasonably comparable rates to mean exactly the same rates between urban and rural areas, considering the smaller pipe (ph) relation of rural calling areas, and in fact, that it was what is affordable in the largest urban areas is not what is also affordable to consumers in the rural.

WHEELER: Thank you. I'm glad you asked that question, it's an important question. The -- so -- so, as you stated, we're supposed to make sure that things are reasonably comparable. The reason for that is to make sure that the subsidies that some Americans are paying to deliver service to other Americans, don't end up being subsidies that some Americans are paying to reduce the bills of other Americans, but to overcome the high cost of getting it to them.

In some instances, it has been unfortunately the former, there are in 16 states, there are situations where consumers are paying -- some consumers are paying $5.00 a month for telephone service, because they're being subsidized by people in your district and other districts.

We need to get our arms around that. So what we've done, is to say OK, step 1 is Jack (ph) goes into effect January 15. Then what we're going to do is -- and that can't be more than $2.00 by the way.

And then what we're going to do is go back out with another survey that hits the kind of granularity you were talking about in terms of service, including long distance and these kinds of things, so that we have a better understanding of exactly what comparable means, and then lock at that issue again.

LATTA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My time has expired and I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back. The chair now recognizes chairman emeritus of the committee, the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. Dingell.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, I thank you for your courtesy, and I commend you for holding this hearing. I'd like to welcome our old friend, Mr. Wheeler, back, fine public servant, and we're looking forward to good things of him.

Mr. Chairman, last week's open meeting, the commission adopted a number of big ticket items, including a new net neutrality NPRM, and draft rules for the upcoming incentive auction of broadcaster spectrum.

Concerning the former, I commend you for your efforts to keep the internet open, and will be watching the matter closely, as it goes forward. It's my hope the commission will work with this committee to ensure that any final action it takes to conform to its statutory authority, especially concerning Title II reclassification. Now with respect to the incentive auction, I am interested in what the committee intends to do about treating broadcasters fairly. My questions will require a simple yes or no answer.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to begin with a parochial matter. Section 6403 B1 of the middle class tax relief and job creation act specifies that the commission may, subject to international (inaudible) along the border with Mexico and Canada, reassign and relocate and reallocate broadcast frequencies. Is that correct?

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Now Chairman Wheeler, in the commission's joy (ph) to 2013 response to my letter of inquiry about the reverse auction, Gary Epstein, head of the commission's incentive auction taskforce stated the following, the language used in section 6403 B1 of the action is quote, identical to that used by the commission in describing its handling of the earlier DTV transition, in which the commission adopted our proposed allotments for these statements, subject to our continuing negotiations with Canada, notwithstanding the broadcaster's request.

To the contrary, one here could reasonably assume, based on the statement, that the commission may reassign and reallocate broadcast frequencies pursuant to the act, while negotiations with Canada and Mexico are still ongoing. Is that correct?

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: I'm going to ask you to submit for the record how you're going to assure protection to the broadcasters and the viewers in that process.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Now Mr. Wheeler, does the commission believe that concluding negotiations with Canada and Mexico, prior to commencing the reverse action, will give broadcasters, particularly in border regions, greater certainties and likely to increase the unwillingness to participate in this auction? Yes, or no?

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Wheeler, does the commission expect to conclude negotiations with Canada and Mexico prior to commencing the reverse action next year? Yes, or no?

WHEELER: The expectation is it is the goal.

DINGELL: You may not make it, is what you're saying.

WHEELER: It is -- it is the goal, and as we -- as I answered you in your previous point ... DINGELL: Would you notify -- would you notify this committee as soon as that becomes likely or dangerous?

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Now in this matter, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to state for the record that it's my understanding, based on exchange with counsel at the energy and commerce subcommittee on communications and technology, December 1, 2011, markup of the border of the act, that border negotiations are to be completed before the commission reassigns broadcast channels.

I hope that Chairman Wheeler will honor that understanding. I hope, Mr. Chairman, you understand I have great apprehensions about that, because of the impact it should have on the broadcast, and also on my constituents.

WHEELER: Mr. Chairman, this is -- I share your deep concern about this, not only because of the very legitimate concern you have about your constituents and other Americans getting service along the border, but also the candlevering (ph) effect, if you will, as it then -- as spectrum allocation then goes into the middle of the country.

I can assure you this is an incredibly high priority. I can also assure you that our Canadian colleagues have been very forthcoming and very helpful ...

DINGELL: I would like to have this submitted for the record in response to correspondence. Now, Mr. Chairman, I note that the commission proposes to use a method called quote, scoring, to set individual prices for each broadcast station participation -- or participating in the reverse auction. Is that correct?

WHEELER: It is one of the things we're considering ...

DINGELL: One ...

WHEELER: We have not made the final decision yet.

DINGELL: There are others?

WHEELER: There -- we're looking at others ...

DINGELL: I'm going to ask that you submit, in response to correspondence, a proper answer on that ...

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: ... particular point. Now, Chairman Wheeler, is the commission concerned that scoring, as opposed to competitive bidding, will decrease broadcasters willingness to participate in the reverse auction? Yes, or no?

WHEELER: No.

DINGELL: Now Chairman Wheeler, in general, do you intend to work in good faith with broadcasters as the commission defines the rules for reverse auction in order to situate (ph) that their needs are met, as the action (ph) specifies -- as the act specifies, to the best of your abilities? Yes, or no?

WHEELER: Absolutely.

DINGELL: I want to quote Admiral Rickrover (ph), who once observed, the devil's in the details, but so is salvation. I'm hoping you're going to see that the salvation is there and not just that we are going to find ourselves amidst trouble because of carelessness, not by you, but by some of your over-enthusiastic and less-than- competent predecessors. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield my time.

WALDEN: The gentleman's time has expired, and has yielded back. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. Shimkus for five minutes.

SHIMKUS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Chairman Wheeler, welcome. I'm going to try to get through three pretty quick points if I can. As you know, there's a lot of concerns on this side of the dials (ph) and this Title II debate ...

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

SHIMKUS: ... and -- and the basic premise is how do you -- for me, is how do you build out? You want -- we want more, not less. Does a regulated monopoly incentivize more build out, more pipelines, or does a competitive, capital-intensive, incentivized, market-driven process?

I believe the second. So that's -- we've gone from copper, to cable -- collective (ph) cable, satellite, cellular, fiber, a lot of different ways for data to now flow. And we want to encourage that.

And I don't -- I think only -- I kind of like the idea of incentivizing people who want to use more, making them pay more, to incentivize those who carry, someone may want to build out more. That's kind of where I come from. My position is more pipes, not less, more pipes not regulated pipe, competitive markets versus controlled markets.

So because here's an example of that -- a recent -- on May 16th, the Wireline Competition Bureau released a public notice seeking comment on state regulation of dial-up internet traffic. Dial-up. I mean that's a dinosaur. It's hardly used.

So there's -- there is no -- you want to talk about uncertainty for the state and for the providers, when we're still in this process, more than 15 years after the SEC first discussed the treatment of dial-up, we're -- we're now to this process? So that's just kind of a statement. That doesn't create certainty. Would you -- would you agree?

WHEELER: Well what we're trying to do, Mr. Shimkus, is to -- is to create an environment that assures consumers and those who rely on the internet that there is openness, while at the same point in time, encouraging investment.

SHIMKUS: Well let's just go back. I get that, but does that -- this is dial-up.

WHEELER: We still -- so if we're dealing with the dial-up -- I mean that's really -- that's a -- that's a different topic ...

SHIMKUS: Well it is, but it's not, because it's -- it's the whole debate about certainty, and if -- we actually have a dinosaur application, then why are we even ...

WHEELER: So we still have 40 percent of our consumers on dial-up telephone lines. One of the challenges that we have is how do we evolve that into an all IP environment, which would be, you know, an internet-like environment.

And one of the things that I have -- I have said to this committee is that we believe that this IP transition is a crucial part in how do we ...

SHIMKUS: OK, I get it, I'm going to try to (inaudible) ...

WHEELER: OK, sorry, sir.

SHIMKUS: In one deals in both of our sweet spot is kind of the public service, 9-11, the spectromac (ph) call for the creation of the do not call registry, and the automatic dialing issue. The commission keeps saying there's not enough money to do this.

I would ask you to check into that. I think there's a lot of money in the FCC. And because obviously this automatic dialing freezes up lines, and it's a public safety concern, and I would hope that we would work together to try to -- you would take that into consideration.

WHEELER: I would take a look forward to that. Let me -- let me get back, and I will come to ...

SHIMKUS: And you know, myself and the ranking member have been better (ph) involved in this issue, as you have in -- in the early days also. The last thing I want to -- from rural America, is kind of just there seems to be a de facto freeze on this shared service agreement.

And this isn't a broadcast sector, as you know. The local -- when you represent a third of the state of Illinois, as I do now, 33 counties, these shared agreements are now helping to provide, and we've got real-world cases, better local service to the local folks, than -- than less.

And I guess the basic question in my last minute is what's your plan to ensure that FDAC (ph) action on television transfer application is predictable, consistent, fair, and timely?

WHEELER: So -- thank you, Mr. Shimkus. What we -- what we have done, is to put out a public notice on how we look at transfers. And I consider this to be a procedural reform. Because the way it used to be, was broadcasters would -- would -- would come together in some kind of a -- a -- a merger situation, and they would come to the commission, which was a black box, that had constantly changing, well, this we'll look at it this way, we'll look at it that way.

And what I wanted to do was to say OK, what are the things that we will look at? So that everybody has notice, everybody understands, and it is not a black box. And that's the process that we have now established to be able to make those kinds of decisions.

SHIMKUS: Thank you. I know my time has expired. I appreciate it if you'd keep me in mind as these things move forward, it would be helpful.

WHEELER: Yes, sir. Thank you.

WALDEN: The chair now recognizes the gentlelady from Colorado, Ms. DeGette, for five minutes.

DEGETTE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to follow up, Chairman Wheeler, on this discussion about the open internet NPRM (ph). Leading up to the commission's vote last week, there was a robust public exchange among ISPs, and edge (ph) providers, and others, about the impact of paid

prioritization on their business models. And as Ms. Matsui said, we've been hearing from a lot of our constituents about this as well.

Now you talked very briefly about -- a few minutes ago, about what the FCC is doing in its review process to look at the effect of paid prioritization on consumers' broadband bills. Wondering if you can comment about what you think the proposed open internet rules will have on access to new and innovative content online. Because that's one reason why we're concerned about these proposed rules.

WHEELER: The -- it should be encouragement of new and innovative programming, because of the fact that it assures that they will be able to reach the consumer, unfettered, and without having to pay special fees.

DEGETTE: And what impact do you think that the rules will have on average broadband speeds, network investments, and overall quality of service?

WHEELER: That's a terrific question ...

DEGETTE: Thank you.

WHEELER: ... I'm glad you asked it. You know, one of the fascinating things is that 2010, when the open internet rules were first proposed, since then, there has been hundreds of millions of dollars of broadband investment made. So the rules don't seem to have a chilling effect. And, speeds have been doing this, going up. And this is what the court was talking about when they talk about this virtuous cycle because everything -- in the internet ecosystem everything adds to everything else.

DEGETTE: So what do you think that the new rules, what effect will they have on these issues?

WHEELER: I believe ...

DEGETTE: You just talked about what's been happening...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: Yes, we believe that the rules that we have designed will continue to encourage investment in broadband, continue to encourage increases in throughput and as a result continue to encourage innovation from edge providers.

DEGETTE: And so are you saying also that average broadband speeds will increase?

WHEELER: Yes ma'am.

DEGETTE: And overall quality of service will increase?

WHEELER: Yes ma'am, they'll need to.

DEGETTE: All right. OK, one last thing no one has raised yet, is the issue of industry consolidation. And this year we've seen two major merger proposals in the telecom industry. Now clearly the industry's going through a period of significant technological and economic change. And some folks think that consolidation is the best approach to this. So all things being equal, do you think industry consolidation is good or bad for the consumers?

WHEELER: So, I read the other day that we are probably the -- in the last decade the biggest year for telecom mergers and what we're doing is opening a record on each of them. And we'll make that decision based on the record that is developed for each...

DEGETTE: ...So you don't have an opinion at this point?

WHEELER: I don't want to prejudge the record.

DEGETTE: OK. And as you know congress has recognized the importance and unique character of the telecommunications marketplace by giving the FCC the authority to review mergers under the public interest standard. Do you think the conditions the FCC placed on the Comcast/NBCU merger were effective at promoting the public interest?

WHEELER: Oh, wow, you know, that is something that -- a decision that my predecessor made. I know that it had impact. My goal is to look at the record that we have presented before me and my colleagues and make a decision on those.

DEGETTE: Do you think it promoted the public interest? Yes or no.

WHEELER: I think that there were multiple things in it that promoted the public interest.

DEGETTE: And what other lessons do you take away from commissions previous attempts to promote the public interests by placing conditions on mergers as you go forward?

WHEELER: That it is an important role that the commission has. You know, there is a lot of discussion as to why should there be any authority of the FCC to look at public interest obligations.

DEGETTE: Right.

WHEELER: I strongly believe that there is a big difference between the kind of statutory rigidity that the justice department is required to look at mergers with and the kind of broader public interest issues that you've raised that the statute asked the FCC to look at.

DEGETTE: Chairman, I just asked if you could supplement your testimony with some specific takeaways that this has given you. Thank you very much. Thanks Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: Gentlady yields back. The chair now recognizes -- I'm sorry the chair recognizes the Chairman.

(UNKNOWN): I just wanted to clarify one thing to make sure I heard it right. Did you say 40 percent of Americans are still using dial-up for internet access?

WHEELER: No, I'm talking about dial-up phone service writ large.

(UNKNOWN): OK because I was saying it's more like 3 percent.

WHEELER: No, dial-up phone service writ large.

(UNKNOWN): Thank you. And I thank the courtesy of the chair.

(UNKNOWN): Thank you for clarifying that, sir.

WALDEN: Thank you.

The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska for five minutes Mr. Terry.

TERRY: Thank you. It's good to know that my 82-year-old father is in the 3 percent, that makes him very elite. I'm trying to talk him out of that, but that's a...

(CROSSTALK).

WHEELER: I remember the days when we were thrilled to get 56kb, right?

TERRY: Yes.

So switching gears just a little bit. I wanna ask about quintile (ph) aggression analysis progress and I do think that you have probably captured its deficiencies better than anyone else has and I appreciate that work. I was glad to see the commission's follow-up by repealing the QRA formula.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

TERRY: So congratulations, I appreciate that. I'm curious on your thoughts of how it should be replaced and if you could walk me through what factors are going to be used in any decision making and time tables and process.

WHEELER: I respect the question, but I can't really answer it right now because we're in the process of -- there's several proposals and we're in the process of looking at what the best components of each are. And I don't want to hip shoot here, but we do have proceedings underway to say, OK, what is it we will replace QRA with?

TERRY: So, where are we within the process of those?

WHEELER: I think that we're probably heading into something that you would see before fall.

TERRY: Before fall?

(UNKNOWN): Early fall, football season.

TERRY: Well, I don't want to get distracted.

WHEELER: Well if you joined the big team.

TERRY: Do that when we McNeese State and I would appreciate that.

WHEELER: Yes sir.

TERRY: For the rest of you, that was humor. Now then let me go to a broadcast question since we succinctly dealt with one I thought would take all of five minutes. The spectrum deal that was authorized in incentive auctions and passed through the committee was a bipartisan bill and unfortunately the order removed the FCC was not bipartisan. And some commissioners, particularly republicans, stated that the order treats (ph) TV broadcasters that choose not to participate in the auctions unfairly and that has me concerned.

Congress set aside the 1.75 to reimburse broadcasters for us to move part of the incentive option in the range to fully recover their expenses. Why did the FCC not adopt the number as its repacking budget and ensure that broadcasters would not have to go out of pocket when forced to the FCC to move?

WHEELER: Thank you. Congress said a billion 750 million is the max that can be spent on repacking. We think that will be sufficient. There have been broadcasters who have expressed a concern that it might not be sufficient. So we have said, OK, we don't think that's going to happen, but we will put in place a process that will have a structure in place if and when that should happen. Sir, I don't expect that we're going to get there.

TERRY: All right. I'll just yield back my time. Thank you, sir.

WHEELER: The gentleman yields back and the chair now recognizes the gentleman from Utah, Mr. Matheson for five minutes. MATHESON: Thanks Mr. Chairman and Mr. Wheeler thanks for your testimony. I appreciate your candor and your articulate way you answer questions.

WHEELER: Thank you, sir.

MATHESON: I also want to commend you on your efforts to open up more spectrum for our license uses. The FCC took an important step last month by opening up the 100 gigahertz for spectrum for unlicensed uses in the 5 gigahertz band and I'm pleased to see in your testimony that the FCC is actively participating in an ongoing effort to free up additional unlicensed spectrum in the 5 gigahertz band. Can you provide an update on where things currently stand with resolving the technical issues in the ITS band currently used for vehicle-to-vehicle communications and the parts of the band used by the DOD for military radar?

WHEELER: Yes. So, as we talked, there's three slices to 5 gigahertz.

MATHESON: Right.

WHEELER: There's lower slice that we took care of. The middle, as you suggest, is DOD. We are having ongoing discussions with them. I have been personally involved in those discussions about a wide range of spectrum issues including this. There are strongly held beliefs on both sides, sir. I continue to believe, however, that people of good faith can find answers if you sit at the table long enough, and that's the goal.

And so far as the high band in 5 gig, yes, that's intelligent transportation, which offers such great opportunities with Google Smart Card and all this sort of thing. The thing that's really encouraging is that that's an 802 type of standard. It's not a dissimilar reality, however. Where we need to make sure that people are sitting around the table looking for commonalities rather than looking for differences.

MATHESON: Something we got to do around congress a little.

WHEELER: You have a little experience.

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: But that's the goal of what we're trying to do here.

MATHESON: Do you have a sense of what the -- do you have a timeframe for when this additional spectrum could be freed up?

WHEELER: I wish I did. I would be misleading you, sir, if I gave you a date right now.

MATHESON: I understand. Another issue I wanted to mention. The administrations ConnectED program, the goal to bring 100 megabit broadband to every school in the US. To the extent that this initiative is implemented through the ERAY (ph) program, what can the commission do to maximize efficiency and get the most bang for their buck?

WHEELER: Wow, thank you. Great question. There are multiple challenges in that. One is that we need to spend our money, the people's money, on 21st Century high-speed broadband solutions not 20th century solutions like dial-up telephone service and a long distance. Right now about half of the $2 billion, $2.4 billion that's being spent is spent for old stuff. Not today, half today (ph). Second part is that we have to design a system that helps schools and library administrators find their way through the maze that is telecom.

I mean, we put them in those jobs to educate students, not to be telecom wizzes. So we're trying to develop a process that says, you know, here's what you ought to be paying. Here's what somebody next door is paying. Here's like situated, so that they can go in and understand where they're bargaining positioning is.

We're going to be talking about being able to have longer contracts because buying it on a monthly basis, as we all know, is the worst way to buy. So let's talk about several years. We're going to be encouraging concertia (ph) so that you can buy in bulk and get better prices. And I just think that

there are a myriad of things that we can do to get more efficiency out of the existing bucks, and we intend to do that.

MATHESON: That's great. Does the FCC plan on using the national broadband map to identify fiber that is already in place in a given community so it can be leveraged toward these ConnectED (ph) goal?

WHEELER: Absolutely and we have now taken over the ownership of the broadband map, so yes, sir.

MATHESON: OK, I appreciate that. I will yield back, Mr. Chairman.

WHEELER: Thank you very much. The gentleman yields back balance of time and the chair now recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Lance for five minutes.

LANCE: Thank you very much and good afternoon to you. I believe that some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would prefer a title 2 reclassification. And if the commission were to decide to proceed in that direction, I'm concerned that it might trigger a lot of ill-fitting regulations that might not make sense in the context of these services. In your opinion, Chairman, would the process of going through forbearance to separate the wheat from the chaff, could it be a messy exercise and might it lead to more years of litigation and uncertainty is my real concern, sir?

WHEELER: Thank you, Congressman. That's one of the things that gets teed up in the imperium (ph) when we ask about title 2 versus section 706. And I presume that that will be exhaustively discussed in the responses. And that's exactly the kind of questions that we're asking.

LANCE: Thank you. One concern has been raised about the proposed net totality rule making process protections that would be afforded companies use a carrier that's providing the same service as another carrier. For example, the large carriers are beginning to bundle services that go well beyond phone service, the internet and television, to include smart phone services such as temperature control, home health monitoring, which of course is important to another subcommittee of this committee, as well as alarm services such as monitoring of home intrusions and fires, video surveillance or personal emerge response systems. What protections will the FCC provide to ensure that the carrier does not give its service provider a preference over a company using them as a broad-based carrier?

WHEELER: I'm not sure I exactly understand. What your concern is will there be preferences among providers of those services?

LANCE: Yes, Chairman.

WHEELER: That's contrary to the concept of an open internet.

LANCE: So, you can assure us as the American people that that will not be the case as these other services are provided moving forward?

WHEELER: Let me give you an example personally.

LANCE: Yes, sir.

WHEELER: I just switched out ADT in my home security system for another company. And I was able to access both of them over the internet and both of them over my mobile device and there should be no interference with my ability to move from ADT to the other provider.

LANCE: Thank you, and that's the goal of the commission and you will assure us that that is how you will proceed moving forward?

WHEELER: There needs to be open access for all providers.

LANCE: Thank you. I look forward to working with you. I understand you're a proud graduate of Ohio State, is that?

WHEELER: You bet, yes, sir.

LANCE: Please be gentle with Rutgers now that Rutgers has entered the big, whatever it is, the big 16 or whatever it is.

WHEELER: It's the big 10 that can't count.

LANCE: The big 10 that can't count. I defer back to the Chairman the balance of my time, a proud representative from Ohio.

WHEELER: Well thank you very much. For the gentlemen yielding back his balance of his time. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Butterfield for 5 minutes.

BUTTERFIELD: Thank you very much gentlemen for yielding time and thank you to you Chairman for your service and thank you for your testimony today. I especially thank you for your clarity. I told you that the first time that I met you and whenever I hear you speak it is unambiguous. At least until the subject of your home security system comes up and you are a little ambiguous with who the new provider is but thank you so very much.

Mr. Chairman in the communications act congress mandated that the commission ensured diverse participation in media and telecom and that includes participation in minority and women own businesses. The quote from the statue basically says that the mandate is to promote economic opportunity and competition by disseminating licenses among a wide variety of applicants including small businesses, rural telecoms and businesses owned by members of minority groups and women. End of quote.

It seems to me that the response of the commission to judicial criticism of the FCCs inaction in this area and the lack of meaningful study and progress as well as the low level of minority of women on participation and media and telecom licensing that the commission seems to me is not committed to these diversity goals. And if I am wrong about this, I would ask that you correct me.

On May the 14th, members of the congressional black caucus including Congressman Rush and myself addressed these concerns -- these diversity concerns in a letter to you. I suppose the letter may not have made its way to your desk yet, but I ask that you look at it very carefully when you do. Question, what precisely do you need beyond the congressional directions and judicial criticism to get the commission to make progress in creating opportunities for diverse communities.

WHEELER: Thank you, Congressman, and I got the letter this morning, so thank you. First of all, I agree that we have a mandate to have a broad swath of opportunity for all Americans to participate in all aspects of telecommunications. I can assure you that that's a goal of mine. Now let's talk about some specifics.

Number one, I think what we did on the JSAs in the broadcast space actually opens up opportunities for minority and small operators. That's why it was supported by more than a dozen representative minority groups. Secondly is, we are going to move on the AWS3 (ph) auction to make sure that there are appropriate steps taken to assure that minorities can participate through waivers in other kinds of processes in that auction. Thirdly, we are going to have -- and I should pause and in all of these call out Commissioner Clyburn, who has been the constant pusher on all of these issues.

There will be designated envy rules for the incentive auction that will create bidding credits for appropriate designated entities. And I very much take to heart both as an institutional responsibility and as a personal responsibility the language that you read.

BUTTERFIELD: And so when the spectrum is auctioned you are making a commitment that diversity will be an overriding concern of the commission?

WHEELER: What we want to do is make sure that there are opportunities for designated entities to get bidding credits to that, for instance, they can bid with 75 cent dollars against AT&T and Verizon's 100 cent dollars.

BUTTERFIELD: Let me get this last one in if I can. In light of the demographic changes of caring in our country and the growing numbers of mergers in the communications industry, how is the commission encouraging companies to partner with diverse businesses in the secondary market?

WHEELER: We have been doing that in both formally and informally, that there are great opportunities when there are transactions for minority companies. They, you know, grain telecom comes to mind, which is now operating spectrum I believe for both AT&T and Verizon, which they purchased as a part of some settlements with the commission. And those kind of opportunities are important and worthwhile. I also believe that there can be new opportunities in the broadcast space particularly after the auction in terms of being able to share spectrum and offer other kinds of services.

BUTTERFIELD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WHEELER: Thank you very much. The chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky, Mr. Guthrie.

GUTHRIE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for coming today. I know you had a busy week so your time is appreciated. My colleague from California Ms. Matsui have spent a lot of time on spectrum issues and we've founded a congressional spectrum caucus and -- and looking for different ideas on how we can move forward on that spectrum.

And I appreciate the efforts that you've done to move the incentive auction forward. And have a couple of questions about the guard bands and the 680 megahertz band. It appears to me that the band plan for spectrum cleared in the broadcast incentive auction carefully considered the importance of maximizing license spectrum and adhered to the technically reasonable standards set by congress for creating a duplex gap. And I applaud the commission for this area in this regard. Quick two questions, one how do you foresee going forward with unlicensed spectrum in the duplex gap? As you know it would be important for those who bid on adjacent license spectrum to have as sure there will not be interference and are you confident the FCC will have technical guidelines to have assurance for those who bid for license spectrum there will be no interference in the duplex gap from our lines (ph)?

WHEELER: Yes, sir. The answer to both you just identified technical standards. And so for instance we're going to have technical standards proceeding for wireless mics and others who would be using the unlicensed spectrums, so yes, sir.

GUTHRIE: OK, and we've been using social media to reach out to interest Americans and so we're here for representing the American people and one came from Kelly on Facebook and Kelly asked this question -- well Kelly submitted this question through Facebook who would like to ask the question about your plans for future spectrum policy and can you give Kelly a brief answer to her question about why just broadly future spectrum policy? WHEELER: Thank you Kelly. The answer is that, you know, they're not making it no more and so what we have to do -- I believe that we are today on the cusp of the new Verizon on spectrum policy with two things that we are doing. One is the incentive auction that you all created. Because when you boil everything down it ultimately comes to economics. And if you can address the other person's economics you can probably go along with solving your economics issue. And that's what the auction does.

The other component is spectrum sharing. And the days of hearing this is all yours who uses it are over and fortunately digital allows that kind of sharing. You know, think about going into a Starbucks and everybody is sharing that Wi-Fi spectrum. You put those two together and that's I think the answer to Kelly's question as to where is spectrum policy going. And we're in the middle of making both of those work right now, which is why what we're doing is so terribly important.

GUTHRIE: Yes, I often use the metaphor there's a very simple metaphor compared to a complex physics in this, but we don't have special highways for ambulances or fire trucks, we get out of the

way when they need to go down the highway. So sharing that's kind of a simple way to look at the metaphor. There's in one of your statements and I'm putting my hate as a former state legislature so I was the Senator in Kentucky before here and there's been some concerns of places like Utah and Oregon where there's been municipal broadband deployed and the project have failed and there's (ph) were their competitive providers and these projects have resulted in putting millions of dollars in municipal bonds, property taxes, selling franchise taxes at risk and I believe the I probo (ph) sold to Google for a dollar and leaving city tax payers on the hook repaying tens of millions of dollars.

My understanding is five states or so have passed laws saying that cities can't do this -- because the states usually something happens to the city the states kind of on the hook for it as well and I believe in your prepared your written testimony you said that you believe the FCC could do perimption (ph) over this area in the state law and I just wanted you to clarify that. And why you think Washington could have a better view of this than Frankfurt, for example, in Kentucky.

WHEELER: So there are about 20 states that have put some kind of restrictions in place. And I see it through just exactly the opposite end of the telescope with all due respect, that if the citizens of a community want to organize through their local government to say to bring competition in broadband provision, they should not be inhibited.

GUTHRIE: No. They inhibit it by their elected...

WHEELER: They should not be inhibited by the fact that the incumbents have been urging the adoption of legislation that would ban it. And if we believe in competition, we ought to let competition flourished. So what I have said is that I'm following again Judge Silverman's comments in his dissent nonetheless in the open internet case in which he said, "If there's ever an example where 706 would apply, it is in the ability to -- to say the States, 'You cannot get in the middle of this virtuous cycle and prohibit consumers from being able to have access to a competitive service'".

GUTHRIE: So -- so your perception is that government should be doing that because of the incumbents or because they don't want to be on the hook for an I-provoke-type situation.

WHEELER: So the -- I go back to first principles with -- that is this is a decision that ought to be made by the people of the community. And that that if they want to take the risk, if they own it themselves, but you don't have to own it yourself.

It is also -- the gentleman from Utah has left. But for instance in Utah, there's a group of cities that have banded together to -- to solicit bids for somebody else to own that they would have a participation in.

That kind of structure -- if the people say that's what we want; this -- we want this kind of competition, then I think they ought to be encouraged together. And competition has clearly been shown to be the best tool.

GUTHRIE: Well, I don't disagree with you on that. But my time actually has expired. I know that Chairman's ready to gobble me down, so I yield back. Thank you.

WALDEN: Thank you very much. The -- the Chairman would never do that to the gentleman from Kentucky. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Vermont, Mr. Welch.

WELCH: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Wheeler, I have five questions. We have five minutes so we can go look at this split.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

WELCH: First thing, Bob Latta and I started the Rural Caucus. We so appreciated you coming an enormous concern in rural America that we get access to the internet. It's essential for our future. That neutrality is a big deal. That's the big topic. You've been getting comments.

There's an enormous amount of concern that if we make the wrong decision, the big guys are gonna get the fast lane, the little guys - many in rural America are gonna get the breakdown lane.

Can you give us some reassurance that at the end of this process, we're gonna have access, on equal terms, for folks in rural America to the internet?

WHEELER: You want a quick answer? Yes.

WELCH: Yes. WHEELER: Yes.

WELCH: And that's a full sentence. You can give a full sentence to reassure all of us especially rural America...

WHEELER: There should...

WELCH: That we're gonna be driving in the fast lane.

WHEELER: There should not -- there is one internet. There is not a fast internet; there is not a slow internet. There is not an urban internet; there is not a rural internet. There is one internet. Everybody ought to have open equal access to the capacity delivered by the internet.

WELCH: Okay. Thank you. Now, getting the internet, rural America is spread out, and the investors want to put their money where they can make the money. We all understand that. That was true for electricity. But we've got to get that internet out into rural America so we can be part of the modern economy.

And we have a Universal Service Fund with the -- with the Mobility Fund, whereas we need to have that. And I'm wondering if you could comment on the status of that and what we need to do to make sure that the funds are there to build out that broadband.

WHEELER: Specifically on the Mobility. Here's the interesting question that gets raised by Mobility. Broadband wireless is LTE. It is being built out across America. Recently just one of the major carriers announced a new initiative in rural America with LTE.

The question becomes, that we're wrestling with, is should we subsidize something if it's already happening? And that prudent fiscal responsibilities suggest probably not.

WELCH: Well, I got three more questions.

WHEELER: OK.

WELCH: So we wanna work with you on that to make it rational and not have us investing on things that aren't working but invest in things that are going to help rural America gets the best.

WHEELER: That's true. That's -- that's what we're trying to get to.

WELCH: All right. Third, we've got to work with you and your entire Commission, the Republicans and the Democrats. And when you came into our rural working group, you explained a couple of problems you had each in IT and also procedures where I guess it's easier to hire a lawyer...

WHEELER: Yeah.

WELCH: Than an engineer.

WHEELER: Yes.

WELCH: I'm a lawyer so maybe I'd like that, but I wouldn't be very much use to you. What are the things that this committee can advocate to help your entire Commission, Rs&Ds who want to do the job so you have the tools you need to do it?

WHEELER: Thank you for asking. Our IT infrastructure is worthy of this Masonian. I came from a business background. The things that you cannot do is -- that are common sense in the business world. The fact that we're still using computers that have known cyber risks associated with them. The fact that we can't organize a consumer complaint process online for American consumers because our IT system isn't up to us -- up to it is ridiculous.

So, we have serious problems there on the issue of lawyers versus engineers. Far be it for me to take a side on that but we do need more engineers, sir.

WELCH: OK. Thank you.

WHEELER: And economists.

WELCH: Right.

WHEELER: And economists.

WELCH: Well, I'd like our committee to work with you on that. Next, Section 706. There's a lot of concern about whether you have the sufficient authority under that section in order to give you the rulemaking power to guarantee the outcome being net neutrality. Can you comment on that? Do you still feel that that is sufficient and the court gave you a roadmap forward?

WHEELER: I think -- I think that we do have sufficient authority and then when the court talked about this virtuous cycle and they said, "Anything that interferers with that virtuous cycle is a violation of 706", that that is a very broad grant of authority.

WELCH: OK. My last question in 26 seconds. Retrans consent and blocking online content, we've seen that in the broadcast area where there's a dispute and people can't get access to the signal. Now, that's starting to migrate into the online content. Is this the beginning of the cabalization of the internet?

WHEELER: Sir, I think it is the right question. Our authority goes to the -- retransmission and program access goes to the authority of good faith negotiations. I think there is reason to be concerned when because I happen to subscribe to an ISP who is in a dispute with a program provider. That the program provider blocks all access from all IP addresses coming from that ISP. I think that is something that is -- is -- is of concern and that we all should worry about.

WELCH: Okay. I yield back. Thank you very much, Mr. Wheeler.

WHEELER: Thank you, sir.

WALDEN: Thank you very much. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas, Mr. Pompeo.

POMPEO: Thank you, Mr. WALDEN: Thank you for being here today. I don't want to spend a lot of time on net neutrality. We have different view. I view it is nothing more than a price control. I think we've seen how that works in creating supply. And so I think -- I think it's a very dangerous path that you're headed down.

I do want to ask a couple of process questions related to that. Have you spoken to anyone at the White House or OMB in the last month regarding net neutrality?

WHEELER: Only to keep them appraised. They have been assiduous in their recognition that we are an independent agency.

POMPEO: And did you call them or did they call you?

WHEELER: I called them.

POMPEO: And has anyone else on your staff spoken to folks at the White House or OMB in the last month?

WHEELER: Not in my...

POMPEO: With this issue?

WHEELER: Well, on -- the answer is I'm sure. On -- on this issue, I don't know but I can assure you from my discussions with everybody, from the President on down, the recognition of the independence of our agency; and I'll go further and assure you that never have I or to my knowledge anyone of my staff felt any pressure to decide any issue.

POMPEO: I appreciate that. Thank you. I want to follow-up on something. Representative Guthrie was saying you believe the FCC has the power to preempt state law to ban competition from community broadband.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

POMPEO: Under Section 706.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

POMPEO: Do you believe that State have the same authority.

WHEELER: I think that's the -- the issue that I believe is do we have the authority to preempt. That raises the question of what is the authority of the State. And I think that we have preempt authority. I think we'll probably end up having this answered in court.

POMPEO: Wait, look. I -- I just read the statute that they have the same authority that the -- the FCC does. The language is identical. It says you would have authority as you have in that.

WHEELER: Well, it says State Commissions. POMPEO: Right.

WHEELER: If you will. Yes. And -- and it says that we have -- we have preemptory authority over State Commissions.

POMPEO: So State Commissions have the same authority that you do. Do you agree with that?

WHEELER: Don't I?

POMPEO: That's a simple statute, I mean it says the same thing I just said.

WHEELER: No I think that I -- I think that it says that that -- that both of us have authority, but that we have preemptory authority on this issue. And I think that's what Judge Silverman was saying in his dissent in that Verizon...

POMPEO: Great. Not all dissent. Chairman, will the FCC's Media Bureau recently issued new, they call them "Processing Guidelines for Broadcast Transactions"; and this broadcast talks not only about future broadcast transactions but also pending applications. I have three questions with respect to that.

First, how many applications have been singled out for a closed scrutiny since that new guidelines have been issued? How many have been approved in those two months? And when might those broadcasters see the resolution of their applications?

WHEELER: I don't know the answer to any of -- of those three for the -- off top of my head. But I'll be happy to get it for -- get it for you for the record.

POMPEO: OK. You can understand these are pending applications submitted under the set of rules. You've now moved the goalpost on them. This is -- this is...

WHEELER: No, actually, I -- yes, sir, I understand your point. What we're trying to do is not move the goalpost but to open up the process so that everybody knows...

POMPEO: But that's what you did.

WHEELER: ...what the rules are.

POMPEO: But that's what you did. I mean you changed -- you changed the rules with respect to applications already submitted under preexisting set of standards. So, and I don't know how you could describe that as anything but moving the goalpost.

WHEELER: With all respect, sir. We had -- we had a series of transactions that were in placed. And in the decisions on those transactions, we said, note, "Going forward, there will be a new look at what financial structures are in transactions", not in these transactions that we're approving. Then we put out a public notice that said, "Here is how we are going to open up this black box and here is what is gonna be going on." And it is that standard. So there was -- there was notice as a part of a decision that was not affected. Then there was notice through a public notice. And now those that they -- the Bureau is reviewing are subject to both of those.

POMPEO: And my last 20 seconds. And with net neutrality, there are also cyber security issues. Do you plan to explicitly give network providers liability protections in their efforts to protect their network from cyber security as part of your rulemaking and --for net neutrality.

WHEELER: It was not considered as a part of the rulemaking to have -- have that.

POMPEO: All right. Mr. Chairman, I yield back my time.

WALDEN: Thank you very much. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Mexico, Mr. **Lujan.**

LUJAN: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. Chairman, we thank you so much...

WHEELER: Mr. **Lujan.**

LUJAN: ...for being here as well. Chairman Wheeler, two weeks ago, this committee added my amendment calling on the FCC to conduct a study on reforming the designated market area system to the STELA Reauthorization Bill.

As you know, DMAs are currently defined by a map drawn by Nielsen, a for-profit marketing research company based upon the reach of television broadcast antennas. This kind of work of antennas is based upon technology deployed back in the '40s and '50s. Americans could have a multitude of viewing options via technology such as cable, broadband and wireless internet. But current DMA rules prevent the viewership of much of that content.

I believe that a system embraced by these technologies could revitalize television broadcasting with new affiliates reaching viewers who have more in common than their placement on Nielsen's old map.

It is my hope that the Commission takes this study seriously and bring the policy into the 21st century, Mr. Chairman. So I hope that we might be able to work...

WHEELER: Thank you for your leadership on this, Mr. **Lujan.** And that I assure you that we will take it seriously.

LUJAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And Mr. Chairman, it wasn't too long ago that a company would not allow access to another companies upside. There was a question a few years ago with AT&T and FaceTime, an Apple product.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

LUJAN: As I talked about fixed versus mobile. They defended it by saying it was allowed under the FCC's net neutrality rules granted this was under 3G.

Section 62 of the proposal suggests no -- no blocking rule -- that sorry, the no blocking rule was applied to different standard to mobile broadband internet access and mobile internet access service was excluded from the unreasonable discrimination rules. We're seeing mobile getting fast -- faster now and with the new spectrum options, even faster than fixed.

I appreciate and I agree with you that we're talking about one internet with open and equal access. With my colleagues in rural areas, I shared with you before that there's a conversation about taking phone calls and with bandwidth capabilities as well as streaming of content on airplanes. In rural America, we should be able to get the same treatment. I do not understand why we're not there yet. But nonetheless, it's common.

So I'm hopeful that as we have this conversation that we're able to have equitable treatment. I know that there is a, as I read in the proposal, that there is elements of asking for a look into this...

WHEELER: Right.

LUJAN: ... in the rule. But I'm certainly hopeful that this will be treated with the same scrutiny and level of attention. And again, as I talk about an old antiquated rule within the '40s and '50s, we talked about dial-up, that this is another area that we're going to have equitable treatment as well especially with new gigabit access as well.

Mr. Chairman, in another area, I know that there's a number of my colleagues who join me in their concern for recent reports of interconnection deals particularly the one between Comcast and Netflix. You stated that peering is not a net neutrality issue, there is a matter of the -- that there is a matter of the open internet and there is a matter of the internet connection among the various disparate pathways that become the internet.

Well, I understand that net neutrality refers only to the behavior of internet service providers blocking or throttling the speeds of certain websites. My question is how is an interconnection agreement that essentially throttles content substantially different?

WHEELER: So, thank you. So that's -- that's a very good question. They -- you can -- you can think of the internet in -- in three parts. There is the -- well, actually four parts. There is somebody like Netflix getting on the internet and then writing so- called middle mile providers to a peering point which is just a fancy word for interconnection where they then have access to Comcast Verizon, whoever the case maybe.

The consumer buys from their computer up to the peering point. Traditionally, peering has been I'll take mine, you take yours, back and forth kind of a thing; and -- and -- and for free. That has begun to change overtime.

LUJAN: If I may apologize, my time has been elapsed, so maybe what I'll do is if we could get that into the record. All that I would add is once upon a time peering agreements didn't have an exchange of money. People find a way to...

WHEELER: Exactly right.

LUJAN: ...each other. And I'm hoping that we can get some certainty with the treatment of fixed versus mobile in that area. And lastly, I -- I'd like for the record if there's any way that you might be

able to provide us more specifics and details with what's been talked about as commercially reasonable...

WHEELER: Good.

LUJAN: ...as well as we talk about now pretty smaller companies have disadvantages. I apologize again, Mr. Chairman. I could always sit and visit with you. And the last thing that I would say is President Obama isn't in support of an open internet and I would encourage you to speak with him. So thank you very much for that as well.

WHEELER: Let me just -- Congressman, so am I.

WALDEN: Thank you. Thank you very much. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana, Mr. Scalise.

SCALISE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman for having the hearing and thank you Commissioner Wheeler for being here today and answering our questions. And there was -- as we look at the potential changes that have been proposed, a lot of us that want to continue to maintain a free and open internet want to make sure that we're going about it the right way. I know you've got some concerns with the fact that the FCC would even consider going to Title II route in terms of reclassifying broadband, you know.

And a lot of us had reached out for our constituents to -- to have them also give us suggestions on things that they would like to ask you as well. And a lot of the -- the comments that we got I know that I got in my district were just concerns about maintaining that open internet, and keeping the government out of regulating it, and -- and trying to make sure that the government doesn't impede the ability for the innovations that we've seen which have been so dramatic and revolutionized to not only the country, but revolutionized the entire world. And it's a lot of innovation that -- that's made in America. And we want to continue to see that innovation thrive.

When you -- when you look at going into the reclassification, and there's a proposal that's out there. I know, like I said, I've got concerns about that. But in your written statement, you assert that the private sector must play the leading role in extending broadband networks to every American. That if it were to be reclassified under Title II, who -- who would pay for extending those networks if they're subject to common carrier regulations.

WHEELER: Private sector.

SCALISE: But then when you look at the -- the Title II route, would the FCC have the authority to regulate broadband pricing?

WHEELER: So in the vastness of Title II, that is conceivable. One of the reasons that we are asking for Title II versus Section 706 comments in this proceeding is to be able to specifically zero-in on what are issues such as that. What are the...

SCALISE: So you think you may have the ability to regulate broadband pricing, is that something you -- you think could be an open...

WHEELER: Now, let's...

SCALISE: ...possibility for the FCC?

WHEELER: Should a full Title II regime be chosen, which should has not been, we are proposing...

SCALISE: But you're making the proposals.

WHEELER: ...Section 706.

SCALISE: Right.

WHEELER: No, we're -- we're -- no we're not. What we're doing is we're proposing Section 706 as the approach and then we've asked questions about Title II. And these are the kinds of issues that come up -- will come up in that discussion and that are gonna warrant...

SCALISE: But if -- if you'd in them telecommunication services. You know, because that puts broadband into a different realm than it is today. It's not there right now. If you do choose to try to put it there. Which state public utility in the -- in our State. We've got a public service commission. Would those state public service commissions and other related entities in the States be able to -- to regulate broadband at that point?

WHEELER: So what we have proposed is not Title II, it's Section 706. What we have asked is for a discussion of Title II and those kinds of issues. But our proposal for which I've taken a lot of heat is not Title II. I've said...

SCALISE: We don't have to go forward with the proposal.

WHEELER: I've said -- I've said...

SCALISE: So you stop taking the heat right now and...

WHEELER: No, I've said -- I've said that we're -- I said that Title II was on the table. That we're willing to look at Title II. But -- and -- and Mr. Waxman has a specific proposal where he thinks that Title II ought to be a backup and that's a proposal that is important and worth considering. But the proposal that we made is Section 706. SCALISE: Let me ask you this because you're also -- it seems like a one-way street where you're just targeting this towards internet service providers. I mean there are a lot of content carriers out there too, content providers that, you know, a lot of members have used the Netflix example or, you know, Google and other content providers that also have a play in this realm that that you just seem to be targeting this towards internet service providers.

And so I'm not sure if there's some -- some acts to grind there, but it just seems like it's a -- it's a one-sided approach that you're taking even in the review. And I -- I wouldn't -- wouldn't recommend going down that road for any of these folks. But I just wanted to point that out.

And one last thing coz I know I'm running out of time. In the February report, the FCC, some of your staff in the working group, recommended eliminating some of the reports that are out there, the Orbit report, the International Broadband report, and Modifying Video Competition report and Cable Price and Service, some of those things.

I've got a piece of legislation we've passed out of the Full House twice now, very bipartisan figures unanimous earlier in this Congress called the FCC Consolidated Reporting Act, which really tries to -- to take a -- a broad view and into eliminate a lot of the outdated reports, the streamline reporting process, something that I think you've seen bipartisan's report to do in the House.

We're trying to get the Senate to take that up. I'm not sure if you've got a comment on what you think should happen there, if that's something you're supportive of generally, especially as it relates to -- to the Bipartisan Bill in the House trying to move through the Senate to also would become law to streamline the process as your staff is suggesting some of these areas.

WHEELER: So -- so, you know, in the Senate side, it's Senator Heller who has been...

SCALISE: Yeah.

WHEELER: ...pushing on this. And I know that he and Senator Rockefeller are talking about it in terms of their package of legislation over there. I definitely agree that -- that there are -- there is a plethora of reports and that we are spending a lot of time that could be better organized, shall we say.

SCALISE: Including competitiveness in the telegraph industry which is still on the books, which we're trying to get rid off in this bill over there. I appreciate that and anything you can do to help us advocate for the advancement. I do think that's one area where we found a lot of bipartisans support in the way it passed the House. Hopefully we can get the Heller bill move through the Senate as well on the -- and get that to the present statute.

WHEELER: Thank you, gentleman.

SCALISE: Thank you very much for your time. And I yield back as well my time.

WALDEN: Thank you very much, Mr. Scalise. I do not see any member in the Democratic side. Mr. Kinzinger of Illinois is recognized.

KINZINGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for being here today with us. I know it's a lot of...

WHEELER: Thank you for your patience, Mr. Kinzinger.

KINZINGER: Yeah, you're welcome. I might be the end. Wow. So -- but we had a lot of big issues we want to talk about. I'm just going to hit a couple right now. I'd like to talk to you a little -- I know it was -- it was touched earlier about the E-Rate Program.

I'm a big supporter of the intentions of this program and especially it's modernization. And I appreciate the Commission putting on the recent workshop on this issue. I have a few concerns I want to address.

I represent a rural district with a number of very small schools and libraries. And over the past few months, I've reached out to a lot of these entities and asked them what their concern is and -- and asked them about their participation or their lack of participation in the program to see what concern -- concerns or issues they have with the program itself.

The number one problem raised in these conversations was the complexity involved in both applying for and eventually receiving the funding necessary to move forward in implementing new technology in their facilities through the E-Rate Program.

In hearing this, I actually looked into the issue a little further and found out that the basic application for funding, and this is the process of it, but the basic application is 17 pages long. And with additional technologies not being necessary can run even longer, i.e. Wi-Fi. I would actually probably rather punch myself in the face and be the guy that has to fill this out.

So the complexity of the -- of the application process has actually caused a number of these schools to spend money on outside consultants to help guide them through this process. And this is money that's no longer being spend on our students and automatically puts many smaller rural schools at a disadvantage coz they don't have the funds necessary to pay this out so I can sell them. Essentially, we leave individuals in a technological desert if you will.

As the Commissioner continues these efforts to modernize the E- Rate Program, what are your plans to simplify the application process for these small and rural districts. And also, will you commit to working to address the issues faced by these schools who have routinely told me they simply cannot afford to pursue these funds.

WHEELER: Congressman, I share your shock and dismay. We're gonna fix it.

KINZINGER: Good. All right. Do you have an idea of a timeframe? How long?

WHEELER: Yeah, we're gonna...

KINZINGER: We're busy. We're going home.

WHEELER: It's gonna be part of our -- of our E-Rate modernization program that we'll be bringing forward. There's actually a series of things that we're gonna begin administratively even before that -- that rulemaking takes place. It is -- yes, sir. I mean I...

KINZINGER: All right.

WHEELER: I'm as -- you know, how do we get online. So it becomes an interesting challenge. So here we are talking about broadband access for schools and libraries and we have a 17-page paper process.

KINZINGER: Right.

WHEELER: So unfortunately, it's not something that you can solve just like this because as I've indicated like to Mr. Welch, we have awful IT systems. But what I would like to get to is for your schools and all schools and libraries to be able to get online to make their filling, to be able to track that filling and where things stand, and to do it less frequently than annually.

KINZINGER: Right.

WHEELER: Well, I appreciate that. I want to touch on one other quick issue in this short amount of time. Again, thank you for your consideration with the -- the E-Rate issue.

I'm concerned with the process and policy rationale used to changed the FCC's treatment of broadcast JSAs for the purpose of the broadcast ownership rules. The decision to count TV JSAs' ownership has the effect of tightening ownership restrictions without the comprehensive review of the ownership rules that is required by statute. And your analysis seem to lack an appreciation for the public interest benefited -- benefits fostered by JSAs.

In Rockford, for instance, an area I represent, without these agreements, the Fox station produces actually a Hispanic newscast and they've said that they will not be able to produce that Hispanic newscast, for instance. Well, I don't believe my local TV station should have to fight for a waiver and we can have a broader issue on the whole discussion in general.

I do wanna say in light of your rule, are you gonna make sure that these stations can take advantage of waivers and will there be clear transparent standards for applying for waivers in this process.

WHEELER: Thank you, Congressman because you've raised a really important point about waivers.

The reality was why we had to deal with JSAs is there was becoming a cottage industry in this town, down on K Street of lawyers figuring out creative ways to get around the ownership rules of the Commission's head in place forever. And JSAs were a favorite way of doing that.

What we have said is that you have to have attributable ownership as you've indicated. But that there is a waiver process to address exactly what you're talking about in Rockford. And yes it's an expedited process, and it is a -- it's a -- it's a situation unfortunately where -- where the process took over and perverted the underlying rules and the basic concepts of ownership.

KINZINGER: We can -- and -- and we can have that broader discussion when I have more time. My time is expired but I will say I've heard a lot of concerns from local TV stations even on my district. And I hope that, you know, while we disagree with the rule, I hope that you make it very clear how they can apply for these waivers and how they can get this thing carry them. Mr. Chairman, I yield back and thank you.

WHEELER: Yes, thank you.

WALDEN: Thank you very much. In behalf of Mr. Matheson and of myself, thank you Chairman Wheeler for your testimony this morning. We look forward to working with you in the future. And the hearing is now adjourned.

END

LOAD-DATE: May 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 66535

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

JOURNAL-CODE: PTTW

Copyright 2014 ProQuest Information and Learning
All Rights Reserved
Copyright 2014 Roll Call, Inc.

States News Service

May 21, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON REPORTS OF MISMANAGEMENT AT VA MEDICAL CENTERS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 213 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on reports of mismanagement at Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers. **Lujan** recently sent a letter to Secretary Shinseki expressing concerns with these reports and excessive wait times for veterans in New Mexico seeking health care services from the VA. Click here for the letter.

"When we as a nation ask brave Americans to serve and protect our county, we make a promise that when they answer the call of duty we will provide them with the care they have earned. The deeply disturbing reports of mismanagement at VA medical clinics strike at the very heart of our commitment to our men and women in uniform and the veterans who have sacrificed so much. It breaks a solemn promise to our veterans and shakes the faith of the American people that our veterans will be treated like the heroes they are.

"The administration and VA must act swiftly to restore that faith by thoroughly investigating and getting to the bottom of any failure to care for our veterans, addressing the backlogs, and taking steps to implement real reforms that will ensure this mismanagement does not occur again."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: May 28, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

May 21, 2014 Wednesday 9:09 PM EST

Lujan Statement on Reports of Mismanagement at VA Medical Centers

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 292 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on reports of mismanagement at Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers. **Lujan** recently sent a letter to Secretary Shinseki expressing concerns with these reports and excessive wait times for veterans in New Mexico seeking health care services from the VA. Click here (http://**lujan**.house.gov/uploads/Letter%20to%20Shinseki%20on%20VA%20Hospitals1.pdf) for the letter.

"When we as a nation ask brave Americans to serve and protect our county, we make a promise that when they answer the call of duty we will provide them with the care they have earned. The deeply disturbing reports of mismanagement at VA medical clinics strike at the very heart of our commitment to our men and women in uniform and the veterans who have sacrificed so much. It breaks a solemn promise to our veterans and shakes the faith of the American people that our veterans will be treated like the heroes they are.

"The administration and VA must act swiftly to restore that faith by thoroughly investigating and getting to the bottom of any failure to care for our veterans, addressing the backlogs, and taking steps to implement real reforms that will ensure this mismanagement does not occur again."

Lujan Letter to Sec. Shinseki (http://**lujan**.house.gov/uploads/Letter%20to%20Shinseki%20on%20VA%20Hospitals1.pdf) (05/21/14 12:03 PM PST)

Rep. **Lujan** wrote to Secretary Shinseki expressing concerns with reports of mismanagement at VA medical centers and excessive wait times for veterans in New Mexico seeking health care services from the VA.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140523-4744206 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: May 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

131 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

May 21, 2014 Wednesday 9:08 PM EST

CHC Members on President Obama's Designation of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 623 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus today released the following statements in response to President Obama's announcement that he will use his authority under the 1906 Antiquities Act to establish the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument. The monument, located in Las Cruces, New Mexico, will help tell the story of Latinos in American history and protect unique natural resources for the nation's benefit.

The designation is expected to promote economic growth in the local community through tourism and outdoor recreation.

Rep. Raul M. Grijalva of Arizona, the ranking member of the House Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation, congratulated President Obama on the announcement and highlighted its importance for everyone interested in Hispanic American history.

"The Organ Mountains tell the story of centuries of conflict, boundary disputes and reconciliations with Mexico," Grijalva said. "Many Latino families in the Southwest trace their roots to the region, and its natural beauty continues to draw people today. Designating this sensitive area as a national monument means the Organ Mountains will inspire and be enjoyed by generations of Americans to come, and I couldn't be happier to support President Obama's decision."

"New Mexico is blessed with majestic lands and the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks are a tremendous example of the beauty of our great state," said Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico. "The people of New Mexico have a special connection with these precious lands and the monument designation will ensure that not only the land but our culture and way of life will be protected for years to come. Thanks to the efforts of so many stakeholders in southern New Mexico who have worked hard to

advocate for this designation, the Organ Mountains will attract more visitors, provide a boost to tourism, and strengthen the local economy."

"I am very pleased with the designation of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks as a national monument. This national treasure is not only central in preserving the region's biodiversity, but it is also key in protecting New Mexico's rich history and diverse culture for future generations," said Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham of New Mexico. "Preserving this land will protect New Mexico's tourism and outdoor economy, while also spurring economic development and job growth in the state. This new monument is an investment in New Mexico's communities and future generations."

According to a 2013 economic study (http://www.nmgreenchamber.com/OMDPjobs) by BBC Research & Consulting, protecting the Organ Mountains would generate $7.4 million in new economic activity annually and double the number of jobs supported by outdoor recreation and tourism in the area. Furthermore, a 2006 study by the National Parks and Conservation Association revealed each federal dollar invested in national parks generates at least four dollars of economic value to the public.

President Obama has previously designated monuments honoring the contributions of Latinos to American society using the Antiquities Act. This includes the Cesar E. Chavez National Monument in California, Chavez' home and the headquarters of the United Farm Workers of America since the early 1970s when Chavez was its president.

Raul M. Grijalva, who also serves as a co-chair of the National Landscape Conservation System Caucus, sent a letter to President Obama (http://grijalva.house.gov/uploads/Thank%20you%20Letter%20to%20White%20House%20on%20Monument%20Designation.PDF) thanking him for the significant contribution to the National Conservation Lands.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140523-4744205 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: May 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

132 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

May 21, 2014 Wednesday 12:45 AM EST

New Mexico Dems: Congressman Ben Ray Lujan Highlights USDA Funding Aimed at Fighting Poverty in Rural New Mexico

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 245 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today through the StrikeForce initiative that provides assistance to farmers, ranchers, and private forest owners in rural areas. The USDA is providing $15 million in 20 states, including $450,000 for New Mexico, which targets rural communities that experience "persistent poverty."

"Sadly, too many people in New Mexico are living in poverty and struggling to get by. With the economy continuing to feel the effects of the deep recession, rural communities have been hard hit," Congressman **Lujan** said. "This program can help rural farmers and ranchers by providing critical funding for conservation efforts that enable them to improve their land that is so important to their economic wellbeing."

Through the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the USDA will provide technical and financial assistance in the StrikeForce areas, building on efforts that have invested a total of $653 million for conservation efforts since 2010. Funds, which are provided through the USDA Environmental Quality Incentives Program, can be used for conservation activities, including water conservation improvements and soil protections. Applications for funding are accepted at local USDA Service Centers.

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage10PkS-140522-30TacordaCheng-4743070 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: May 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

May 20, 2014

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS USDA FUNDING AIMED AT FIGHTING POVERTY IN RURAL NEW MEXICO; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 246 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today through the StrikeForce initiative that provides assistance to farmers, ranchers, and private forest owners in rural areas. The USDA is providing $15 million in 20 states, including $450,000 for New Mexico, which targets rural communities that experience "persistent poverty."

"Sadly, too many people in New Mexico are living in poverty and struggling to get by. With the economy continuing to feel the effects of the deep recession, rural communities have been hard hit," Congressman **Lujan** said. "This program can help rural farmers and ranchers by providing critical funding for conservation efforts that enable them to improve their land that is so important to their economic wellbeing."

Through the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the USDA will provide technical and financial assistance in the StrikeForce areas, building on efforts that have invested a total of $653 million for conservation efforts since 2010. Funds, which are provided through the USDA Environmental Quality Incentives Program, can be used for conservation activities, including water conservation improvements and soil protections. Applications for funding are accepted at local USDA Service Centers.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-highlights-usda-funding-aimed-at-fighting-poverty-in-rural-new-mexico/

LOAD-DATE: May 21, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

134 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Copyright 2014 CQ Transcriptions, LLC
All Rights Reserved
CQ Transcriptions

All materials herein are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of CQ Transcriptions. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.

REP. GREG WALDEN HOLDS A HEARING ON FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION OVERSIGHT

May 20, 2014 Tuesday

EVENT DATE: **May 20, 2014**

TYPE: COMMITTEE HEARING

LOCATION: WASHINGTON, D.C.

COMMITTEE: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY

SPEAKER: REP. GREG WALDEN, CHAIRMAN

WITNESSES:
REP. GREG WALDEN, R-ORE. CHAIRMAN
REP. ANNA G. ESHOO, D-CALIF., RANKING MEMBER
REP. FRED UPTON, R-MICH. EX OFFICIO
REP. BOB LATTA, R-OHIO
REP. JOE L. BARTON, R-TEXAS EX OFFICIO
REP. HENRY A. WAXMAN, D-CALIF. EX OFFICIO
REP. DORIS MATSUI, D-CALIF.
WITNESS: THOMAS E. WHEELER, CHAIRMAN, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
REP. MARSHA BLACKBURN, R-TENN.
REP. JOHN D. DINGELL, D-MICH.
REP. JOHN SHIMKUS, R-ILL.
REP. DIANA DEGETTE, D-COLO.
REP. LEE TERRY, R-NEB.
REP. JIM MATHESON, D-UTAH
REP. LEONARD LANCE, R-N.J.
REP. G.K. BUTTERFIELD, D-N.C.
REP. BRETT GUTHRIE, R-KY.
REP. PETER WELCH, D-VT.
REP. MIKE POMPEO, R-KAN.
REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M.
REP. STEVE SCALISE, R-LA.
REP. ADAM KINZINGER, R-ILL.

TEXT:

WALDEN: We'll call to order the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology and certainly want to welcome our members and our witness, the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission. Mr. Wheeler, we're delighted that you would make time to come and spend with us on this important day, with so much going on in the telecommunications world.

Six months ago this subcommittee met for the very first time with the current complement of FCC commissioners, and welcomed Mr. Wheeler as the new chairman. Today, and let me welcome Mr. Wheeler back, we meet to review the record of action and selective inaction that the commission has taken under the first six months of your leadership. Unfortunately, given some of the most recent actions out of the commission, I fear that we may be heading into some rough waters.

When we last met, I offered two pieces of advice to Chairman Wheeler, and his colleagues. First, I urged them to heed the words of Congress, where it was - has spoken and reject calls to act in ways contrary to Congressional intent. Second, I urged them to bear in mind that even seemingly small changes in the Federal Communications Commission rules can have significant impact on the marketplace. I called upon all the members of the commission to discharge their duties with transparency, accountability and a long view of the technological landscape. In sum, my advice was that they must approach their duties with humility and restraint.

Unfortunately, recent actions have hinted that my advice was ignored. In December, we had yet to know that the DC Circuit Court of Appeals would once again reject the commission's attempt to regulate the Internet and could only speculate as to whether the commission under Chairman Wheeler's lead would mount a third attempt. Sadly, we now know the answer. Not only is Chairman Wheeler leading us down this path again, the item the commission adopted last week tees up the long dead idea that the Internet is a common carrier.

This reinvigorated willingness to consider regulating the Internet under Title II of the Communications Act, rules that find their roots in the 19th century railroad regulation, and were designed to regulate the world of telephone monopoly, harking back to a world in which twisted copper was the only portal for consumers, the communications network and voice the only service. The modern communications landscape bears no resemblance to the world Title II was meant to regulate, and application of Title II to the Internet is, at best, a poor fit. Worse still, the practical consequences of reclassification are to give the bureaucrats at the FCC the authority to second guess business decisions and to regulate ever possible aspect of the Internet.

We should all pause and consider the prospect of the FCC as a rate setting authority over Internet access and what that means for innovation in the telephone network of yesteryear. We should also be aware that this path opens a door for states to regulate the Internet. Contrary to any intended effect, the reclassification of broadband service under Title II will harm consumers, halt job creation, curtail innovation and stifle investment.

In sum, at a time when the commission at Congress' direction is taking steps toward even greater growth and innovation across Internet access platforms, the commission is simultaneously contemplating rules that undermine those very efforts and compromise the fundamental approaches of both the Clinton and Bush Administrations that laid the foundation for the Internet that we know today.

It's troubling that some of the actions taken under Chairman Wheeler's watch, the selective inaction of the FCC is equally troubling. Although required under the Telecommunications Act, the Federal Communications Commission has failed to complete its quadrennial review of the limitations on ownership of broadcast properties. It's been six years, six years, since the commission last fulfilled this statutory mandate. Rather than focus on ensuring that the rules reflect reality, however, the chairman has now announced that the commission would essentially scrap the 2010 quadrennial review and begin in earnest its 2014 quadrennial review.

Now, notwithstanding this stale record, the FCC also moved forward to make major changes to the regulations that govern media ownership anyway. It adopted changes to its attribution rules that determine how to count stations toward the local television ownership rule, the FCC also stated that it would begin counting certain shared service agreements toward the local ownership cap. In order to comply with local ownership rules, these pronouncements will likely force broadcasters to divest stations and unwind shared service agreements that are beneficial to ensuring local content in the smaller markets. These changes do not bring benefits to the communities served by these broadcasters, drawing into question how this change could serve the public interest.

Finally, FCC process reform has been an ongoing priority of our subcommittee. It's an issue my colleagues and I are deeply invested in, as demonstrated by the unanimous passage in the House of the bipartisan Federal Communications Commission Process Reform Act on March 11th of this year. Unfortunately, after the events of the past few months I'm sad to say I continue to be troubled by the FCC's seemingly flawed process.

In March the FCC chose to restrict license transfers involving certain shared service agreements which had long been blessed - implicitly blessed by the commission. This action was not debated by the commissioners, nor was it subject to any kind of vote. Rather, it was announced by the chief of the media bureau as a fait accompli.

Recent press reports also allege the chairman's office withheld presentation of revisions to the Open Internet Notice of Proposed Rulemaking from Republicans for as long as 24 hours, after having provided the material to the Democratic commissioners and to the press during the run up to the May 15th FCC Open Meeting. The concern raised by these reports is only compounded by revelations that a substantially revised draft of another item scheduled for vote at the open meeting was not presented to other offices until the closing minutes of the evening before.

According to Commissioner Pai's dissent from the commission's mobile spectrum holdings item, his office received the revised item fewer than 12 hours before the open meeting and the item contained more than 3,000 revisions. So, I find myself channeling Commissioner Rosenworcel, who

said of the Open Internet NPRM, that the quote, "Process that got us this rule making today is flawed." Closed quote. Committee has opined in the past that withholding of a revised draft item from other members of the commission until the 11th hour precludes the scrutiny and analysis necessary for ease in decision making. It's my hope that these occurrences were anomalies. Perhaps Chairman Wheeler will want to commit today to providing his fellow commissioners with adequate and equal time to review proposed orders and rules.

The transformative impact of the evolution of technology from a long - analog to digital, from narrow band to broadband, has forever altered our lives. The evolution continues and the commission has before it the issues I just mentioned and many more, all significant in their impacts on our lives and the economy. Stated in your written testimony, you're eager to build on the progress of the last six months going forward, and I hope working together we can move forward in a direction that protects the success, this critical sector of the economy has enjoyed and facilitates its continued growth and job creation unencumbered by over regulatory overreach.

With that, I yield back, and I recognize my friend and colleague from California, Miss Eshoo, the Ranking Member of the subcommittee for her opening statement.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning to all of my colleagues and welcome back to the committee, Chairman Wheeler. Before we do a - a deep dive into the specifics of the chairman's proposal as well as so many other major issues that are before the FCC, I - I think that it would be well for us to step back and appreciate what I believe is one of the most consequential inventions in human history. This was dreamed of and built by disruptors. It's an American story, it's a product of American genius, the Internet. One word, but it is - it really it takes one's breath away in terms of the arc of history.

It's not only an invention, it has reshaped lives, economies here and around the world, and our thinking and our debate today really should be viewed, I think, through the prism of a critical step that we're taking now in the 21st Century. The Internet is a continuum of change. It's accessible. It's open. And its innovations continue. They empower individuals, entire fields of learning, growing not only our economy but economies around the world, and serving humanity in countless ways. All of this has taken place and here we are, in the second decade of the 21st Century.

So, this is huge. This is huge. This is not what is behind door number one, door number two, door number three, where the price is right. This is not some guessing game. This is huge. This is something, these decisions are going to affect every single American going forward, just as it has in the past and it will continue to. So, all of us, regulators, innovators, consumers, legislators, we have to get this right. The stakes are very high and American cannot lose. It's been our leadership that has advanced the digital age. And, now is not the time and, actually, I don't think there should be ever a time to unravel the values that have really been the hallmarks and the bulwarks of the Internet.

So, the question is: how do we seize the future? At least in my view that's what the question is. I know what I want to see continue: openness, free, accessible, these are also the hallmarks of our democracy. And that's what this has been such an extraordinary export of - of our country.

I know what I don't want. I don't want this to become an auction, selling off the best in bits and pieces, where some pay for faster lanes. Others can't pay, they get stuck in the slow lane. Some giant company blocking content and others discriminating so that they can sell their stuff to keep the other guy's stuff stymied. That's not a very pretty description, but it's a street description of what can be at hand.

I want every day to be essentially the Fourth of July for American innovation. So, that it just keeps bursting. It just keeps bursting. And I see it every day in my Congressional district. Looking forward 10 years. 25 years, 50 years, I want this to continue and we should all be thinking on a grand scale, because this growth and this economic driver should be for everyone. We need smart, savvy regulations - regulatory decision, we need a Congress that's engaged in this, and a Congress that's vigilant, and I plan to be.

So, what should the FCC do? I think, and all the articles you read, there's a debate: should it be 706 or should it be Title II? I think that we have to have a clear eyed understanding of what has made the Internet what it is today and what basic values need to be protected and preserved. And then what that is going to look like. And there's more, on top of all of this. Can anyone here today piece together the effects of a Comcast Time Warner merger and an AT&T DirecTV merger on consumers and a free and Open Internet? These are massive decisions, and massive pieces that are moving forward. And what's going to happen to innovation?

Mr. Chairman, Chairman Walden, I urge you to convene a hearing to examine these issues here. I think they deserve to be examined and to be debated and questions asked. So, as I said earlier, every person in the country will be affected by the outcome of these decisions that are before the commission and before us. And, so I look forward to questioning Chairman Wheeler today.

I also ask for unanimous consent that two letters, two very important letters be entered into the record. One, signed by more than a hundred venture capitalists and angel investors who support simple, strong, enforceable rules against online discrimination and access fees. And the other, signed by more than 100 Internet companies, small and large. Mostly small. That support a free and Open Internet.

WALDEN: Without objection.

ESHOO: And I don't know if I have any time remaining. No. I think I've gone over. Well, with that, I'll yield back what I don't have.

WALDEN: Thank the gentlelady for her opening statement and the letters. We'll now turn to the full committee chairman, Mr. Fred Upton, from Michigan for opening comments.

UPTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Oversight is a critical part of this committee's work to foster a smaller, more nimble government for the innovation age. We've held lots of hearings, with all of the FCC's commissioners to address issues of national importance, to keep a close eye on the budget, and to ensure that commission process focusing on promoting jobs and innovation, and today's oversight hearing with Chairman Wheeler will continue that discussion to ensure that the FCC works in a way that benefits consumers, industry and certainly the economy. And I thank you for coming today.

There's a lot to discuss. In the six months since Mr. Wheeler was confirmed as char he has addressed a number of items, including media ownership, the IP transition, universal service and just this past week, of course, the incentive auctions and net neutrality. While I appreciate the chairman's leadership, on one of these I have serious concerns with some others.

As an initial matter, Chairman Wheeler started off his chairmanship with a review of FCC procedure, an issue that this subcommittee has spent lots of time working to reform in a bipartisan manner. But, I was disappointed to see some of the process failures that occurred last week. Media reports of an Open Meeting item being circulated to commissioners as late as midnight the evening before the vote on one item, in what seems to be partisan sharing of items with Democrats as much as 24 hours before sharing them with Republicans on another is particularly concerning. Regardless of political affiliation, commissioners must be given adequate and equal time to consider the items on which they're going to vote. Let us all hope that such incidents of favoritism and selective sharing are isolated and not emblematic of the chairman's new operating procedure.

Additionally, I continue to be concerned with the commission's ongoing defiance of its statutory obligations to complete the 2010 quadrennial review of media ownership rules. Despite the commission's woefully outdated record on this issue, it has nonetheless moved forward with changes that effectively bar joint sales agreements and change commission treatment of shared service agreements under its media attribution rules. These actions, in the absence of the statutorily required media ownership review, do raise significant questions about the commission's commitment to making decisions informed by facts and utilizing sound process.

And, lastly, I am troubled by the chairman's insistence on attempting to regulate the Internet under rules that were informed by 19th Century railroad regs, and adopted to regulate the monopoly telephone network of the past. The Internet has indeed flourished under the current light touch regulatory scheme, and subjecting to burdensome regs is a leap in the wrong direction. Title II is inappropriate for the Internet, and attempting to reclassify it would be harmful to consumers, businesses and the future of the Internet as we know it. Nobody wants telephone service to look like it did in 1984, and we certainly shouldn't wish for our Internet access to return to that rotary phone era either. The communications sector is vital to our national economy and commission auction - action on even small items can have broad impact. I thank Chairman Wheeler for being here today. Look forward to working together toward a bipartisan, measured, transparent and responsible actions that do benefit consumers, job creation and our economy. And I yield my balance of my time to be split between Mr. Latta and Mr. Barton.

LATTA: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman for yielding and Chairman Walden I appreciate you holding this hearing today, and welcome Chairman Wheeler. Thanks for being here.

The communications and technology industry is heralded as a vibrant, dynamic and productive sector of our economy. This is not by accident, as networks and services transition to IP based platforms, they've had the flexibility to grow, advance and evolve in large part because they have not been subjected to the stifling hand of legacy government regulation. We've pursued a light touch regulatory approach to the Internet ecosystem, because we've seen time and again, that it serves as a catalyst for increased investment, innovation, job creation and competition.

As I look forward to develop policies that would further this growth, we'd be remiss to overlook the significance of how regulatory restraint has been fundamental - a fundamental component of the industry's success. That's why I'm concerned with some of the proposals emerging from the FCC, particularly in consideration of reclassifying broadband Internet access service, telecommunications service under Title II of the Communications Act. This policy would be an extreme exercise of government overreach and likely result in failed websites, downgraded and poor customer service, less choice and flexibility for consumers, businesses and stifling of innovation through regulation.

Unwanted attempts to manufacture and shape markets outcomes propose solutions in search of problems impose antiquated regulation will frustrate future progress and innovation. I intend to introduce legislation that prevents the FCC from following through on this misguided regulatory proposal. Mr. Chairman, with that I yield back the balance of my time. And I yield to Mr. Barton.

BARTON: (AUDIO GAP) We just welcomed Chairman Wheeler and the question before the committee today are we soon going to be calling him Mr. Wheeler Dealer? With that, I - I'll put my statement in the record in the interest of time, and yield back to the chairman.

WALDEN: Thank you, Chairman. Gentleman yields back. Now turn to the gentleman from California, Mr. Waxman for opening comments.

WAXMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to welcome back Chairman Wheeler. The Federal Communications Commission had a historic week last week. You are tackling some of the most complex and pressing issues in the communications sector today.

In 2012, Congress gave the FCC a big job: create the world's first incentive auction to ensure that beachfront, low band spectrum is put to its highest economic value, and you established the ground rules for this crucial auction last week. You had a hard job, because you needed to balance four potential - potentially conflicting objectives. One, maximizing the amount of spectrum made available for auction. Two, promote competition. Three, create bands of unlicensed spectrum to spur innovation. And, four, raise money. It appears you hit this one out of the ballpark.

I particularly want to commend you for your work to advance unlicensed spectrum. Your plan will create three channels of beachfront, unlicensed spectrum throughout the nation. The vision of new, super Wi-Fi can now become a reality.

I also want to commend you for promoting competition, by reserving spectrum for competitive carriers. It would be an enormous setback for innovation and consumers if the incentive auction turns the wireless market into a duopoly, dominated by Verizon and AT&T. This auction is the best, and possibly the last, chance the FCC has to invigorate competition.

I would have preferred if you reserved even more spectrum for competitive carriers, but I recognize the pressures you are under and your need to secure three votes. By the way, you may hear arguments today from Republicans on this committee that you lack the authority to promote competition. These claims are nonsense and contradict the express language of the statute.

Last week you also launched the FCC's third attempt in eight years to protect the Open Internet. You didn't hit this one out of the park, but you didn't need to, either. You made a wide decision to solicit comment on a wide range of options. As I wrote you, this time has come to - wrote you, the time has come to end the legal gymnastics and stop the lobbying games being played by the big broadband providers.

In 2010, Verizon, AT&T and Comcast pled with the FCC not to use its undisputed authority under Title II of the Communications Act. And, then, after FCC did what they wanted, Verizon sued the agency for lacking authority when the FCC agreed with the company. This time, you need a different approach. You should use your Title II authority as a backstop authority to protect the Open Internet. If you want to proceed under Section 706, as your main legal theory that's fine. But you shouldn't water down the Open Internet rules to fit Section 706. Instead, you should get the substance right, and invoke Title II as an independent basis of authority.

The FCC has already lost two rulings in court over the Open Internet. You don't have to choose between weak rules and a weak legal case. You can issue strong rules, and have a strong legal case, if you use a belt and suspender approach to the next rule making. I look forward to exploring this issue with you further in the question period. In the meantime, I want to yield the balance of my time to my friend and colleague, Congresswoman Matsui.

MATSUI: Thank you very much, Ranking Member Waxman, for yielding me time and welcome, Chairman Wheeler. The FCC certainly has a lot on its plate. The commission is considering net neutrality rules, rules on the broadcast incentive auction, the AWS-III auction, USF and E- Rate reforms in two very significant mergers. I'm confident the FCC will be able to demonstrate that it can walk and chew gum at the same time.

This subcommittee should also do its part. For one, I join in calling for the chairman to hold oversight hearings on the two proposed mergers between Comcast and Time Warner. And on AT&T and DirecTV. Both are some of the largest mergers in our nation's telecommunications history. Americans, including many in my district of Sacramento, are seeing the trends towards consolidation, content and peering deals, and how they hear phrases like, paid prioritization, and wondering what is going on? What does all this mean for them, for competition and for the economy?

It has been encouraging that so many Americans are speaking up in support of protecting an Open Internet. I was one who thought the FCC should have taken more time to deliberate on what net neutrality rules the commission should propose. But we are where we are. The proposal has certainly improved over the last few weeks. It is still far from perfect. I support a ban on paid prioritization deals. We can't afford a two tiered Internet system.

I look forward from hearing from you today, and I yield back the balance of my time.

WALDEN: Gentlelady yields back the balance of her time. And with that, you've heard from us, or at least a few of us up here, Mr. Chairman. Now, we're delighted to have you here, and we look forward to your - your opening statement and comments. And thank you, again, for the work you're doing. Go ahead.

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the - of the committee. As you've pointed out, it's been about six months since we last sat down. And what I wanted to do was to highlight some of

the things that we have done in that period, and then engage in a dialogue with you with whatever topics that you would like to address.

As has been evidenced by a lot of these comments up here, one of the principal responsibilities of - of the commission is dealing with the spectrum crunch. And we have taken a significant step forward in terms of getting more spectrum out to the market. We had the H Block auction, which raised a billion and a half dollars for 10 MHz spectrum. We have opened a new 100MHz swath in the 5GHz band, which is already being referred to as gigabyte Wi-Fi, because of the incredible throughput that it enables.

We have begun a proceeding on spectrum sharing in 3.5 GHz, and we announced yesterday that in accord with the mandate of this committee and Congress to auction off AWS-III spectrum. That we will begin the auction on November 13th, and we will finish as per your mandate February - we will license February 22, 2015.

We have also, as some of the committee had noted established a new set of mobile spectrum holding rules, which have been praised by everybody from public interest groups to small operators, to large operators as - as was commented by Mr. Waxman, hitting the ball out of the park. And we have begun the incentive auction process. It's - you mandated us as - as you've said, with a non-trivial task. And we have - we have taken the first important steps to that.

On the question of universal service and what's going on there, we have fulfilled the pledge that I made to this committee last time we were together, to eliminate the infamous quantile regression analysis. And, we're seeking comments on what its replacement should be. We have funded the Connect America fund to provide connectivity to five million more Americans who do not have access to broadband today. That's about a third of the total, and a significant bite out of - out of that. And we're seeking input on multiple additional issues: throughput standards, should we, as - as technology increases and bandwidth increases, do we need to think about higher bandwidth that is supported by the Connect America fund? How do we best deal with the mobile component of broadband delivery in Connect America? And how best to support broadband for rate of return carriers? Those are all proceedings that we have underway.

We have - we have made some significant strides, also, in the area of public safety. We took a good chunk out of the FirstNet $7.5 billion with the H-Band auction. Expect, obviously, that the AWS-III auction will do more and I wouldn't be surprised if we show up at the incentive auction having met the requirement, or at least taking a huge bite out of the requirement for funding FirstNet.

We had a rule making on text to 911, you know, phones aren't used just for talking anymore, but texting and - and so if you want to text to an emergency service provider, we had a rule making on that, the major carriers stepped up and literally in the last couple of days, they all met their goals for implementation on that, which is a terrific step forward. And we've also initiated a further notice on location accuracy, because as wireless usage increases and particularly as it replaces what's - wired line connections inside, and as GPS usage has increased, there's been a fascinating reality that location accuracy has actually declined. And, we've got a notice going on how do we address that, because that's literally a matter of life and death.

As you mentioned we began the 2014 quadrennial review on media issues with a - an expedited delivery date. We closed a loophole that was being exploited to get around the ownership rules, using joint services agreement, and we brought competition back to the retransmission consent negotiations. We have also continued to press on the reform issues that so many of you and I share in common as being important.

Last time we were together, I told you we stood up a task force to deal with this. That task force came back with 154 recommendations. About three quarters of those are now well along their way to being in process. They kind of break into two parts. There are procedural issues that you might associate with administrative procedure act, and things like this. And there's also just how do you make the agency more efficient?

And last week, as many have discussed, we opened a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on preserving and protecting the Open Internet. It's important to recognize that there are no protections for an Open Internet in place today. The January court decision affirmed the commission's authority under Section 706 to deal with the Open Internet, and identified what I call a road map for how to achieve that. And what I have proposed in a method that follows that road map.

I understand that there is a great debate on this issue. I heard the debate here this morning. Between those who say there is no need and those who say it ought to be a regulated utility. What we have tried to do is to follow the court's direction, the road map, the blueprint, and to come up with a proposal that stops blocking, that prohibits anything that degrades a consumer's access, including prioritization. That asks a broader question about prioritization as to whether it should be banned outright, and if so, how, and then engages in the discussion that we've heard already this morning about Title II versus 706, and collecting a broad scope of learned information on that.

I've consistently said that there is only one Internet. There's not a fast Internet and a slow Internet. There's not special service Internet and non. There is one Internet, and the - when the consumer buys access to the Internet, they are buying access to the full Internet. And that's what our rules attempt to protect. This has become a debate among legal approaches - about legal approaches.

It's a healthy debate. It's a debate that our Notice of Proposed Rulemaking furthers with multiple requests for input, but my position has been similar to that of the Consumer Federation of America, and that is that we ought to explore the powers that are granted in the '96 act, specifically Section 706, keep asking how Title II fits in, but develop a regulatory policy that looks forward not backward, because what we need is a regulatory plan for the 21st Century. And I look forward to discussing that with you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee.

WALDEN: Mr. Wheeler, chairman, thank you for being here. We appreciate your work, and - and your willingness to come and spend some time with us and - and respond to our questions.

I want to pick up on the Middle Class Tax Relief Act, which as you know, was designed to create a forum where broadcasters could volunteer their spectrum up for auction, for mobile broadband use. Never been done quite like proposed, and you've got, we - we all knew that going in, but it seemed like a good balance. The critical term in all of this was that the broadcasters would volunteer to put their spectrum up, they wouldn't be forced into it. That was the agreement. Yet, many of the actions that we've seen coming out of the commission would lead some to believe that the FCC might be bulling broadcasters into giving up spectrum without providing hard data and clear models so that the broadcasters can thoroughly and thoughtfully deliberate and choose to participate or not in this first of its kind auction.

Let me tell you what I'm - I'm thinking here. For example, the joint sales agreements that are now outlawed. These agreements essentially offer broadcasters a viable business model in small markets that would otherwise suffer from lack of service. You're considering the attribution value of UHF stations, such that more broadcasters could end up in violation of that the national cap under the broadcast ownership rule, and the FCC has failed to process broadcasters' petitions for allocation changes from VHF to UHF, even though the petitions were filed prior to Middle Class Tax Relief Act.

And, finally, you're seeking to use a modified version of OET-69. I'm hearing about this to repack broadcasters. This will likely result in reduced coverage for broadcasters that choose to stay in the business, making the business itself less viable. So ,the very people you're trying to incent to put spectrum, so that it'll be available for auction, I think are - are concerned about where the commission's headed in a number of areas. Can you explain to me how these actions will actually encourage broadcasters to participate in this auction?

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the goal here, that we have been trying to follow, is - is not to discourage or to encourage, but to follow through with our responsibilities. And - and that means enforcing and updating our rules ...

WALDEN: Do you think any of these, though, do you think any of these things I've just cited encourage broadcasters to participate more? If you don't have broadcasters showing up with spectrum ...

WHEELER: So, I -I, as I said, Mr. Chairman, I -I don't think that we have an important, as you said, an important and historic role. This is an incentive auction.

WALDEN: I'm aware of that. Yes.

WHEELER: What we have tried to do in the mobile spectrum holdings rule, for instance, is to encourage broadcasters -encourage, I'm sorry, wireless carriers to buy, which creates the incentive. The interesting thing, there was a -a report by one of the Wall Street analysts last week who said we expect the greatest risk to this auction, broadcasters not showing up, just dropped. Because the fact that AT&T suggested that they're ready to bid between $9 and $18 billion ...

WALDEN: Right.

WHEELER: ...for 20 to 40MHz, this analyst said should send positive signals to broadcasters. So, our goal is to...

WALDEN: All right ...

WHEELER: ...is to create this marketplace and we're not trying to take regulatory action ...

WALDEN: All right, well ...

WHEELER: in -in unrelated areas that would ...

WALDEN: But you are taking lots of regulatory actions, and it does have an effect on the marketplace. I mean, those two are facts. (AUDIO GAP) If -if we don't have these broadcasters coming to the table voluntarily, there won't be spectrum available. So, I want to steal a line from the distinguished gentleman from Michigan, and that this one I refer to as Mr. Dingle, to see if I can get, just sort of some yes or nos here. Will you commit that the FCC will not score television stations based on their (AUDIO GAP). That's yes, actually. That you will commit that you will not score it. Will you commit the FCC, is that correct?

WHEELER: Yes.

WALDEN: Yes. You will commit the FCC will ensure that broadcasters' cost to reallocate are covered by the $1.75 billion relocation fund?

WHEELER: We believe that that fund will be adequate. That's - that's ....

WALDEN: OK.

WHEELER: ...that's what Congress told us to spend. Period.

WALDEN: And will you commit to completing frequency coordination with Canada and Mexico before the auction?

WHEELER: I think the issue there is what is the term complete? As you know on the DTV transition it never came down to actual signing on paper, but we understood where each other were, and I am very confident that we will be at that kind of a point.

WALDEN: Because that's critical. And will you commit to revoking only those low powered TV and translator licenses that are necessary to complete the auction?

WHEELER: Yes.

WALDEN: Thank you. And, I think I'm out of time. So, with that, I would now yield to the gentlelady, my friend from California, Miss Eshoo.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A lot of things to discuss, but I want to bore down on, or bore into some of the particulars on your recent proposal relative to -to the Internet, on net neutrality. I've argued, many advocates for net neutrality have argued that paid prioritization represents a fundamental departure from the Internet as we know it. I -I'm just kind of restating what is obvious, but I think that when you have hundreds of thousands of people communicating from across the country to you on it, that it is -that it's important to raise. Now, as a policy, not as a legal question, do you think that paid prioritization should be blocked outright?

WHEELER: So, I have said, Congresswoman, that I don't believe there ought to have and have nots.

ESHOO: No, no, just answer my question.

WHEELER: That -- that -that ...

ESHOO: Just tell me. Do you think that it should be blocked outright?

WHEELER: We have asked that question in the rulemaking. And - and what I have said is that I believe that under Section 706, anything that is anti-competitive or anti-consumer is competitively unreasonable and therefore can and should be blocked. And that becomes the trigger for how you deal with paid prioritization.

ESHOO: Yes, now what happens ...

WHEELER: On the question of per se that you asked...

ESHOO: Yes.

WHEELER: ...we've specifically asked how and whether.

ESHOO: Now, what happens if the FCC determines that there's no outright -no way to outright - create an outright ban, and these paid agreements under 706, where does that leave you? Where does that leave the country?

WHEELER: So - so when the court gave us our instructions, they talked about what they called the virtuous cycle, and that is that - that content drives the need for conduit, which then creates the opportunity for content. And that this cycle is what it is our responsibility to protect. And that's - that's what 706 authorizes us to protect. And so what my proposal is is that we take them up on that. And we say if there is something that interferes with that virtuous cycle, which I believe paid prioritization does, that then we can move against it.

ESHOO: Yes. All right. But, now let's move over to Title II. Title II is described, it depends on who's describing it, it's either a scourge --it's been compared to the early railroad regulations in our country - to being the flip side, you know, the savior title. I talked about in my opening statement about the - the - one of the imprimaturs of the Internet has been consistent innovation. And, while there are those that, and I understand why people would move to Title II, because they want the Internet protected, and these values are -they're worth protecting. But I also believe that there is room for, in Title II, for heavy handed regulation, and I don't think that, well, let me put it this way, I think that we need a light but strengthful legal touch in this. Because the values are so essential, and people across the country, and in the world, I mean, I'm hearing from people from different parts of the world as well, are calling for these protections. How would you envision - how would you handle constraint under Title II?

WHEELER: Well ...

ESHOO: In terms of being the chief regulator?

WHEELER: So, as you know ...

ESHOO: Have you given thought to this?

WHEELER: Pardon me?

ESHOO: Have you given thought to this?

WHEELER: Yes, ma'am.

ESHOO: OK.

WHEELER: And -and as you know ...

ESHOO: As some people say share it with me.

WHEELER: As you know Title II, there is nothing in Title II that prohibits paid prioritization. As a matter of fact we have all kinds of paid prioritization exists ...

ESHOO: You're ...

WHEELER: ...today.

ESHOO: You're worrying me by bringing that up first. But anyway, go ahead.

WHEELER: So -so that, no, because it goes to you, I think, the root question of yours which is how do you forbear from that?

ESHOO: Yes.

WHEELER: OK? And - and so - so it is possible to go through and say, yes, we will not do this, we will not do this, we will not do this. In the - in the wireless context, interestingly enough, Congress created that - created wireless as a common carrier, but then specifically said but this doesn't apply, and this doesn't apply, and this doesn't apply.

ESHOO: Yes.

WHEELER: We can do that as a commission, as well. It has been proposed that that's an approach to take. There are also those who throw up their hands and ooh in great concern over that because they say, OK, well this commission may do this, but what about the next commission? And you can't bind a future commission by making those kinds of - of determinations. So, what we have done in this NPRM is to ask the specific question about here's Section 706, here's Title II, let's compare them and contrast them with each other, and tell us what the pluses and minuses and the best ways to get through this are? And I think that leads us to the kind of answer that you're asking for today.

WALDEN: The gentlelady's time's expired. We'll go now to the gentlelady from Tennessee, Miss Blackburn, the Vice Chair of the full committee, for her questions.

BLACKBURN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And Mr. Wheeler, we thank you for taking the time to come and be with us. You've got a feisty term going over there, at the FCC, and in Tennessee we would say you're kicking up a little dust. And, it's causing concern.

Many of our content creators have a tremendous amount of concern about your approach, and many of our health care innovators, who are looking at apps in telemedicine concepts and things of that nature, are also expressing concern. And I think that probably your actions have inserted a good bit of uncertainty into the innovation sector that is looking at how we best utilize all things Internet to - for quality of life and access for economic development for health care, for - for innovation and I've got just a couple of simple questions for you.

First of all, on cost benefit analysis, and I thank you that last night your team sent a letter over to us on that question, but what concerns me was that in the letter you say that this is just a tool. Cost benefit analysis is just one of many tools that would go into your decision. And your NPRM does not include an initial cost benefit analysis, and your predecessor, Mr. Genachowski, in this committee came before us and assured us he was going to use this and I'm actually going to read you his statement that he gave to us. He said, during my tenure I brought particular focus to this process, including the - by directing the early involvement of our chief economist and the analytical process of rulemaking, and by having FCC staff consult with the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs on best practices in conducting cost benefit analysis.

And I - I think it is an incredibly important component of this, to look at what the cost of net neutrality rules would be to the consumer, and also to industry, so I want to know from you: are you going to give us a commitment right now that you will conduct a thorough and extensive cost benefit analysis of the actual cost to the consumer and to industry on these rules?

WHEELER: Thank you, Ms. Blackburn, I agree that cost benefit analysis are crucial to decision making. And in this rulemaking we specifically ask what are the costs of one approach or another? And what are the benefits, one or another? So that we can collect that information and have that kind of analysis. I agree with the importance of cost benefit analysis.

BLACKBURN: OK. Let me ask you this, also. You know, the commission's fund really comes from those that are regulated by the FCC, but we have some that are not. They're impacted by this, but they are not regulated and paying those fees, so in the net neutrality context, for example, companies like Google and Netflix want the FCC to act on their behalf, and petition or visit the agency, if you will, in support of those efforts, but they free ride because they are not paying the fees and bearing that part of the regulatory burden. So, since they seem so ready and willing to rely on regulation to help them, with their business models, how would you recommend that those entities share in the cost, pay their part of the costs, funding the agency?

WHEELER: With all respect, that's above my pay grade. That's a decision that - that this committee and the Congress can make in setting those rules ...

BLACKBURN: I'm asking for what your recommendation would be? They come and they lobby you, and ...

WHEELER: So ...

BLACKBURN: ...and they're pushing the net neutrality rules, and while they may like what you are saying, because they want you to step in, we have a lot of people out there who are paying the fees that are not in favor of what you are doing, and we have a lot of innovators who are not in favor of what you are doing, and your door has the name chairman on it, so I'm asking what is your perspective?

WHEELER: So, our - our effort in all of this is to represent the American people, not company a or company b. We have been told by the Congress, from whom we can collect regulatory fees and we do. If there is a decision that we should collect regulatory fees from somebody else, that's something we obviously will take. If there is a decision that we should expand regulatory authority over other entities, that's obviously something we should do. But that is a decision that is out of our hands.

BLACKBURN: I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back. The chairman recognizes the gentlelady from California, Miss Matsui, for her questions.

MATSUI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Wheeler, I'd like to understand, given the success of the Internet and the absence of prioritization, precisely what types of paid prioritization you believe will speed the deployment and adoption of broadband Internet access services? Given that paid prioritization agreements would be used as a barrier of entry to startup and small business, what

prioritization arrangements, specifically, will be better for the Internet than the no prioritization norm we have today?

WHEELER: What we are trying to do in this item is to say that anything that affects that virtuous cycle that the court talked about, and I talked about before, is not appropriate. Is unlawful. And that would include paid prioritization. Now, the court told us to look at this on a case by case basis. We have asked the question in the rulemaking as to whether we should look at it generically, and say it's all out. And we're soliciting comments on that. But, you know, the concept of paid prioritization when I buy Internet access, I am buying the full pipe. I am buying access to everything that's out there, and if somebody comes along and says, oh, no, you can't get this unless you pay more, that's unreasonable, and should be banned. If somebody comes along and says to a content provider, you can't get on unless you pay more, that's unreasonable and that would not be permitted.

MATSUI: OK, well. You know, as for my part, other than public - public safety, I believe paid prioritization should be banned. I also think another concern here is the last mile equivalent we're seeing in peering. The fact that there's so much uncertainty with paid prioritization is troublesome. If this concept moves forward, we could inadvertently block the next Google or Amazon from the market without even knowing it. I'm concerned that your hands may be tied here. Even if the commission wanted to ban anti-competitive paid prioritization deals, you may not have the authority or tools to do so.

Chairman Wheeler, if you were to explain to my constituents what is occurring in the market right now with the two mergers, content and peering agreements, and now paid prioritization could be legitimized under a commercially reasonable standard. What would you tell them? Not just what it means for them, but also for competition and for economy as a whole

WHEELER: I would tell them that I felt that paid prioritization was commercially unreasonable, and therefore could be dealt with. And, that, on the question of peering, that that is a separate issue that the commission needs to look at and will be looking at. But I would emphasize that I am strong supporter of the Open Internet.

And I would also tell them a story that when I was an entrepreneur, I was shut out of cable systems, because they were closed networks. And, I would come with a new product and couldn't get on. And, then when I was a venture capitalist, before taking this job, that the companies that I was backing had to have access to the Internet, could only succeed if they had access to the Internet. So, I would say to them that I believe in an Open Internet. I've experienced closed networks and the harm they cause to innovation, and that I want to protect and preserve an Open Internet.

MATSUI: you know, I think this is a very critical time. When I have ordinary people, probably (ph) off the street, coming to me and asking me about all these things they've heard, because people today really depend on the Internet. Ordinary citizens, the entrepreneurs who are concerned about this, and who else we know - we may not know out there. So, it's very concerning to all of us that there is a potential that we may have a situation where we won't have an Open Internet. And I would also like you to consider some of these mergers. I mean, we feel like we're kind of in the Wild West of the digital economy now. And now with mergers coming forward. Can you commit to us, these large mergers that are before us, they may be different from each other, but can you commit to us here that the FCC will carefully scrutinize these deals? With a focus toward public interest?

WHEELER: Without hesitation. And with complete affirmation.

MATSUI: OK, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: Chair now recognizes former chairman of the full committee, Mr. Barton, for his questions.

BARTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to echo the last question you asked Chairman Wheeler about low powered television. You and I are working on a bill, hopefully, to give them some protection. We understand that under current law they - they - they don't have standing when they repackage, but we hope to give them some at least priority or some help if and when we do do these repackaging of the spectrums. So I wanted to commend you for that last question.

I've listened Chairman Wheeler, to my friends on the Democratic side repeatedly talk about the Open Internet and whether you should try to regulate it under Section 706 or Title II. I think you're asking a false question. The Internet is open.

The question is what does the FCC do in terms of monitoring to make sure that it stays open? And, the analogy I'm going to use is not perfect, but I think it is instructive and educational. The airways that we fly back and forth from Washington to our districts are open, but they are regulated and monitored for a number of reasons by the FAA. If I call up American Airlines, and I say, I want to go from Washington -Reagan to DFW, they quote me a price, let's say it's $350 one way. But when I show up with my ticket, I get one seat on that plane. I don't' get to take a hundred of my friends, and put them on the plane with me because I happen to buy the ticket first, and show up first.

BARTON: So, it's obvious that it would be great for $350 if I could fill the plane.

But we allow the airlines to price by volume. You want one ticket, it's $350. You want two tickets, it's $700. Maybe if you want to buy the whole plane, they do give you a discount. It's only $250, but we don't let the first person to buy the ticket use the whole plane for $350.

And for all the bold talk about open access, what people are really trying to do is, you know, I want to pay a minimum price and get all this broadband, and I want to download everything from Netflix, and I don't want to pay if I download every movie they rent, or vice versa.

Netflix pays a basic price, and they can service 10 million people, instead of whatever it would be. So, you know, this -- this -- the broadband providers who have spent billions and billions of dollars, and have -- have networked this country and provided access through the competitive market principles, are not going to somehow, all of a sudden decide, as long as the FCC, which under your chairmanship, makes sure that it stays a competitive model.

They're -- they're going to continue to provide an open internet, but they may want to provide based on volume of use, some sort of a pricing system that allocates that it isn't a limited spectrum.

I see no reason to try to shoehorn some sort of a regulatory approach into either Title II, or Section 706, you know. Explain to me why my approach, which is what we've been doing and which works, is the wrong approach.

WHEELER: Let me see if I can respond to both parts of your question. First, on LPTV, we -- as I said to the chairman, we do not want to move those who don't have to be moved as part of it.

We also believe that there is opportunities to go to digital and the new efficiencies that that brings, just like it did in the -- in the Class A stations. And thirdly, we're opening a new rulemaking to specifically deal with that. So because we agree with the importance of low power and -- and translators.

To your -- to the second part of your question, let me take the chairman's hat off, and put my consumer hat on for a second, because two weekends ago, I called my ISP, and increased my capacity, because I wanted faster true plan (ph).

And they said for another $10 a month, we'll give you another, what turned out to be like, 20 MB. That's a marketplace transaction. That's something that's accepted now. That is not something that is part of the open internet rules.

What the open internet rules are trying to say, is that when I buy that capacity, I've bought that ride to every place on the internet, that somebody can't turn around and say oh, but you can't get that, or somebody can't turn around and say well, you can deliver that, Tom, but you've got to pay me an extra fee.

And so the concept of the open internet is that I have bought this broad pathway, and I have the right to use it, unfettered, in a -- on an open basis, and that's what we're trying to deliver in this rulemaking.

BARTON: I'm not -- my time's expired. I'm not trying to oppose that, but if you want -- you're looking at it from the consumer standpoint, that everybody should have access, but if you are a provider of content, you should be willing to pay more based on the number of items you're going to put at any given time on the open internet, so that everybody has access to it.

Because if you have a constrained pipeline, somebody has to make a decision how you put things into the pipeline, whether it's the airplane, or whether it's the airways, or the internet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

WALDEN: Gentleman yields back, the chair now recognizes the former chairman on the Democratic side, Mr. Waxman.

CHAIRMAN HENRY WAXMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Wheeler, I commended your leadership earlier in my opening statement, about the spectrum auction, so I want to ask questions about a different subject, and that's net neutrality.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

WAXMAN: I commend you for tackling this issue, and for seeking comment on a broad range of issues, but I have serious concerns about some proposals that have been discussed. You've said that there would be presumption against broadband providers like Verizon, AT&T, and Comcast, entering into arrangements that give exclusive advantage, to their affiliates. Is that right?

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

WAXMAN: OK. What I don't understand, is why this presumption against exclusive arrangements would be limited to affiliates. Suppose Netflix entered into an exclusive arrangement with AT&T or Comcast for faster speeds for its videos that block competitors like Amazon Prime, from getting similar service.

I think that would be a serious threat to competition and an open internet, yet your proposal does not create a presumption against these exclusive arrangements. Why would you allow any exclusive arrangement that guarantees some content providers faster speeds than competitors can access?

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Waxman. This goes to the -- back to this virtuous (ph) cycle that the court talked about, and you know, it was interesting, yesterday in the Wall Street Journal, there was an article that interviewed a bunch of infrastructure manufacturers about the impact on that neutrality.

And they flat out said that if you offer fast lanes for some, you're going to degrade service for others. And I think that's at the heart of what you're talking about here. That would be commercially unreasonable under our proposal.

WAXMAN: OK. The problem with exclusive arrangements is they would let some companies block their competition from similar advantages. In markets where there are -- there is no, or only limited choices of broadband providers, that would stifle openness and competition.

I just want to say to you that I'm opposed to any form of paid prioritization. Paid prioritization divides the internet into the haves and the have-nots, and it will entrench the big companies at the expense of startups.

My understanding is that you've asked comment on a multi-factor test for determining whether -- determining when paid prioritization is permissible, and when it would be prohibited. My concern is that this will create a lot of ambiguity, and a lot of litigation.

I believe right lines would be much better for the market, and for innovation, so I'm going to ask you to consider a presumption against all paid prioritization as you develop final rules. Will you -- will you agree to consider this option?

WHEELER: Absolutely, and we have asked in the NPRM (ph) specifically whether, and if so, how do you accomplish it? So that is -- that is a ripe debate that is in the NPRM right now, sir.

WAXMAN: My understanding is that the reason you had proposed a complicated, multi-factored test, is concern about the court ruling. And I agree that if you're limited to acting under section 706, your options could be limited.

But if you are not limited to Section 706, you could establish a presumption against paid prioritization under Title II, and that's why it's so important for us -- for you to use your Title II authority as back stop authority.

You don't have to settle for a weak open internet rules if you exercise your full powers. And I'm glad you're looking at that possibility. Let me close by thanking you for seeking comment on the back stop proposal in the proposal adopted last week.

I'm committed to working with you to ensure the commission adopts strong and open internet protections for consumers and innovators, while encouraging continued investment in the online content and services we all rely on and enjoy today.

I think it's important that we get the substance right. We tried three times, we meaning you, at the FCC, because of the concern that the consumer have full access to what is on the internet, and full access to be able to use the internet to its greatest and maximum potential, and I would hate to see that net neutrality in any way be diminished if we have an opportunity under the law, as we look at it, to make sure that we get the substance right.

WALDEN: Thank you.

WAXMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back his time, and now turn to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio, the vice chair of the subcommittee, Mr. Latta.

LATTA: Well thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and again, Chairman Wheeler, thanks very much again for being here. There has been some discussion on Title II, and I'd like to follow up on some of that questioning.

Central premise of Title II regulation always been that the regulation was a substitute for competition. And two parts with a question, then. What types of findings have the commission made to justify entertaining the idea of Title II regulation of the internet?

And then do you believe the SEC should have to make a specific showing that of a market failure reform proposing rate regulation, or reporting requirements, that are the precursor to rate regulation?

WHEELER: So again, this -- these are the kinds of questions that we have tried assiduously not to decide on, but to ask about in this rulemaking. We're going to have to make a decision on exactly those questions at some point in time.

But what we want to achieve, is a record that gives everybody the opportunity to opine on that, so that we can be appropriately informed.

LATTA: Well let me ask you, what's your time line on that, then?

WHEELER: So we've got 60 days for comments, and then 45 days for reply comments.

LATTA: OK, so are you saying then that you're not ruling out rate regulation?

WHEELER: I'm saying we have asked the question about Title II, and -- and the full panoply of Title II. Yes, sir.

LATTA: OK, well -- let me ask you this, what have you been hearing from the community thus far, especially when you're saying that you are asking those questions, what have you -- what have you been hearing out there?

WHEELER: Excuse me. Well we have -- we've heard very little on the record thus far. There has been a great outpouring of people speaking to us through the press, people speaking to us through letters, and this sort of thing.

And as I indicated at the outset, there are two, diametrically opposed positions. One is that you should not do anything, and the other is that it should go all the way to being regulated like a public utility.

And our job is to find that which is best for consumers and best for encouraging investment in the internet, which itself is best for consumers.

LATTA: Let me go on with this question, while you've resolved some of the issues in the 5 GHz rulemaking, there are number of issues outstanding that have the potential to open up another 195 MHz of spectrum for unlicensed use. What is the FCC's and your plan for tackling the open issues?

WHEELER: In the 5 GHz?

LATTA: Right.

WHEELER: So there's -- there's -- actually think about 5 GHz, and 3 bytes. The first byte we've -- we've dealt with. That's the lower end of 5 GHz. In the middle component of 5 GHz, there are lots of national defense kind of activities, radar, and this sort of thing.

And the question is how can you work out sharing arrangements there? And we're working with those parties. On the upper end, is where you have spectrum that has been identified for intelligent traffic, ITFS, kinds of activities.

And that is based around the 802.11 standard. There are strong feelings about the need to protect that. I believe that it's possible to work together to meet both sets of needs, since it's based around a common 802.11 standard.

LATTA: Yeah, and in my remaining time, let me ask this last question, the SEC's 2011 universal service transformation, or transformation order, requires phone companies to set minimum prices that they can charge their consumers if they -- if the provider wants to continue receiving the same amount of funds from the US (inaudible) to support the high cost of the business.

So as a result, many of our rural consumers, the lot that I represent out there, will see the rate forward (ph) go from $14 to about $20.46. And while the communications act requires rural rates to be reasonably comparable to rates in urban areas, as affordable, reasonably comparable does not necessarily mean that the rural rate should be exactly the same as the urban rate when the rural customer might be able to call, only a few thousand people locally want urban call many times more than that.

And then should the rate be the same in the rural areas where the average income is significantly lower than it might in fact not be as affordable. The rate floor continues to be a concern for many of our telecommunications providers in my district, and other servicing rural America, where I understand that the SEC has agree to phase in the increase at $2.00 per year, and proposed a start date until -- or postponed that start date until after 2015.

Can you explain why the FCC interprets the reasonably comparable rates to mean exactly the same rates between urban and rural areas, considering the smaller pipe (ph) relation of rural calling areas, and in fact, that it was what is affordable in the largest urban areas is not what is also affordable to consumers in the rural.

WHEELER: Thank you. I'm glad you asked that question, it's an important question. The -- so -- so, as you stated, we're supposed to make sure that things are reasonably comparable. The reason for that is to make sure that the subsidies that some Americans are paying to deliver service to other Americans, don't end up being subsidies that some Americans are paying to reduce the bills of other Americans, but to overcome the high cost of getting it to them.

In some instances, it has been unfortunately the former, there are in 16 states, there are situations where consumers are paying -- some consumers are paying $5.00 a month for telephone service, because they're being subsidized by people in your district and other districts.

We need to get our arms around that. So what we've done, is to say OK, step 1 is Jack (ph) goes into effect January 15. Then what we're going to do is -- and that can't be more than $2.00 by the way.

And then what we're going to do is go back out with another survey that hits the kind of granularity you were talking about in terms of service, including long distance and these kinds of things, so that we have a better understanding of exactly what comparable means, and then lock at that issue again.

LATTA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My time has expired and I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back. The chair now recognizes chairman emeritus of the committee, the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. Dingell.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, I thank you for your courtesy, and I commend you for holding this hearing. I'd like to welcome our old friend, Mr. Wheeler, back, fine public servant, and we're looking forward to good things of him.

Mr. Chairman, last week's open meeting, the commission adopted a number of big ticket items, including a new net neutrality NPRM, and draft rules for the upcoming incentive auction of broadcaster spectrum.

Concerning the former, I commend you for your efforts to keep the internet open, and will be watching the matter closely, as it goes forward. It's my hope the commission will work with this committee to ensure that any final action it takes to conform to its statutory authority, especially concerning Title II reclassification.

Now with respect to the incentive auction, I am interested in what the committee intends to do about treating broadcasters fairly. My questions will require a simple yes or no answer.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to begin with a parochial matter. Section 6403 B1 of the middle class tax relief and job creation act specifies that the commission may, subject to international (inaudible) along the border with Mexico and Canada, reassign and relocate and reallocate broadcast frequencies. Is that correct?

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Now Chairman Wheeler, in the commission's joy (ph) to 2013 response to my letter of inquiry about the reverse auction, Gary Epstein, head of the commission's incentive auction taskforce stated the following, the language used in section 6403 B1 of the action is quote, identical to that used by the commission in describing its handling of the earlier DTV transition, in which the

commission adopted our proposed allotments for these statements, subject to our continuing negotiations with Canada, notwithstanding the broadcaster's request.

To the contrary, one here could reasonably assume, based on the statement, that the commission may reassign and reallocate broadcast frequencies pursuant to the act, while negotiations with Canada and Mexico are still ongoing. Is that correct?

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: I'm going to ask you to submit for the record how you're going to assure protection to the broadcasters and the viewers in that process.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Now Mr. Wheeler, does the commission believe that concluding negotiations with Canada and Mexico, prior to commencing the reverse action, will give broadcasters, particularly in border regions, greater certainties and likely to increase the unwillingness to participate in this auction? Yes, or no?

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Wheeler, does the commission expect to conclude negotiations with Canada and Mexico prior to commencing the reverse action next year? Yes, or no?

WHEELER: The expectation is it is the goal.

DINGELL: You may not make it, is what you're saying.

WHEELER: It is -- it is the goal, and as we -- as I answered you in your previous point ...

DINGELL: Would you notify -- would you notify this committee as soon as that becomes likely or dangerous?

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Now in this matter, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to state for the record that it's my understanding, based on exchange with counsel at the energy and commerce subcommittee on communications and technology, December 1, 2011, markup of the border of the act, that border negotiations are to be completed before the commission reassigns broadcast channels.

I hope that Chairman Wheeler will honor that understanding. I hope, Mr. Chairman, you understand I have great apprehensions about that, because of the impact it should have on the broadcast, and also on my constituents.

WHEELER: Mr. Chairman, this is -- I share your deep concern about this, not only because of the very legitimate concern you have about your constituents and other Americans getting service along the border, but also the candlevering (ph) effect, if you will, as it then -- as spectrum allocation then goes into the middle of the country.

I can assure you this is an incredibly high priority. I can also assure you that our Canadian colleagues have been very forthcoming and very helpful ...

DINGELL: I would like to have this submitted for the record in response to correspondence. Now, Mr. Chairman, I note that the commission proposes to use a method called quote, scoring, to set individual prices for each broadcast station participation -- or participating in the reverse auction. Is that correct?

WHEELER: It is one of the things we're considering ...

DINGELL: One ...

WHEELER: We have not made the final decision yet.

DINGELL: There are others?

WHEELER: There -- we're looking at others ...

DINGELL: I'm going to ask that you submit, in response to correspondence, a proper answer on that ...

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: ... particular point. Now, Chairman Wheeler, is the commission concerned that scoring, as opposed to competitive bidding, will decrease broadcasters willingness to participate in the reverse auction? Yes, or no?

WHEELER: No.

DINGELL: Now Chairman Wheeler, in general, do you intend to work in good faith with broadcasters as the commission defines the rules for reverse auction in order to situate (ph) that their needs are met, as the action (ph) specifies -- as the act specifies, to the best of your abilities? Yes, or no?

WHEELER: Absolutely.

DINGELL: I want to quote Admiral Rickrover (ph), who once observed, the devil's in the details, but so is salvation. I'm hoping you're going to see that the salvation is there and not just that we are going to find ourselves amidst trouble because of carelessness, not by you, but by some of your over-enthusiastic and less-than- competent predecessors. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield my time.

WALDEN: The gentleman's time has expired, and has yielded back. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. Shimkus for five minutes.

SHIMKUS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Chairman Wheeler, welcome. I'm going to try to get through three pretty quick points if I can. As you know, there's a lot of concerns on this side of the dials (ph) and this Title II debate ...

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

SHIMKUS: ... and -- and the basic premise is how do you -- for me, is how do you build out? You want -- we want more, not less. Does a regulated monopoly incentivize more build out, more pipelines, or does a competitive, capital-intensive, incentivized, market-driven process?

I believe the second. So that's -- we've gone from copper, to cable -- collective (ph) cable, satellite, cellular, fiber, a lot of different ways for data to now flow. And we want to encourage that.

And I don't -- I think only -- I kind of like the idea of incentivizing people who want to use more, making them pay more, to incentivize those who carry, someone may want to build out more. That's kind of where I come from. My position is more pipes, not less, more pipes not regulated pipe, competitive markets versus controlled markets.

So because here's an example of that -- a recent -- on May 16th, the Wireline Competition Bureau released a public notice seeking comment on state regulation of dial-up internet traffic. Dial-up. I mean that's a dinosaur. It's hardly used.

So there's -- there is no -- you want to talk about uncertainty for the state and for the providers, when we're still in this process, more than 15 years after the SEC first discussed the treatment of

dial-up, we're -- we're now to this process? So that's just kind of a statement. That doesn't create certainty. Would you -- would you agree?

WHEELER: Well what we're trying to do, Mr. Shimkus, is to -- is to create an environment that assures consumers and those who rely on the internet that there is openness, while at the same point in time, encouraging investment.

SHIMKUS: Well let's just go back. I get that, but does that -- this is dial-up.

WHEELER: We still -- so if we're dealing with the dial-up -- I mean that's really -- that's a -- that's a different topic ...

SHIMKUS: Well it is, but it's not, because it's -- it's the whole debate about certainty, and if -- we actually have a dinosaur application, then why are we even ...

WHEELER: So we still have 40 percent of our consumers on dial-up telephone lines. One of the challenges that we have is how do we evolve that into an all IP environment, which would be, you know, an internet-like environment.

And one of the things that I have -- I have said to this committee is that we believe that this IP transition is a crucial part in how do we ...

SHIMKUS: OK, I get it, I'm going to try to (inaudible) ...

WHEELER: OK, sorry, sir.

SHIMKUS: In one deals in both of our sweet spot is kind of the public service, 9-11, the spectromac (ph) call for the creation of the do not call registry, and the automatic dialing issue. The commission keeps saying there's not enough money to do this.

I would ask you to check into that. I think there's a lot of money in the FCC. And because obviously this automatic dialing freezes up lines, and it's a public safety concern, and I would hope that we would work together to try to -- you would take that into consideration.

WHEELER: I would take a look forward to that. Let me -- let me get back, and I will come to ...

SHIMKUS: And you know, myself and the ranking member have been better (ph) involved in this issue, as you have in -- in the early days also. The last thing I want to -- from rural America, is kind of just there seems to be a de facto freeze on this shared service agreement.

And this isn't a broadcast sector, as you know. The local -- when you represent a third of the state of Illinois, as I do now, 33 counties, these shared agreements are now helping to provide, and we've got real-world cases, better local service to the local folks, than -- than less.

And I guess the basic question in my last minute is what's your plan to ensure that FDAC (ph) action on television transfer application is predictable, consistent, fair, and timely?

WHEELER: So -- thank you, Mr. Shimkus. What we -- what we have done, is to put out a public notice on how we look at transfers. And I consider this to be a procedural reform. Because the way it used to be, was broadcasters would -- would -- would come together in some kind of a -- a -- a merger situation, and they would come to the commission, which was a black box, that had constantly changing, well, this we'll look at it this way, we'll look at it that way.

And what I wanted to do was to say OK, what are the things that we will look at? So that everybody has notice, everybody understands, and it is not a black box. And that's the process that we have now established to be able to make those kinds of decisions.

SHIMKUS: Thank you. I know my time has expired. I appreciate it if you'd keep me in mind as these things move forward, it would be helpful.

WHEELER: Yes, sir. Thank you.

WALDEN: The chair now recognizes the gentlelady from Colorado, Ms. DeGette, for five minutes.

DEGETTE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to follow up, Chairman Wheeler, on this discussion about the open internet NPRM (ph). Leading up to the commission's vote last week, there was a robust public exchange among ISPs, and edge (ph) providers, and others, about the impact of paid prioritization on their business models. And as Ms. Matsui said, we've been hearing from a lot of our constituents about this as well.

Now you talked very briefly about -- a few minutes ago, about what the FCC is doing in its review process to look at the effect of paid prioritization on consumers' broadband bills. Wondering if you can comment about what you think the proposed open internet rules will have on access to new and innovative content online. Because that's one reason why we're concerned about these proposed rules.

WHEELER: The -- it should be encouragement of new and innovative programming, because of the fact that it assures that they will be able to reach the consumer, unfettered, and without having to pay special fees.

DEGETTE: And what impact do you think that the rules will have on average broadband speeds, network investments, and overall quality of service?

WHEELER: That's a terrific question ...

DEGETTE: Thank you.

WHEELER: ... I'm glad you asked it. You know, one of the fascinating things is that 2010, when the open internet rules were first proposed, since then, there has been hundreds of millions of dollars of broadband investment made. So the rules don't seem to have a chilling effect. And, speeds have been doing this, going up. And this is what the court was talking about when they talk about this virtuous cycle because everything -- in the internet ecosystem everything adds to everything else.

DEGETTE: So what do you think that the new rules, what effect will they have on these issues?

WHEELER: I believe ...

DEGETTE: You just talked about what's been happening...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: Yes, we believe that the rules that we have designed will continue to encourage investment in broadband, continue to encourage increases in throughput and as a result continue to encourage innovation from edge providers.

DEGETTE: And so are you saying also that average broadband speeds will increase?

WHEELER: Yes ma'am.

DEGETTE: And overall quality of service will increase?

WHEELER: Yes ma'am, they'll need to.

DEGETTE: All right. OK, one last thing no one has raised yet, is the issue of industry consolidation. And this year we've seen two major merger proposals in the telecom industry. Now clearly the

industry's going through a period of significant technological and economic change. And some folks think that consolidation is the best approach to this. So all things being equal, do you think industry consolidation is good or bad for the consumers?

WHEELER: So, I read the other day that we are probably the -- in the last decade the biggest year for telecom mergers and what we're doing is opening a record on each of them. And we'll make that decision based on the record that is developed for each...

DEGETTE: ...So you don't have an opinion at this point?

WHEELER: I don't want to prejudge the record.

DEGETTE: OK. And as you know congress has recognized the importance and unique character of the telecommunications marketplace by giving the FCC the authority to review mergers under the public interest standard. Do you think the conditions the FCC placed on the Comcast/NBCU merger were effective at promoting the public interest?

WHEELER: Oh, wow, you know, that is something that -- a decision that my predecessor made. I know that it had impact. My goal is to look at the record that we have presented before me and my colleagues and make a decision on those.

DEGETTE: Do you think it promoted the public interest? Yes or no.

WHEELER: I think that there were multiple things in it that promoted the public interest.

DEGETTE: And what other lessons do you take away from commissions previous attempts to promote the public interests by placing conditions on mergers as you go forward?

WHEELER: That it is an important role that the commission has. You know, there is a lot of discussion as to why should there be any authority of the FCC to look at public interest obligations.

DEGETTE: Right.

WHEELER: I strongly believe that there is a big difference between the kind of statutory rigidity that the justice department is required to look at mergers with and the kind of broader public interest issues that you've raised that the statute asked the FCC to look at.

DEGETTE: Chairman, I just asked if you could supplement your testimony with some specific takeaways that this has given you. Thank you very much. Thanks Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: Gentlady yields back. The chair now recognizes -- I'm sorry the chair recognizes the Chairman.

(UNKNOWN): I just wanted to clarify one thing to make sure I heard it right. Did you say 40 percent of Americans are still using dial-up for internet access?

WHEELER: No, I'm talking about dial-up phone service writ large.

(UNKNOWN): OK because I was saying it's more like 3 percent.

WHEELER: No, dial-up phone service writ large.

(UNKNOWN): Thank you. And I thank the courtesy of the chair.

(UNKNOWN): Thank you for clarifying that, sir.

WALDEN: Thank you.

The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska for five minutes Mr. Terry.

TERRY: Thank you. It's good to know that my 82-year-old father is in the 3 percent, that makes him very elite. I'm trying to talk him out of that, but that's a...

(CROSSTALK).

WHEELER: I remember the days when we were thrilled to get 56kb, right?

TERRY: Yes.

So switching gears just a little bit. I wanna ask about quintile (ph) aggression analysis progress and I do think that you have probably captured its deficiencies better than anyone else has and I appreciate that work. I was glad to see the commission's follow-up by repealing the QRA formula.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

TERRY: So congratulations, I appreciate that. I'm curious on your thoughts of how it should be replaced and if you could walk me through what factors are going to be used in any decision making and time tables and process.

WHEELER: I respect the question, but I can't really answer it right now because we're in the process of -- there's several proposals and we're in the process of looking at what the best components of each are. And I don't want to hip shoot here, but we do have proceedings underway to say, OK, what is it we will replace QRA with?

TERRY: So, where are we within the process of those?

WHEELER: I think that we're probably heading into something that you would see before fall.

TERRY: Before fall?

(UNKNOWN): Early fall, football season.

TERRY: Well, I don't want to get distracted.

WHEELER: Well if you joined the big team.

TERRY: Do that when we McNeese State and I would appreciate that.

WHEELER: Yes sir.

TERRY: For the rest of you, that was humor. Now then let me go to a broadcast question since we succinctly dealt with one I thought would take all of five minutes. The spectrum deal that was authorized in incentive auctions and passed through the committee was a bipartisan bill and unfortunately the order removed the FCC was not bipartisan. And some commissioners, particularly republicans, stated that the order treats (ph) TV broadcasters that choose not to participate in the auctions unfairly and that has me concerned.

Congress set aside the 1.75 to reimburse broadcasters for us to move part of the incentive option in the range to fully recover their expenses. Why did the FCC not adopt the number as its repacking budget and ensure that broadcasters would not have to go out of pocket when forced to the FCC to move?

WHEELER: Thank you. Congress said a billion 750 million is the max that can be spent on repacking. We think that will be sufficient. There have been broadcasters who have expressed a concern that it might not be sufficient. So we have said, OK, we don't think that's going to happen, but we will put in

place a process that will have a structure in place if and when that should happen. Sir, I don't expect that we're going to get there.

TERRY: All right. I'll just yield back my time. Thank you, sir.

WHEELER: The gentleman yields back and the chair now recognizes the gentleman from Utah, Mr. Matheson for five minutes.

MATHESON: Thanks Mr. Chairman and Mr. Wheeler thanks for your testimony. I appreciate your candor and your articulate way you answer questions.

WHEELER: Thank you, sir.

MATHESON: I also want to commend you on your efforts to open up more spectrum for our license uses. The FCC took an important step last month by opening up the 100 gigahertz for spectrum for unlicensed uses in the 5 gigahertz band and I'm pleased to see in your testimony that the FCC is actively participating in an ongoing effort to free up additional unlicensed spectrum in the 5 gigahertz band. Can you provide an update on where things currently stand with resolving the technical issues in the ITS band currently used for vehicle-to-vehicle communications and the parts of the band used by the DOD for military radar?

WHEELER: Yes. So, as we talked, there's three slices to 5 gigahertz.

MATHESON: Right.

WHEELER: There's lower slice that we took care of. The middle, as you suggest, is DOD. We are having ongoing discussions with them. I have been personally involved in those discussions about a wide range of spectrum issues including this. There are strongly held beliefs on both sides, sir. I continue to believe, however, that people of good faith can find answers if you sit at the table long enough, and that's the goal.

And so far as the high band in 5 gig, yes, that's intelligent transportation, which offers such great opportunities with Google Smart Card and all this sort of thing. The thing that's really encouraging is that that's an 802 type of standard. It's not a dissimilar reality, however. Where we need to make sure that people are sitting around the table looking for commonalities rather than looking for differences.

MATHESON: Something we got to do around congress a little.

WHEELER: You have a little experience.

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: But that's the goal of what we're trying to do here.

MATHESON: Do you have a sense of what the -- do you have a timeframe for when this additional spectrum could be freed up?

WHEELER: I wish I did. I would be misleading you, sir, if I gave you a date right now.

MATHESON: I understand. Another issue I wanted to mention. The administrations ConnectED program, the goal to bring 100 megabit broadband to every school in the US. To the extent that this initiative is implemented through the ERAY (ph) program, what can the commission do to maximize efficiency and get the most bang for their buck?

WHEELER: Wow, thank you. Great question. There are multiple challenges in that. One is that we need to spend our money, the people's money, on 21st Century high-speed broadband solutions not 20th century solutions like dial-up telephone service and a long distance. Right now about half of the

$2 billion, $2.4 billion that's being spent is spent for old stuff. Not today, half today (ph). Second part is that we have to design a system that helps schools and library administrators find their way through the maze that is telecom.

I mean, we put them in those jobs to educate students, not to be telecom wizzes. So we're trying to develop a process that says, you know, here's what you ought to be paying. Here's what somebody next door is paying. Here's like situated, so that they can go in and understand where they're bargaining positioning is.

We're going to be talking about being able to have longer contracts because buying it on a monthly basis, as we all know, is the worst way to buy. So let's talk about several years. We're going to be encouraging concertia (ph) so that you can buy in bulk and get better prices. And I just think that there are a myriad of things that we can do to get more efficiency out of the existing bucks, and we intend to do that.

MATHESON: That's great. Does the FCC plan on using the national broadband map to identify fiber that is already in place in a given community so it can be leveraged toward these ConnectED (ph) goal?

WHEELER: Absolutely and we have now taken over the ownership of the broadband map, so yes, sir.

MATHESON: OK, I appreciate that. I will yield back, Mr. Chairman.

WHEELER: Thank you very much. The gentleman yields back balance of time and the chair now recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Lance for five minutes.

LANCE: Thank you very much and good afternoon to you. I believe that some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would prefer a title 2 reclassification. And if the commission were to decide to proceed in that direction, I'm concerned that it might trigger a lot of ill-fitting regulations that might not make sense in the context of these services. In your opinion, Chairman, would the process of going through forbearance to separate the wheat from the chaff, could it be a messy exercise and might it lead to more years of litigation and uncertainty is my real concern, sir?

WHEELER: Thank you, Congressman. That's one of the things that gets teed up in the imperium (ph) when we ask about title 2 versus section 706. And I presume that that will be exhaustively discussed in the responses. And that's exactly the kind of questions that we're asking.

LANCE: Thank you. One concern has been raised about the proposed net totality rule making process protections that would be afforded companies use a carrier that's providing the same service as another carrier. For example, the large carriers are beginning to bundle services that go well beyond phone service, the internet and television, to include smart phone services such as temperature control, home health monitoring, which of course is important to another subcommittee of this committee, as well as alarm services such as monitoring of home intrusions and fires, video surveillance or personal emerge response systems. What protections will the FCC provide to ensure that the carrier does not give its service provider a preference over a company using them as a broad-based carrier?

WHEELER: I'm not sure I exactly understand. What your concern is will there be preferences among providers of those services?

LANCE: Yes, Chairman.

WHEELER: That's contrary to the concept of an open internet.

LANCE: So, you can assure us as the American people that that will not be the case as these other services are provided moving forward?

WHEELER: Let me give you an example personally.

LANCE: Yes, sir.

WHEELER: I just switched out ADT in my home security system for another company. And I was able to access both of them over the internet and both of them over my mobile device and there should be no interference with my ability to move from ADT to the other provider.

LANCE: Thank you, and that's the goal of the commission and you will assure us that that is how you will proceed moving forward?

WHEELER: There needs to be open access for all providers.

LANCE: Thank you. I look forward to working with you. I understand you're a proud graduate of Ohio State, is that?

WHEELER: You bet, yes, sir.

LANCE: Please be gentle with Rutgers now that Rutgers has entered the big, whatever it is, the big 16 or whatever it is.

WHEELER: It's the big 10 that can't count.

LANCE: The big 10 that can't count. I defer back to the Chairman the balance of my time, a proud representative from Ohio.

WHEELER: Well thank you very much. For the gentlemen yielding back his balance of his time. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Butterfield for 5 minutes.

BUTTERFIELD: Thank you very much gentlemen for yielding time and thank you to you Chairman for your service and thank you for your testimony today. I especially thank you for your clarity. I told you that the first time that I met you and whenever I hear you speak it is unambiguous. At least until the subject of your home security system comes up and you are a little ambiguous with who the new provider is but thank you so very much.

Mr. Chairman in the communications act congress mandated that the commission ensured diverse participation in media and telecom and that includes participation in minority and women own businesses. The quote from the statue basically says that the mandate is to promote economic opportunity and competition by disseminating licenses among a wide variety of applicants including small businesses, rural telecoms and businesses owned by members of minority groups and women. End of quote.

It seems to me that the response of the commission to judicial criticism of the FCCs inaction in this area and the lack of meaningful study and progress as well as the low level of minority of women on participation and media and telecom licensing that the commission seems to me is not committed to these diversity goals. And if I am wrong about this, I would ask that you correct me.

On May the 14th, members of the congressional black caucus including Congressman Rush and myself addressed these concerns -- these diversity concerns in a letter to you. I suppose the letter may not have made its way to your desk yet, but I ask that you look at it very carefully when you do. Question, what precisely do you need beyond the congressional directions and judicial criticism to get the commission to make progress in creating opportunities for diverse communities.

WHEELER: Thank you, Congressman, and I got the letter this morning, so thank you. First of all, I agree that we have a mandate to have a broad swath of opportunity for all Americans to participate in all aspects of telecommunications. I can assure you that that's a goal of mine. Now let's talk about some specifics.

Number one, I think what we did on the JSAs in the broadcast space actually opens up opportunities for minority and small operators. That's why it was supported by more than a dozen representative

minority groups. Secondly is, we are going to move on the AWS3 (ph) auction to make sure that there are appropriate steps taken to assure that minorities can participate through waivers in other kinds of processes in that auction. Thirdly, we are going to have -- and I should pause and in all of these call out Commissioner Clyburn, who has been the constant pusher on all of these issues.

There will be designated envy rules for the incentive auction that will create bidding credits for appropriate designated entities. And I very much take to heart both as an institutional responsibility and as a personal responsibility the language that you read.

BUTTERFIELD: And so when the spectrum is auctioned you are making a commitment that diversity will be an overriding concern of the commission?

WHEELER: What we want to do is make sure that there are opportunities for designated entities to get bidding credits to that, for instance, they can bid with 75 cent dollars against AT&T and Verizon's 100 cent dollars.

BUTTERFIELD: Let me get this last one in if I can. In light of the demographic changes of caring in our country and the growing numbers of mergers in the communications industry, how is the commission encouraging companies to partner with diverse businesses in the secondary market?

WHEELER: We have been doing that in both formally and informally, that there are great opportunities when there are transactions for minority companies. They, you know, grain telecom comes to mind, which is now operating spectrum I believe for both AT&T and Verizon, which they purchased as a part of some settlements with the commission. And those kind of opportunities are important and worthwhile. I also believe that there can be new opportunities in the broadcast space particularly after the auction in terms of being able to share spectrum and offer other kinds of services.

BUTTERFIELD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WHEELER: Thank you very much. The chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky, Mr. Guthrie.

GUTHRIE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for coming today. I know you had a busy week so your time is appreciated. My colleague from California Ms. Matsui have spent a lot of time on spectrum issues and we've founded a congressional spectrum caucus and -- and looking for different ideas on how we can move forward on that spectrum.

And I appreciate the efforts that you've done to move the incentive auction forward. And have a couple of questions about the guard bands and the 680 megahertz band. It appears to me that the band plan for spectrum cleared in the broadcast incentive auction carefully considered the importance of maximizing license spectrum and adhered to the technically reasonable standards set by congress for creating a duplex gap. And I applaud the commission for this area in this regard. Quick two questions, one how do you foresee going forward with unlicensed spectrum in the duplex gap? As you know it would be important for those who bid on adjacent license spectrum to have as sure there will not be interference and are you confident the FCC will have technical guidelines to have assurance for those who bid for license spectrum there will be no interference in the duplex gap from our lines (ph)?

WHEELER: Yes, sir. The answer to both you just identified technical standards. And so for instance we're going to have technical standards proceeding for wireless mics and others who would be using the unlicensed spectrums, so yes, sir.

GUTHRIE: OK, and we've been using social media to reach out to interest Americans and so we're here for representing the American people and one came from Kelly on Facebook and Kelly asked this question -- well Kelly submitted this question through Facebook who would like to ask the question about your plans for future spectrum policy and can you give Kelly a brief answer to her question about why just broadly future spectrum policy?

WHEELER: Thank you Kelly. The answer is that, you know, they're not making it no more and so what we have to do -- I believe that we are today on the cusp of the new Verizon on spectrum policy with two things that we are doing. One is the incentive auction that you all created. Because when you boil everything down it ultimately comes to economics. And if you can address the other person's economics you can probably go along with solving your economics issue. And that's what the auction does.

The other component is spectrum sharing. And the days of hearing this is all yours who uses it are over and fortunately digital allows that kind of sharing. You know, think about going into a Starbucks and everybody is sharing that Wi-Fi spectrum. You put those two together and that's I think the answer to Kelly's question as to where is spectrum policy going. And we're in the middle of making both of those work right now, which is why what we're doing is so terribly important.

GUTHRIE: Yes, I often use the metaphor there's a very simple metaphor compared to a complex physics in this, but we don't have special highways for ambulances or fire trucks, we get out of the way when they need to go down the highway. So sharing that's kind of a simple way to look at the metaphor. There's in one of your statements and I'm putting my hate as a former state legislature so I was the Senator in Kentucky before here and there's been some concerns of places like Utah and Oregon where there's been municipal broadband deployed and the project have failed and there's (ph) were their competitive providers and these projects have resulted in putting millions of dollars in municipal bonds, property taxes, selling franchise taxes at risk and I believe the I probo (ph) sold to Google for a dollar and leaving city tax payers on the hook repaying tens of millions of dollars.

My understanding is five states or so have passed laws saying that cities can't do this -- because the states usually something happens to the city the states kind of on the hook for it as well and I believe in your prepared your written testimony you said that you believe the FCC could do perimption (ph) over this area in the state law and I just wanted you to clarify that. And why you think Washington could have a better view of this than Frankfurt, for example, in Kentucky.

WHEELER: So there are about 20 states that have put some kind of restrictions in place. And I see it through just exactly the opposite end of the telescope with all due respect, that if the citizens of a community want to organize through their local government to say to bring competition in broadband provision, they should not be inhibited.

GUTHRIE: No. They inhibit it by their elected...

WHEELER: They should not be inhibited by the fact that the incumbents have been urging the adoption of legislation that would ban it. And if we believe in competition, we ought to let competition flourished.

So what I have said is that I'm following again Judge Silverman's comments in his dissent nonetheless in the open internet case in which he said, "If there's ever an example where 706 would apply, it is in the ability to -- to say the States, 'You cannot get in the middle of this virtuous cycle and prohibit consumers from being able to have access to a competitive service'".

GUTHRIE: So -- so your perception is that government should be doing that because of the incumbents or because they don't want to be on the hook for an I-provoke-type situation.

WHEELER: So the -- I go back to first principles with -- that is this is a decision that ought to be made by the people of the community. And that that if they want to take the risk, if they own it themselves, but you don't have to own it yourself.

It is also -- the gentleman from Utah has left. But for instance in Utah, there's a group of cities that have banded together to -- to solicit bids for somebody else to own that they would have a participation in.

That kind of structure -- if the people say that's what we want; this -- we want this kind of competition, then I think they ought to be encouraged together. And competition has clearly been shown to be the best tool.

GUTHRIE: Well, I don't disagree with you on that. But my time actually has expired. I know that Chairman's ready to gobble me down, so I yield back. Thank you.

WALDEN: Thank you very much. The -- the Chairman would never do that to the gentleman from Kentucky. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Vermont, Mr. Welch.

WELCH: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Wheeler, I have five questions. We have five minutes so we can go look at this split.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

WELCH: First thing, Bob Latta and I started the Rural Caucus. We so appreciated you coming an enormous concern in rural America that we get access to the internet. It's essential for our future. That neutrality is a big deal. That's the big topic. You've been getting comments.

There's an enormous amount of concern that if we make the wrong decision, the big guys are gonna get the fast lane, the little guys - many in rural America are gonna get the breakdown lane.

Can you give us some reassurance that at the end of this process, we're gonna have access, on equal terms, for folks in rural America to the internet?

WHEELER: You want a quick answer? Yes.

WELCH: Yes.

WHEELER: Yes.

WELCH: And that's a full sentence. You can give a full sentence to reassure all of us especially rural America...

WHEELER: There should...

WELCH: That we're gonna be driving in the fast lane.

WHEELER: There should not -- there is one internet. There is not a fast internet; there is not a slow internet. There is not an urban internet; there is not a rural internet. There is one internet. Everybody ought to have open equal access to the capacity delivered by the internet.

WELCH: Okay. Thank you. Now, getting the internet, rural America is spread out, and the investors want to put their money where they can make the money. We all understand that. That was true for electricity. But we've got to get that internet out into rural America so we can be part of the modern economy.

And we have a Universal Service Fund with the -- with the Mobility Fund, whereas we need to have that. And I'm wondering if you could comment on the status of that and what we need to do to make sure that the funds are there to build out that broadband.

WHEELER: Specifically on the Mobility. Here's the interesting question that gets raised by Mobility. Broadband wireless is LTE. It is being built out across America. Recently just one of the major carriers announced a new initiative in rural America with LTE.

The question becomes, that we're wrestling with, is should we subsidize something if it's already happening? And that prudent fiscal responsibilities suggest probably not.

WELCH: Well, I got three more questions.

WHEELER: OK.

WELCH: So we wanna work with you on that to make it rational and not have us investing on things that aren't working but invest in things that are going to help rural America gets the best.

WHEELER: That's true. That's -- that's what we're trying to get to.

WELCH: All right. Third, we've got to work with you and your entire Commission, the Republicans and the Democrats. And when you came into our rural working group, you explained a couple of problems you had each in IT and also procedures where I guess it's easier to hire a lawyer...

WHEELER: Yeah.

WELCH: Than an engineer.

WHEELER: Yes.

WELCH: I'm a lawyer so maybe I'd like that, but I wouldn't be very much use to you. What are the things that this committee can advocate to help your entire Commission, Rs&Ds who want to do the job so you have the tools you need to do it?

WHEELER: Thank you for asking. Our IT infrastructure is worthy of this Masonian. I came from a business background. The things that you cannot do is -- that are common sense in the business world. The fact that we're still using computers that have known cyber risks associated with them. The fact that we can't organize a consumer complaint process online for American consumers because our IT system isn't up to us -- up to it is ridiculous.

So, we have serious problems there on the issue of lawyers versus engineers. Far be it for me to take a side on that but we do need more engineers, sir.

WELCH: OK. Thank you.

WHEELER: And economists.

WELCH: Right.

WHEELER: And economists.

WELCH: Well, I'd like our committee to work with you on that. Next, Section 706. There's a lot of concern about whether you have the sufficient authority under that section in order to give you the rulemaking power to guarantee the outcome being net neutrality. Can you comment on that? Do you still feel that that is sufficient and the court gave you a roadmap forward?

WHEELER: I think -- I think that we do have sufficient authority and then when the court talked about this virtuous cycle and they said, "Anything that interferers with that virtuous cycle is a violation of 706", that that is a very broad grant of authority.

WELCH: OK. My last question in 26 seconds. Retrans consent and blocking online content, we've seen that in the broadcast area where there's a dispute and people can't get access to the signal. Now, that's starting to migrate into the online content. Is this the beginning of the cabalization of the internet?

WHEELER: Sir, I think it is the right question. Our authority goes to the -- retransmission and program access goes to the authority of good faith negotiations. I think there is reason to be concerned when because I happen to subscribe to an ISP who is in a dispute with a program provider. That the program provider blocks all access from all IP addresses coming from that ISP. I think that is something that is -- is -- is of concern and that we all should worry about.

WELCH: Okay. I yield back. Thank you very much, Mr. Wheeler.

WHEELER: Thank you, sir.

WALDEN: Thank you very much. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas, Mr. Pompeo.

POMPEO: Thank you, Mr. WALDEN: Thank you for being here today. I don't want to spend a lot of time on net neutrality. We have different view. I view it is nothing more than a price control. I think we've seen how that works in creating supply. And so I think -- I think it's a very dangerous path that you're headed down.

I do want to ask a couple of process questions related to that. Have you spoken to anyone at the White House or OMB in the last month regarding net neutrality?

WHEELER: Only to keep them appraised. They have been assiduous in their recognition that we are an independent agency.

POMPEO: And did you call them or did they call you?

WHEELER: I called them.

POMPEO: And has anyone else on your staff spoken to folks at the White House or OMB in the last month?

WHEELER: Not in my...

POMPEO: With this issue?

WHEELER: Well, on -- the answer is I'm sure. On -- on this issue, I don't know but I can assure you from my discussions with everybody, from the President on down, the recognition of the independence of our agency; and I'll go further and assure you that never have I or to my knowledge anyone of my staff felt any pressure to decide any issue.

POMPEO: I appreciate that. Thank you. I want to follow-up on something. Representative Guthrie was saying you believe the FCC has the power to preempt state law to ban competition from community broadband.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

POMPEO: Under Section 706.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

POMPEO: Do you believe that State have the same authority.

WHEELER: I think that's the -- the issue that I believe is do we have the authority to preempt. That raises the question of what is the authority of the State. And I think that we have preempt authority. I think we'll probably end up having this answered in court.

POMPEO: Wait, look. I -- I just read the statute that they have the same authority that the -- the FCC does. The language is identical. It says you would have authority as you have in that.

WHEELER: Well, it says State Commissions.

POMPEO: Right.

WHEELER: If you will. Yes. And -- and it says that we have -- we have preemptory authority over State Commissions.

POMPEO: So State Commissions have the same authority that you do. Do you agree with that?

WHEELER: Don't I?

POMPEO: That's a simple statute, I mean it says the same thing I just said.

WHEELER: No I think that I -- I think that it says that that -- that both of us have authority, but that we have preemptory authority on this issue. And I think that's what Judge Silverman was saying in his dissent in that Verizon...

POMPEO: Great. Not all dissent. Chairman, will the FCC's Media Bureau recently issued new, they call them "Processing Guidelines for Broadcast Transactions"; and this broadcast talks not only about future broadcast transactions but also pending applications. I have three questions with respect to that.

First, how many applications have been singled out for a closed scrutiny since that new guidelines have been issued? How many have been approved in those two months? And when might those broadcasters see the resolution of their applications?

WHEELER: I don't know the answer to any of -- of those three for the -- off top of my head. But I'll be happy to get it for -- get it for you for the record.

POMPEO: OK. You can understand these are pending applications submitted under the set of rules. You've now moved the goalpost on them. This is -- this is...

WHEELER: No, actually, I -- yes, sir, I understand your point. What we're trying to do is not move the goalpost but to open up the process so that everybody knows...

POMPEO: But that's what you did.

WHEELER: ...what the rules are.

POMPEO: But that's what you did. I mean you changed -- you changed the rules with respect to applications already submitted under preexisting set of standards. So, and I don't know how you could describe that as anything but moving the goalpost.

WHEELER: With all respect, sir. We had -- we had a series of transactions that were in placed. And in the decisions on those transactions, we said, note, "Going forward, there will be a new look at what financial structures are in transactions", not in these transactions that we're approving.

Then we put out a public notice that said, "Here is how we are going to open up this black box and here is what is gonna be going on." And it is that standard. So there was -- there was notice as a part of a decision that was not affected. Then there was notice through a public notice. And now those that they -- the Bureau is reviewing are subject to both of those.

POMPEO: And my last 20 seconds. And with net neutrality, there are also cyber security issues. Do you plan to explicitly give network providers liability protections in their efforts to protect their network from cyber security as part of your rulemaking and --for net neutrality.

WHEELER: It was not considered as a part of the rulemaking to have -- have that.

POMPEO: All right. Mr. Chairman, I yield back my time.

WALDEN: Thank you very much. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Mexico, Mr. **Lujan.**

LUJAN: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. Chairman, we thank you so much...

WHEELER: Mr. **Lujan.**

LUJAN: ...for being here as well. Chairman Wheeler, two weeks ago, this committee added my amendment calling on the FCC to conduct a study on reforming the designated market area system to the STELA Reauthorization Bill.

As you know, DMAs are currently defined by a map drawn by Nielsen, a for-profit marketing research company based upon the reach of television broadcast antennas. This kind of work of antennas is based upon technology deployed back in the '40s and '50s. Americans could have a multitude of viewing options via technology such as cable, broadband and wireless internet. But current DMA rules prevent the viewership of much of that content.

I believe that a system embraced by these technologies could revitalize television broadcasting with new affiliates reaching viewers who have more in common than their placement on Nielsen's old map.

It is my hope that the Commission takes this study seriously and bring the policy into the 21st century, Mr. Chairman. So I hope that we might be able to work...

WHEELER: Thank you for your leadership on this, Mr. **Lujan.** And that I assure you that we will take it seriously.

LUJAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And Mr. Chairman, it wasn't too long ago that a company would not allow access to another companies upside. There was a question a few years ago with AT&T and FaceTime, an Apple product.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

LUJAN: As I talked about fixed versus mobile. They defended it by saying it was allowed under the FCC's net neutrality rules granted this was under 3G.

Section 62 of the proposal suggests no -- no blocking rule -- that sorry, the no blocking rule was applied to different standard to mobile broadband internet access and mobile internet access service was excluded from the unreasonable discrimination rules. We're seeing mobile getting fast -- faster now and with the new spectrum options, even faster than fixed.

I appreciate and I agree with you that we're talking about one internet with open and equal access. With my colleagues in rural areas, I shared with you before that there's a conversation about taking phone calls and with bandwidth capabilities as well as streaming of content on airplanes. In rural America, we should be able to get the same treatment. I do not understand why we're not there yet. But nonetheless, it's common.

So I'm hopeful that as we have this conversation that we're able to have equitable treatment. I know that there is a, as I read in the proposal, that there is elements of asking for a look into this...

WHEELER: Right.

LUJAN: ... in the rule. But I'm certainly hopeful that this will be treated with the same scrutiny and level of attention. And again, as I talk about an old antiquated rule within the '40s and '50s, we talked about dial-up, that this is another area that we're going to have equitable treatment as well especially with new gigabit access as well.

Mr. Chairman, in another area, I know that there's a number of my colleagues who join me in their concern for recent reports of interconnection deals particularly the one between Comcast and Netflix. You stated that peering is not a net neutrality issue, there is a matter of the -- that there is a matter of the open internet and there is a matter of the internet connection among the various disparate pathways that become the internet.

Well, I understand that net neutrality refers only to the behavior of internet service providers blocking or throttling the speeds of certain websites. My question is how is an interconnection agreement that essentially throttles content substantially different?

WHEELER: So, thank you. So that's -- that's a very good question. They -- you can -- you can think of the internet in -- in three parts. There is the -- well, actually four parts. There is somebody like Netflix getting on the internet and then writing so- called middle mile providers to a peering point which is just a fancy word for interconnection where they then have access to Comcast Verizon, whoever the case maybe.

The consumer buys from their computer up to the peering point. Traditionally, peering has been I'll take mine, you take yours, back and forth kind of a thing; and -- and -- and for free. That has begun to change overtime.

LUJAN: If I may apologize, my time has been elapsed, so maybe what I'll do is if we could get that into the record. All that I would add is once upon a time peering agreements didn't have an exchange of money. People find a way to...

WHEELER: Exactly right.

LUJAN: ...each other. And I'm hoping that we can get some certainty with the treatment of fixed versus mobile in that area. And lastly, I -- I'd like for the record if there's any way that you might be able to provide us more specifics and details with what's been talked about as commercially reasonable...

WHEELER: Good.

LUJAN: ...as well as we talk about now pretty smaller companies have disadvantages. I apologize again, Mr. Chairman. I could always sit and visit with you. And the last thing that I would say is President Obama isn't in support of an open internet and I would encourage you to speak with him. So thank you very much for that as well.

WHEELER: Let me just -- Congressman, so am I.

WALDEN: Thank you. Thank you very much. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana, Mr. Scalise.

SCALISE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman for having the hearing and thank you Commissioner Wheeler for being here today and answering our questions. And there was -- as we look at the potential changes that have been proposed, a lot of us that want to continue to maintain a free and open internet want to make sure that we're going about it the right way. I know you've got some concerns with the fact that the FCC would even consider going to Title II route in terms of reclassifying broadband, you know.

And a lot of us had reached out for our constituents to -- to have them also give us suggestions on things that they would like to ask you as well. And a lot of the -- the comments that we got I know that I got in my district were just concerns about maintaining that open internet, and keeping the government out of regulating it, and -- and trying to make sure that the government doesn't impede the ability for the innovations that we've seen which have been so dramatic and revolutionized to not only the country, but revolutionized the entire world. And it's a lot of innovation that -- that's made in America. And we want to continue to see that innovation thrive.

When you -- when you look at going into the reclassification, and there's a proposal that's out there. I know, like I said, I've got concerns about that. But in your written statement, you assert that the private sector must play the leading role in extending broadband networks to every American. That if it were to be reclassified under Title II, who -- who would pay for extending those networks if they're subject to common carrier regulations.

WHEELER: Private sector.

SCALISE: But then when you look at the -- the Title II route, would the FCC have the authority to regulate broadband pricing?

WHEELER: So in the vastness of Title II, that is conceivable. One of the reasons that we are asking for Title II versus Section 706 comments in this proceeding is to be able to specifically zero-in on what are issues such as that. What are the...

SCALISE: So you think you may have the ability to regulate broadband pricing, is that something you -- you think could be an open...

WHEELER: Now, let's...

SCALISE: ...possibility for the FCC?

WHEELER: Should a full Title II regime be chosen, which should has not been, we are proposing...

SCALISE: But you're making the proposals.

WHEELER: ...Section 706.

SCALISE: Right.

WHEELER: No, we're -- we're -- no we're not. What we're doing is we're proposing Section 706 as the approach and then we've asked questions about Title II. And these are the kinds of issues that come up -- will come up in that discussion and that are gonna warrant...

SCALISE: But if -- if you'd in them telecommunication services. You know, because that puts broadband into a different realm than it is today. It's not there right now. If you do choose to try to put it there. Which state public utility in the -- in our State. We've got a public service commission. Would those state public service commissions and other related entities in the States be able to -- to regulate broadband at that point?

WHEELER: So what we have proposed is not Title II, it's Section 706. What we have asked is for a discussion of Title II and those kinds of issues. But our proposal for which I've taken a lot of heat is not Title II. I've said...

SCALISE: We don't have to go forward with the proposal.

WHEELER: I've said -- I've said...

SCALISE: So you stop taking the heat right now and...

WHEELER: No, I've said -- I've said that we're -- I said that Title II was on the table. That we're willing to look at Title II. But -- and -- and Mr. Waxman has a specific proposal where he thinks that Title II ought to be a backup and that's a proposal that is important and worth considering. But the proposal that we made is Section 706.

SCALISE: Let me ask you this because you're also -- it seems like a one-way street where you're just targeting this towards internet service providers. I mean there are a lot of content carriers out there too, content providers that, you know, a lot of members have used the Netflix example or, you know, Google and other content providers that also have a play in this realm that that you just seem to be targeting this towards internet service providers.

And so I'm not sure if there's some -- some acts to grind there, but it just seems like it's a -- it's a one-sided approach that you're taking even in the review. And I -- I wouldn't -- wouldn't recommend going down that road for any of these folks. But I just wanted to point that out.

And one last thing coz I know I'm running out of time. In the February report, the FCC, some of your staff in the working group, recommended eliminating some of the reports that are out there, the Orbit report, the International Broadband report, and Modifying Video Competition report and Cable Price and Service, some of those things.

I've got a piece of legislation we've passed out of the Full House twice now, very bipartisan figures unanimous earlier in this Congress called the FCC Consolidated Reporting Act, which really tries to -- to take a -- a broad view and into eliminate a lot of the outdated reports, the streamline reporting process, something that I think you've seen bipartisan's report to do in the House.

We're trying to get the Senate to take that up. I'm not sure if you've got a comment on what you think should happen there, if that's something you're supportive of generally, especially as it relates to -- to the Bipartisan Bill in the House trying to move through the Senate to also would become law to streamline the process as your staff is suggesting some of these areas.

WHEELER: So -- so, you know, in the Senate side, it's Senator Heller who has been...

SCALISE: Yeah.

WHEELER: ...pushing on this. And I know that he and Senator Rockefeller are talking about it in terms of their package of legislation over there. I definitely agree that -- that there are -- there is a plethora of reports and that we are spending a lot of time that could be better organized, shall we say.

SCALISE: Including competitiveness in the telegraph industry which is still on the books, which we're trying to get rid off in this bill over there. I appreciate that and anything you can do to help us advocate for the advancement. I do think that's one area where we found a lot of bipartisans support in the way it passed the House. Hopefully we can get the Heller bill move through the Senate as well on the -- and get that to the present statute.

WHEELER: Thank you, gentleman.

SCALISE: Thank you very much for your time. And I yield back as well my time.

WALDEN: Thank you very much, Mr. Scalise. I do not see any member in the Democratic side. Mr. Kinzinger of Illinois is recognized.

KINZINGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for being here today with us. I know it's a lot of...

WHEELER: Thank you for your patience, Mr. Kinzinger.

KINZINGER: Yeah, you're welcome. I might be the end. Wow. So -- but we had a lot of big issues we want to talk about. I'm just going to hit a couple right now. I'd like to talk to you a little -- I know it was -- it was touched earlier about the E-Rate Program.

I'm a big supporter of the intentions of this program and especially it's modernization. And I appreciate the Commission putting on the recent workshop on this issue. I have a few concerns I want to address.

I represent a rural district with a number of very small schools and libraries. And over the past few months, I've reached out to a lot of these entities and asked them what their concern is and -- and asked them about their participation or their lack of participation in the program to see what concern -- concerns or issues they have with the program itself.

The number one problem raised in these conversations was the complexity involved in both applying for and eventually receiving the funding necessary to move forward in implementing new technology in their facilities through the E-Rate Program.

In hearing this, I actually looked into the issue a little further and found out that the basic application for funding, and this is the process of it, but the basic application is 17 pages long. And with additional technologies not being necessary can run even longer, i.e. Wi-Fi. I would actually probably rather punch myself in the face and be the guy that has to fill this out.

So the complexity of the -- of the application process has actually caused a number of these schools to spend money on outside consultants to help guide them through this process. And this is money that's no longer being spend on our students and automatically puts many smaller rural schools at a disadvantage coz they don't have the funds necessary to pay this out so I can sell them. Essentially, we leave individuals in a technological desert if you will.

As the Commissioner continues these efforts to modernize the E- Rate Program, what are your plans to simplify the application process for these small and rural districts. And also, will you commit to working to address the issues faced by these schools who have routinely told me they simply cannot afford to pursue these funds.

WHEELER: Congressman, I share your shock and dismay. We're gonna fix it.

KINZINGER: Good. All right. Do you have an idea of a timeframe? How long?

WHEELER: Yeah, we're gonna...

KINZINGER: We're busy. We're going home.

WHEELER: It's gonna be part of our -- of our E-Rate modernization program that we'll be bringing forward. There's actually a series of things that we're gonna begin administratively even before that -- that rulemaking takes place. It is -- yes, sir. I mean I...

KINZINGER: All right.

WHEELER: I'm as -- you know, how do we get online. So it becomes an interesting challenge. So here we are talking about broadband access for schools and libraries and we have a 17-page paper process.

KINZINGER: Right.

WHEELER: So unfortunately, it's not something that you can solve just like this because as I've indicated like to Mr. Welch, we have awful IT systems. But what I would like to get to is for your schools and all schools and libraries to be able to get online to make their filling, to be able to track that filling and where things stand, and to do it less frequently than annually.

KINZINGER: Right.

WHEELER: Well, I appreciate that. I want to touch on one other quick issue in this short amount of time. Again, thank you for your consideration with the -- the E-Rate issue.

I'm concerned with the process and policy rationale used to changed the FCC's treatment of broadcast JSAs for the purpose of the broadcast ownership rules. The decision to count TV JSAs' ownership has the effect of tightening ownership restrictions without the comprehensive review of the ownership rules that is required by statute. And your analysis seem to lack an appreciation for the public interest benefited -- benefits fostered by JSAs.

In Rockford, for instance, an area I represent, without these agreements, the Fox station produces actually a Hispanic newscast and they've said that they will not be able to produce that Hispanic newscast, for instance. Well, I don't believe my local TV station should have to fight for a waiver and we can have a broader issue on the whole discussion in general.

I do wanna say in light of your rule, are you gonna make sure that these stations can take advantage of waivers and will there be clear transparent standards for applying for waivers in this process.

WHEELER: Thank you, Congressman because you've raised a really important point about waivers.

The reality was why we had to deal with JSAs is there was becoming a cottage industry in this town, down on K Street of lawyers figuring out creative ways to get around the ownership rules of the Commission's head in place forever. And JSAs were a favorite way of doing that.

What we have said is that you have to have attributable ownership as you've indicated. But that there is a waiver process to address exactly what you're talking about in Rockford. And yes it's an expedited process, and it is a -- it's a -- it's a situation unfortunately where -- where the process took over and perverted the underlying rules and the basic concepts of ownership.

KINZINGER: We can -- and -- and we can have that broader discussion when I have more time. My time is expired but I will say I've heard a lot of concerns from local TV stations even on my district. And I hope that, you know, while we disagree with the rule, I hope that you make it very clear how they can apply for these waivers and how they can get this thing carry them. Mr. Chairman, I yield back and thank you.

WHEELER: Yes, thank you.

WALDEN: Thank you very much. In behalf of Mr. Matheson and of myself, thank you Chairman Wheeler for your testimony this morning. We look forward to working with you in the future. And the hearing is now adjourned.

END

LOAD-DATE: May 21, 2014

135 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Copyright 2014 CQ Transcriptions, LLC
All Rights Reserved
Financial Markets Regulatory Wire

All materials herein are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of CQ Transcriptions. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.

REP. GREG WALDEN HOLDS A HEARING ON FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION OVERSIGHT

May 20, 2014 Tuesday

EVENT DATE: May 20, 2014

TYPE: COMMITTEE HEARING

LOCATION: WASHINGTON, D.C.

COMMITTEE: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY

SPEAKER: REP. GREG WALDEN, CHAIRMAN

WITNESSES:
REP. GREG WALDEN, R-ORE. CHAIRMAN
REP. ANNA G. ESHOO, D-CALIF., RANKING MEMBER
REP. FRED UPTON, R-MICH. EX OFFICIO
REP. BOB LATTA, R-OHIO
REP. JOE L. BARTON, R-TEXAS EX OFFICIO
REP. HENRY A. WAXMAN, D-CALIF. EX OFFICIO
REP. DORIS MATSUI, D-CALIF.
WITNESS: THOMAS E. WHEELER, CHAIRMAN, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
REP. MARSHA BLACKBURN, R-TENN.
REP. JOHN D. DINGELL, D-MICH.
REP. JOHN SHIMKUS, R-ILL.
REP. DIANA DEGETTE, D-COLO.
REP. LEE TERRY, R-NEB.
REP. JIM MATHESON, D-UTAH
REP. LEONARD LANCE, R-N.J.
REP. G.K. BUTTERFIELD, D-N.C.
REP. BRETT GUTHRIE, R-KY.
REP. PETER WELCH, D-VT.
REP. MIKE POMPEO, R-KAN.
REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M.
REP. STEVE SCALISE, R-LA.
REP. ADAM KINZINGER, R-ILL.

TEXT:

WALDEN: We'll call to order the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology and certainly want to welcome our members and our witness, the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission. Mr. Wheeler, we're delighted that you would make time to come and spend with us on this important day, with so much going on in the telecommunications world.

Six months ago this subcommittee met for the very first time with the current complement of FCC commissioners, and welcomed Mr. Wheeler as the new chairman. Today, and let me welcome Mr. Wheeler back, we meet to review the record of action and selective inaction that the commission has taken under the first six months of your leadership. Unfortunately, given some of the most recent actions out of the commission, I fear that we may be heading into some rough waters.

When we last met, I offered two pieces of advice to Chairman Wheeler, and his colleagues. First, I urged them to heed the words of Congress, where it was - has spoken and reject calls to act in ways contrary to Congressional intent. Second, I urged them to bear in mind that even seemingly small changes in the Federal Communications Commission rules can have significant impact on the marketplace. I called upon all the members of the commission to discharge their duties with transparency, accountability and a long view of the technological landscape. In sum, my advice was that they must approach their duties with humility and restraint.

Unfortunately, recent actions have hinted that my advice was ignored. In December, we had yet to know that the DC Circuit Court of Appeals would once again reject the commission's attempt to regulate the Internet and could only speculate as to whether the commission under Chairman Wheeler's lead would mount a third attempt. Sadly, we now know the answer. Not only is Chairman Wheeler leading us down this path again, the item the commission adopted last week tees up the long dead idea that the Internet is a common carrier.

This reinvigorated willingness to consider regulating the Internet under Title II of the Communications Act, rules that find their roots in the 19th century railroad regulation, and were designed to regulate the world of telephone monopoly, harking back to a world in which twisted copper was the only portal for consumers, the communications network and voice the only service. The modern

communications landscape bears no resemblance to the world Title II was meant to regulate, and application of Title II to the Internet is, at best, a poor fit. Worse still, the practical consequences of reclassification are to give the bureaucrats at the FCC the authority to second guess business decisions and to regulate ever possible aspect of the Internet.

We should all pause and consider the prospect of the FCC as a rate setting authority over Internet access and what that means for innovation in the telephone network of yesteryear. We should also be aware that this path opens a door for states to regulate the Internet. Contrary to any intended effect, the reclassification of broadband service under Title II will harm consumers, halt job creation, curtail innovation and stifle investment.

In sum, at a time when the commission at Congress' direction is taking steps toward even greater growth and innovation across Internet access platforms, the commission is simultaneously contemplating rules that undermine those very efforts and compromise the fundamental approaches of both the Clinton and Bush Administrations that laid the foundation for the Internet that we know today.

It's troubling that some of the actions taken under Chairman Wheeler's watch, the selective inaction of the FCC is equally troubling. Although required under the Telecommunications Act, the Federal Communications Commission has failed to complete its quadrennial review of the limitations on ownership of broadcast properties. It's been six years, six years, since the commission last fulfilled this statutory mandate. Rather than focus on ensuring that the rules reflect reality, however, the chairman has now announced that the commission would essentially scrap the 2010 quadrennial review and begin in earnest its 2014 quadrennial review.

Now, notwithstanding this stale record, the FCC also moved forward to make major changes to the regulations that govern media ownership anyway. It adopted changes to its attribution rules that determine how to count stations toward the local television ownership rule, the FCC also stated that it would begin counting certain shared service agreements toward the local ownership cap. In order to comply with local ownership rules, these pronouncements will likely force broadcasters to divest stations and unwind shared service agreements that are beneficial to ensuring local content in the smaller markets. These changes do not bring benefits to the communities served by these broadcasters, drawing into question how this change could serve the public interest.

Finally, FCC process reform has been an ongoing priority of our subcommittee. It's an issue my colleagues and I are deeply invested in, as demonstrated by the unanimous passage in the House of the bipartisan Federal Communications Commission Process Reform Act on March 11th of this year. Unfortunately, after the events of the past few months I'm sad to say I continue to be troubled by the FCC's seemingly flawed process.

In March the FCC chose to restrict license transfers involving certain shared service agreements which had long been blessed - implicitly blessed by the commission. This action was not debated by the commissioners, nor was it subject to any kind of vote. Rather, it was announced by the chief of the media bureau as a fait accompli.

Recent press reports also allege the chairman's office withheld presentation of revisions to the Open Internet Notice of Proposed Rulemaking from Republicans for as long as 24 hours, after having provided the material to the Democratic commissioners and to the press during the run up to the May 15th FCC Open Meeting. The concern raised by these reports is only compounded by revelations that a substantially revised draft of another item scheduled for vote at the open meeting was not presented to other offices until the closing minutes of the evening before.

According to Commissioner Pai's dissent from the commission's mobile spectrum holdings item, his office received the revised item fewer than 12 hours before the open meeting and the item contained more than 3,000 revisions. So, I find myself channeling Commissioner Rosenworcel, who said of the Open Internet NPRM, that the quote, "Process that got us this rule making today is flawed." Closed quote. Committee has opined in the past that withholding of a revised draft item from other members of the commission until the 11th hour precludes the scrutiny and analysis necessary for ease in decision making. It's my hope that these occurrences were anomalies. Perhaps

Chairman Wheeler will want to commit today to providing his fellow commissioners with adequate and equal time to review proposed orders and rules.

The transformative impact of the evolution of technology from a long - analog to digital, from narrow band to broadband, has forever altered our lives. The evolution continues and the commission has before it the issues I just mentioned and many more, all significant in their impacts on our lives and the economy. Stated in your written testimony, you're eager to build on the progress of the last six months going forward, and I hope working together we can move forward in a direction that protects the success, this critical sector of the economy has enjoyed and facilitates its continued growth and job creation unencumbered by over regulatory overreach.

With that, I yield back, and I recognize my friend and colleague from California, Miss Eshoo, the Ranking Member of the subcommittee for her opening statement.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning to all of my colleagues and welcome back to the committee, Chairman Wheeler. Before we do a - a deep dive into the specifics of the chairman's proposal as well as so many other major issues that are before the FCC, I - I think that it would be well for us to step back and appreciate what I believe is one of the most consequential inventions in human history. This was dreamed of and built by disruptors. It's an American story, it's a product of American genius, the Internet. One word, but it is - it really it takes one's breath away in terms of the arc of history.

It's not only an invention, it has reshaped lives, economies here and around the world, and our thinking and our debate today really should be viewed, I think, through the prism of a critical step that we're taking now in the 21st Century. The Internet is a continuum of change. It's accessible. It's open. And its innovations continue. They empower individuals, entire fields of learning, growing not only our economy but economies around the world, and serving humanity in countless ways. All of this has taken place and here we are, in the second decade of the 21st Century.

So, this is huge. This is huge. This is not what is behind door number one, door number two, door number three, where the price is right. This is not some guessing game. This is huge. This is something, these decisions are going to affect every single American going forward, just as it has in the past and it will continue to. So, all of us, regulators, innovators, consumers, legislators, we have to get this right. The stakes are very high and American cannot lose. It's been our leadership that has advanced the digital age. And, now is not the time and, actually, I don't think there should be ever a time to unravel the values that have really been the hallmarks and the bulwarks of the Internet.

So, the question is: how do we seize the future? At least in my view that's what the question is. I know what I want to see continue: openness, free, accessible, these are also the hallmarks of our democracy. And that's what this has been such an extraordinary export of - of our country.

I know what I don't want. I don't want this to become an auction, selling off the best in bits and pieces, where some pay for faster lanes. Others can't pay, they get stuck in the slow lane. Some giant company blocking content and others discriminating so that they can sell their stuff to keep the other guy's stuff stymied. That's not a very pretty description, but it's a street description of what can be at hand.

I want every day to be essentially the Fourth of July for American innovation. So, that it just keeps bursting. It just keeps bursting. And I see it every day in my Congressional district. Looking forward 10 years. 25 years, 50 years, I want this to continue and we should all be thinking on a grand scale, because this growth and this economic driver should be for everyone. We need smart, savvy regulations - regulatory decision, we need a Congress that's engaged in this, and a Congress that's vigilant, and I plan to be.

So, what should the FCC do? I think, and all the articles you read, there's a debate: should it be 706 or should it be Title II? I think that we have to have a clear eyed understanding of what has made the Internet what it is today and what basic values need to be protected and preserved. And then what that is going to look like. And there's more, on top of all of this. Can anyone here today piece together the effects of a Comcast Time Warner merger and an AT&T DirecTV merger on consumers

and a free and Open Internet? These are massive decisions, and massive pieces that are moving forward. And what's going to happen to innovation?

Mr. Chairman, Chairman Walden, I urge you to convene a hearing to examine these issues here. I think they deserve to be examined and to be debated and questions asked. So, as I said earlier, every person in the country will be affected by the outcome of these decisions that are before the commission and before us. And, so I look forward to questioning Chairman Wheeler today.

I also ask for unanimous consent that two letters, two very important letters be entered into the record. One, signed by more than a hundred venture capitalists and angel investors who support simple, strong, enforceable rules against online discrimination and access fees. And the other, signed by more than 100 Internet companies, small and large. Mostly small. That support a free and Open Internet.

WALDEN: Without objection.

ESHOO: And I don't know if I have any time remaining. No. I think I've gone over. Well, with that, I'll yield back what I don't have.

WALDEN: Thank the gentlelady for her opening statement and the letters. We'll now turn to the full committee chairman, Mr. Fred Upton, from Michigan for opening comments.

UPTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Oversight is a critical part of this committee's work to foster a smaller, more nimble government for the innovation age. We've held lots of hearings, with all of the FCC's commissioners to address issues of national importance, to keep a close eye on the budget, and to ensure that commission process focusing on promoting jobs and innovation, and today's oversight hearing with Chairman Wheeler will continue that discussion to ensure that the FCC works in a way that benefits consumers, industry and certainly the economy. And I thank you for coming today.

There's a lot to discuss. In the six months since Mr. Wheeler was confirmed as char he has addressed a number of items, including media ownership, the IP transition, universal service and just this past week, of course, the incentive auctions and net neutrality. While I appreciate the chairman's leadership, on one of these I have serious concerns with some others.

As an initial matter, Chairman Wheeler started off his chairmanship with a review of FCC procedure, an issue that this subcommittee has spent lots of time working to reform in a bipartisan manner. But, I was disappointed to see some of the process failures that occurred last week. Media reports of an Open Meeting item being circulated to commissioners as late as midnight the evening before the vote on one item, in what seems to be partisan sharing of items with Democrats as much as 24 hours before sharing them with Republicans on another is particularly concerning. Regardless of political affiliation, commissioners must be given adequate and equal time to consider the items on which they're going to vote. Let us all hope that such incidents of favoritism and selective sharing are isolated and not emblematic of the chairman's new operating procedure.

Additionally, I continue to be concerned with the commission's ongoing defiance of its statutory obligations to complete the 2010 quadrennial review of media ownership rules. Despite the commission's woefully outdated record on this issue, it has nonetheless moved forward with changes that effectively bar joint sales agreements and change commission treatment of shared service agreements under its media attribution rules. These actions, in the absence of the statutorily required media ownership review, do raise significant questions about the commission's commitment to making decisions informed by facts and utilizing sound process.

And, lastly, I am troubled by the chairman's insistence on attempting to regulate the Internet under rules that were informed by 19th Century railroad regs, and adopted to regulate the monopoly telephone network of the past. The Internet has indeed flourished under the current light touch regulatory scheme, and subjecting to burdensome regs is a leap in the wrong direction. Title II is inappropriate for the Internet, and attempting to reclassify it would be harmful to consumers, businesses and the future of the Internet as we know it. Nobody wants telephone service to look like

it did in 1984, and we certainly shouldn't wish for our Internet access to return to that rotary phone era either. The communications sector is vital to our national economy and commission auction - action on even small items can have broad impact. I thank Chairman Wheeler for being here today. Look forward to working together toward a bipartisan, measured, transparent and responsible actions that do benefit consumers, job creation and our economy. And I yield my balance of my time to be split between Mr. Latta and Mr. Barton.

LATTA: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman for yielding and Chairman Walden I appreciate you holding this hearing today, and welcome Chairman Wheeler. Thanks for being here.

The communications and technology industry is heralded as a vibrant, dynamic and productive sector of our economy. This is not by accident, as networks and services transition to IP based platforms, they've had the flexibility to grow, advance and evolve in large part because they have not been subjected to the stifling hand of legacy government regulation. We've pursued a light touch regulatory approach to the Internet ecosystem, because we've seen time and again, that it serves as a catalyst for increased investment, innovation, job creation and competition.

As I look forward to develop policies that would further this growth, we'd be remiss to overlook the significance of how regulatory restraint has been fundamental - a fundamental component of the industry's success. That's why I'm concerned with some of the proposals emerging from the FCC, particularly in consideration of reclassifying broadband Internet access service, telecommunications service under Title II of the Communications Act. This policy would be an extreme exercise of government overreach and likely result in failed websites, downgraded and poor customer service, less choice and flexibility for consumers, businesses and stifling of innovation through regulation.

Unwanted attempts to manufacture and shape markets outcomes propose solutions in search of problems impose antiquated regulation will frustrate future progress and innovation. I intend to introduce legislation that prevents the FCC from following through on this misguided regulatory proposal. Mr. Chairman, with that I yield back the balance of my time. And I yield to Mr. Barton.

BARTON: (AUDIO GAP) We just welcomed Chairman Wheeler and the question before the committee today are we soon going to be calling him Mr. Wheeler Dealer? With that, I - I'll put my statement in the record in the interest of time, and yield back to the chairman.

WALDEN: Thank you, Chairman. Gentleman yields back. Now turn to the gentleman from California, Mr. Waxman for opening comments.

WAXMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to welcome back Chairman Wheeler. The Federal Communications Commission had a historic week last week. You are tackling some of the most complex and pressing issues in the communications sector today.

In 2012, Congress gave the FCC a big job: create the world's first incentive auction to ensure that beachfront, low band spectrum is put to its highest economic value, and you established the ground rules for this crucial auction last week. You had a hard job, because you needed to balance four potential - potentially conflicting objectives. One, maximizing the amount of spectrum made available for auction. Two, promote competition. Three, create bands of unlicensed spectrum to spur innovation. And, four, raise money. It appears you hit this one out of the ballpark.

I particularly want to commend you for your work to advance unlicensed spectrum. Your plan will create three channels of beachfront, unlicensed spectrum throughout the nation. The vision of new, super Wi-Fi can now become a reality.

I also want to commend you for promoting competition, by reserving spectrum for competitive carriers. It would be an enormous setback for innovation and consumers if the incentive auction turns the wireless market into a duopoly, dominated by Verizon and AT&T. This auction is the best, and possibly the last, chance the FCC has to invigorate competition.

I would have preferred if you reserved even more spectrum for competitive carriers, but I recognize the pressures you are under and your need to secure three votes. By the way, you may hear

arguments today from Republicans on this committee that you lack the authority to promote competition. These claims are nonsense and contradict the express language of the statute.

Last week you also launched the FCC's third attempt in eight years to protect the Open Internet. You didn't hit this one out of the park, but you didn't need to, either. You made a wide decision to solicit comment on a wide range of options. As I wrote you, this time has come to - wrote you, the time has come to end the legal gymnastics and stop the lobbying games being played by the big broadband providers.

In 2010, Verizon, AT&T and Comcast pled with the FCC not to use its undisputed authority under Title II of the Communications Act. And, then, after FCC did what they wanted, Verizon sued the agency for lacking authority when the FCC agreed with the company. This time, you need a different approach. You should use your Title II authority as a backstop authority to protect the Open Internet. If you want to proceed under Section 706, as your main legal theory that's fine. But you shouldn't water down the Open Internet rules to fit Section 706. Instead, you should get the substance right, and invoke Title II as an independent basis of authority.

The FCC has already lost two rulings in court over the Open Internet. You don't have to choose between weak rules and a weak legal case. You can issue strong rules, and have a strong legal case, if you use a belt and suspender approach to the next rule making. I look forward to exploring this issue with you further in the question period. In the meantime, I want to yield the balance of my time to my friend and colleague, Congresswoman Matsui.

MATSUI: Thank you very much, Ranking Member Waxman, for yielding me time and welcome, Chairman Wheeler. The FCC certainly has a lot on its plate. The commission is considering net neutrality rules, rules on the broadcast incentive auction, the AWS-III auction, USF and E- Rate reforms in two very significant mergers. I'm confident the FCC will be able to demonstrate that it can walk and chew gum at the same time.

This subcommittee should also do its part. For one, I join in calling for the chairman to hold oversight hearings on the two proposed mergers between Comcast and Time Warner. And on AT&T and DirecTV. Both are some of the largest mergers in our nation's telecommunications history. Americans, including many in my district of Sacramento, are seeing the trends towards consolidation, content and peering deals, and how they hear phrases like, paid prioritization, and wondering what is going on? What does all this mean for them, for competition and for the economy?

It has been encouraging that so many Americans are speaking up in support of protecting an Open Internet. I was one who thought the FCC should have taken more time to deliberate on what net neutrality rules the commission should propose. But we are where we are. The proposal has certainly improved over the last few weeks. It is still far from perfect. I support a ban on paid prioritization deals. We can't afford a two tiered Internet system.

I look forward from hearing from you today, and I yield back the balance of my time.

WALDEN: Gentlelady yields back the balance of her time. And with that, you've heard from us, or at least a few of us up here, Mr. Chairman. Now, we're delighted to have you here, and we look forward to your - your opening statement and comments. And thank you, again, for the work you're doing. Go ahead.

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the - of the committee. As you've pointed out, it's been about six months since we last sat down. And what I wanted to do was to highlight some of the things that we have done in that period, and then engage in a dialogue with you with whatever topics that you would like to address.

As has been evidenced by a lot of these comments up here, one of the principal responsibilities of - of the commission is dealing with the spectrum crunch. And we have taken a significant step forward in terms of getting more spectrum out to the market. We had the H Block auction, which raised a billion and a half dollars for 10 MHz spectrum. We have opened a new 100MHz swath in the 5GHz

band, which is already being referred to as gigabyte Wi-Fi, because of the incredible throughput that it enables.

We have begun a proceeding on spectrum sharing in 3.5 GHz, and we announced yesterday that in accord with the mandate of this committee and Congress to auction off AWS-III spectrum. That we will begin the auction on November 13th, and we will finish as per your mandate February - we will license February 22, 2015.

We have also, as some of the committee had noted established a new set of mobile spectrum holding rules, which have been praised by everybody from public interest groups to small operators, to large operators as - as was commented by Mr. Waxman, hitting the ball out of the park. And we have begun the incentive auction process. It's - you mandated us as - as you've said, with a non-trivial task. And we have - we have taken the first important steps to that.

On the question of universal service and what's going on there, we have fulfilled the pledge that I made to this committee last time we were together, to eliminate the infamous quantile regression analysis. And, we're seeking comments on what its replacement should be. We have funded the Connect America fund to provide connectivity to five million more Americans who do not have access to broadband today. That's about a third of the total, and a significant bite out of - out of that. And we're seeking input on multiple additional issues: throughput standards, should we, as - as technology increases and bandwidth increases, do we need to think about higher bandwidth that is supported by the Connect America fund? How do we best deal with the mobile component of broadband delivery in Connect America? And how best to support broadband for rate of return carriers? Those are all proceedings that we have underway.

We have - we have made some significant strides, also, in the area of public safety. We took a good chunk out of the FirstNet $7.5 billion with the H-Band auction. Expect, obviously, that the AWS-III auction will do more and I wouldn't be surprised if we show up at the incentive auction having met the requirement, or at least taking a huge bite out of the requirement for funding FirstNet.

We had a rule making on text to 911, you know, phones aren't used just for talking anymore, but texting and - and so if you want to text to an emergency service provider, we had a rule making on that, the major carriers stepped up and literally in the last couple of days, they all met their goals for implementation on that, which is a terrific step forward. And we've also initiated a further notice on location accuracy, because as wireless usage increases and particularly as it replaces what's - wired line connections inside, and as GPS usage has increased, there's been a fascinating reality that location accuracy has actually declined. And, we've got a notice going on how do we address that, because that's literally a matter of life and death.

As you mentioned we began the 2014 quadrennial review on media issues with a - an expedited delivery date. We closed a loophole that was being exploited to get around the ownership rules, using joint services agreement, and we brought competition back to the retransmission consent negotiations. We have also continued to press on the reform issues that so many of you and I share in common as being important.

Last time we were together, I told you we stood up a task force to deal with this. That task force came back with 154 recommendations. About three quarters of those are now well along their way to being in process. They kind of break into two parts. There are procedural issues that you might associate with administrative procedure act, and things like this. And there's also just how do you make the agency more efficient?

And last week, as many have discussed, we opened a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on preserving and protecting the Open Internet. It's important to recognize that there are no protections for an Open Internet in place today. The January court decision affirmed the commission's authority under Section 706 to deal with the Open Internet, and identified what I call a road map for how to achieve that. And what I have proposed in a method that follows that road map.

I understand that there is a great debate on this issue. I heard the debate here this morning. Between those who say there is no need and those who say it ought to be a regulated utility. What

we have tried to do is to follow the court's direction, the road map, the blueprint, and to come up with a proposal that stops blocking, that prohibits anything that degrades a consumer's access, including prioritization. That asks a broader question about prioritization as to whether it should be banned outright, and if so, how, and then engages in the discussion that we've heard already this morning about Title II versus 706, and collecting a broad scope of learned information on that.

I've consistently said that there is only one Internet. There's not a fast Internet and a slow Internet. There's not special service Internet and non. There is one Internet, and the - when the consumer buys access to the Internet, they are buying access to the full Internet. And that's what our rules attempt to protect. This has become a debate among legal approaches - about legal approaches.

It's a healthy debate. It's a debate that our Notice of Proposed Rulemaking furthers with multiple requests for input, but my position has been similar to that of the Consumer Federation of America, and that is that we ought to explore the powers that are granted in the '96 act, specifically Section 706, keep asking how Title II fits in, but develop a regulatory policy that looks forward not backward, because what we need is a regulatory plan for the 21st Century. And I look forward to discussing that with you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee.

WALDEN: Mr. Wheeler, chairman, thank you for being here. We appreciate your work, and - and your willingness to come and spend some time with us and - and respond to our questions.

I want to pick up on the Middle Class Tax Relief Act, which as you know, was designed to create a forum where broadcasters could volunteer their spectrum up for auction, for mobile broadband use. Never been done quite like proposed, and you've got, we - we all knew that going in, but it seemed like a good balance. The critical term in all of this was that the broadcasters would volunteer to put their spectrum up, they wouldn't be forced into it. That was the agreement. Yet, many of the actions that we've seen coming out of the commission would lead some to believe that the FCC might be bulling broadcasters into giving up spectrum without providing hard data and clear models so that the broadcasters can thoroughly and thoughtfully deliberate and choose to participate or not in this first of its kind auction.

Let me tell you what I'm - I'm thinking here. For example, the joint sales agreements that are now outlawed. These agreements essentially offer broadcasters a viable business model in small markets that would otherwise suffer from lack of service. You're considering the attribution value of UHF stations, such that more broadcasters could end up in violation of that the national cap under the broadcast ownership rule, and the FCC has failed to process broadcasters' petitions for allocation changes from VHF to UHF, even though the petitions were filed prior to Middle Class Tax Relief Act.

And, finally, you're seeking to use a modified version of OET-69. I'm hearing about this to repack broadcasters. This will likely result in reduced coverage for broadcasters that choose to stay in the business, making the business itself less viable. So ,the very people you're trying to incent to put spectrum, so that it'll be available for auction, I think are - are concerned about where the commission's headed in a number of areas. Can you explain to me how these actions will actually encourage broadcasters to participate in this auction?

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the goal here, that we have been trying to follow, is - is not to discourage or to encourage, but to follow through with our responsibilities. And - and that means enforcing and updating our rules ...

WALDEN: Do you think any of these, though, do you think any of these things I've just cited encourage broadcasters to participate more? If you don't have broadcasters showing up with spectrum ...

WHEELER: So, I -I, as I said, Mr. Chairman, I -I don't think that we have an important, as you said, an important and historic role. This is an incentive auction.

WALDEN: I'm aware of that. Yes.

WHEELER: What we have tried to do in the mobile spectrum holdings rule, for instance, is to encourage broadcasters -encourage, I'm sorry, wireless carriers to buy, which creates the incentive. The interesting thing, there was a -a report by one of the Wall Street analysts last week who said we expect the greatest risk to this auction, broadcasters not showing up, just dropped. Because the fact that AT&T suggested that they're ready to bid between $9 and $18 billion ...

WALDEN: Right.

WHEELER: ...for 20 to 40MHz, this analyst said should send positive signals to broadcasters. So, our goal is to...

WALDEN: All right ...

WHEELER: ...is to create this marketplace and we're not trying to take regulatory action ...

WALDEN: All right, well ...

WHEELER: in -in unrelated areas that would ...

WALDEN: But you are taking lots of regulatory actions, and it does have an effect on the marketplace. I mean, those two are facts. (AUDIO GAP) If -if we don't have these broadcasters coming to the table voluntarily, there won't be spectrum available. So, I want to steal a line from the distinguished gentleman from Michigan, and that this one I refer to as Mr. Dingle, to see if I can get, just sort of some yes or nos here. Will you commit that the FCC will not score television stations based on their (AUDIO GAP). That's yes, actually. That you will commit that you will not score it. Will you commit the FCC, is that correct?

WHEELER: Yes.

WALDEN: Yes. You will commit the FCC will ensure that broadcasters' cost to reallocate are covered by the $1.75 billion relocation fund?

WHEELER: We believe that that fund will be adequate. That's - that's ....

WALDEN: OK.

WHEELER: ...that's what Congress told us to spend. Period.

WALDEN: And will you commit to completing frequency coordination with Canada and Mexico before the auction?

WHEELER: I think the issue there is what is the term complete? As you know on the DTV transition it never came down to actual signing on paper, but we understood where each other were, and I am very confident that we will be at that kind of a point.

WALDEN: Because that's critical. And will you commit to revoking only those low powered TV and translator licenses that are necessary to complete the auction?

WHEELER: Yes.

WALDEN: Thank you. And, I think I'm out of time. So, with that, I would now yield to the gentlelady, my friend from California, Miss Eshoo.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A lot of things to discuss, but I want to bore down on, or bore into some of the particulars on your recent proposal relative to -to the Internet, on net neutrality. I've argued, many advocates for net neutrality have argued that paid prioritization represents a fundamental departure from the Internet as we know it. I -I'm just kind of restating what is obvious, but I think that when you have hundreds of thousands of people communicating from across the

country to you on it, that it is -that it's important to raise. Now, as a policy, not as a legal question, do you think that paid prioritization should be blocked outright?

WHEELER: So, I have said, Congresswoman, that I don't believe there ought to have and have nots.

ESHOO: No, no, just answer my question.

WHEELER: That -- that -that ...

ESHOO: Just tell me. Do you think that it should be blocked outright?

WHEELER: We have asked that question in the rulemaking. And - and what I have said is that I believe that under Section 706, anything that is anti-competitive or anti-consumer is competitively unreasonable and therefore can and should be blocked. And that becomes the trigger for how you deal with paid prioritization.

ESHOO: Yes, now what happens ...

WHEELER: On the question of per se that you asked...

ESHOO: Yes.

WHEELER: ...we've specifically asked how and whether.

ESHOO: Now, what happens if the FCC determines that there's no outright -no way to outright - create an outright ban, and these paid agreements under 706, where does that leave you? Where does that leave the country?

WHEELER: So - so when the court gave us our instructions, they talked about what they called the virtuous cycle, and that is that - that content drives the need for conduit, which then creates the opportunity for content. And that this cycle is what it is our responsibility to protect. And that's - that's what 706 authorizes us to protect. And so what my proposal is is that we take them up on that. And we say if there is something that interferes with that virtuous cycle, which I believe paid prioritization does, that then we can move against it.

ESHOO: Yes. All right. But, now let's move over to Title II. Title II is described, it depends on who's describing it, it's either a scourge --it's been compared to the early railroad regulations in our country - to being the flip side, you know, the savior title. I talked about in my opening statement about the - the - one of the imprimaturs of the Internet has been consistent innovation. And, while there are those that, and I understand why people would move to Title II, because they want the Internet protected, and these values are -they're worth protecting. But I also believe that there is room for, in Title II, for heavy handed regulation, and I don't think that, well, let me put it this way, I think that we need a light but strengthful legal touch in this. Because the values are so essential, and people across the country, and in the world, I mean, I'm hearing from people from different parts of the world as well, are calling for these protections. How would you envision - how would you handle constraint under Title II?

WHEELER: Well ...

ESHOO: In terms of being the chief regulator?

WHEELER: So, as you know ...

ESHOO: Have you given thought to this?

WHEELER: Pardon me?

ESHOO: Have you given thought to this?

WHEELER: Yes, ma'am.

ESHOO: OK.

WHEELER: And -and as you know ...

ESHOO: As some people say share it with me.

WHEELER: As you know Title II, there is nothing in Title II that prohibits paid prioritization. As a matter of fact we have all kinds of paid prioritization exists ...

ESHOO: You're ...

WHEELER: ...today.

ESHOO: You're worrying me by bringing that up first. But anyway, go ahead.

WHEELER: So -so that, no, because it goes to you, I think, the root question of yours which is how do you forbear from that?

ESHOO: Yes.

WHEELER: OK? And - and so - so it is possible to go through and say, yes, we will not do this, we will not do this, we will not do this. In the - in the wireless context, interestingly enough, Congress created that - created wireless as a common carrier, but then specifically said but this doesn't apply, and this doesn't apply, and this doesn't apply.

ESHOO: Yes.

WHEELER: We can do that as a commission, as well. It has been proposed that that's an approach to take. There are also those who throw up their hands and ooh in great concern over that because they say, OK, well this commission may do this, but what about the next commission? And you can't bind a future commission by making those kinds of - of determinations. So, what we have done in this NPRM is to ask the specific question about here's Section 706, here's Title II, let's compare them and contrast them with each other, and tell us what the pluses and minuses and the best ways to get through this are? And I think that leads us to the kind of answer that you're asking for today.

WALDEN: The gentlelady's time's expired. We'll go now to the gentlelady from Tennessee, Miss Blackburn, the Vice Chair of the full committee, for her questions.

BLACKBURN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And Mr. Wheeler, we thank you for taking the time to come and be with us. You've got a feisty term going over there, at the FCC, and in Tennessee we would say you're kicking up a little dust. And, it's causing concern.

Many of our content creators have a tremendous amount of concern about your approach, and many of our health care innovators, who are looking at apps in telemedicine concepts and things of that nature, are also expressing concern. And I think that probably your actions have inserted a good bit of uncertainty into the innovation sector that is looking at how we best utilize all things Internet to - for quality of life and access for economic development for health care, for - for innovation and I've got just a couple of simple questions for you.

First of all, on cost benefit analysis, and I thank you that last night your team sent a letter over to us on that question, but what concerns me was that in the letter you say that this is just a tool. Cost benefit analysis is just one of many tools that would go into your decision. And your NPRM does not include an initial cost benefit analysis, and your predecessor, Mr. Genachowski, in this committee came before us and assured us he was going to use this and I'm actually going to read you his statement that he gave to us. He said, during my tenure I brought particular focus to this process, including the - by directing the early involvement of our chief economist and the analytical process of

rulemaking, and by having FCC staff consult with the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs on best practices in conducting cost benefit analysis.

And I - I think it is an incredibly important component of this, to look at what the cost of net neutrality rules would be to the consumer, and also to industry, so I want to know from you: are you going to give us a commitment right now that you will conduct a thorough and extensive cost benefit analysis of the actual cost to the consumer and to industry on these rules?

WHEELER: Thank you, Ms. Blackburn, I agree that cost benefit analysis are crucial to decision making. And in this rulemaking we specifically ask what are the costs of one approach or another? And what are the benefits, one or another? So that we can collect that information and have that kind of analysis. I agree with the importance of cost benefit analysis.

BLACKBURN: OK. Let me ask you this, also. You know, the commission's fund really comes from those that are regulated by the FCC, but we have some that are not. They're impacted by this, but they are not regulated and paying those fees, so in the net neutrality context, for example, companies like Google and Netflix want the FCC to act on their behalf, and petition or visit the agency, if you will, in support of those efforts, but they free ride because they are not paying the fees and bearing that part of the regulatory burden. So, since they seem so ready and willing to rely on regulation to help them, with their business models, how would you recommend that those entities share in the cost, pay their part of the costs, funding the agency?

WHEELER: With all respect, that's above my pay grade. That's a decision that - that this committee and the Congress can make in setting those rules ...

BLACKBURN: I'm asking for what your recommendation would be? They come and they lobby you, and ...

WHEELER: So ...

BLACKBURN: ...and they're pushing the net neutrality rules, and while they may like what you are saying, because they want you to step in, we have a lot of people out there who are paying the fees that are not in favor of what you are doing, and we have a lot of innovators who are not in favor of what you are doing, and your door has the name chairman on it, so I'm asking what is your perspective?

WHEELER: So, our - our effort in all of this is to represent the American people, not company a or company b. We have been told by the Congress, from whom we can collect regulatory fees and we do. If there is a decision that we should collect regulatory fees from somebody else, that's something we obviously will take. If there is a decision that we should expand regulatory authority over other entities, that's obviously something we should do. But that is a decision that is out of our hands.

BLACKBURN: I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back. The chairman recognizes the gentlelady from California, Miss Matsui, for her questions.

MATSUI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Wheeler, I'd like to understand, given the success of the Internet and the absence of prioritization, precisely what types of paid prioritization you believe will speed the deployment and adoption of broadband Internet access services? Given that paid prioritization agreements would be used as a barrier of entry to startup and small business, what prioritization arrangements, specifically, will be better for the Internet than the no prioritization norm we have today?

WHEELER: What we are trying to do in this item is to say that anything that affects that virtuous cycle that the court talked about, and I talked about before, is not appropriate. Is unlawful. And that would include paid prioritization. Now, the court told us to look at this on a case by case basis. We have asked the question in the rulemaking as to whether we should look at it generically, and say it's

all out. And we're soliciting comments on that. But, you know, the concept of paid prioritization when I buy Internet access, I am buying the full pipe. I am buying access to everything that's out there, and if somebody comes along and says, oh, no, you can't get this unless you pay more, that's unreasonable, and should be banned. If somebody comes along and says to a content provider, you can't get on unless you pay more, that's unreasonable and that would not be permitted.

MATSUI: OK, well. You know, as for my part, other than public - public safety, I believe paid prioritization should be banned. I also think another concern here is the last mile equivalent we're seeing in peering. The fact that there's so much uncertainty with paid prioritization is troublesome. If this concept moves forward, we could inadvertently block the next Google or Amazon from the market without even knowing it. I'm concerned that your hands may be tied here. Even if the commission wanted to ban anti-competitive paid prioritization deals, you may not have the authority or tools to do so.

Chairman Wheeler, if you were to explain to my constituents what is occurring in the market right now with the two mergers, content and peering agreements, and now paid prioritization could be legitimized under a commercially reasonable standard. What would you tell them? Not just what it means for them, but also for competition and for economy as a whole

WHEELER: I would tell them that I felt that paid prioritization was commercially unreasonable, and therefore could be dealt with. And, that, on the question of peering, that that is a separate issue that the commission needs to look at and will be looking at. But I would emphasize that I am strong supporter of the Open Internet.

And I would also tell them a story that when I was an entrepreneur, I was shut out of cable systems, because they were closed networks. And, I would come with a new product and couldn't get on. And, then when I was a venture capitalist, before taking this job, that the companies that I was backing had to have access to the Internet, could only succeed if they had access to the Internet. So, I would say to them that I believe in an Open Internet. I've experienced closed networks and the harm they cause to innovation, and that I want to protect and preserve an Open Internet.

MATSUI: you know, I think this is a very critical time. When I have ordinary people, probably (ph) off the street, coming to me and asking me about all these things they've heard, because people today really depend on the Internet. Ordinary citizens, the entrepreneurs who are concerned about this, and who else we know - we may not know out there. So, it's very concerning to all of us that there is a potential that we may have a situation where we won't have an Open Internet. And I would also like you to consider some of these mergers. I mean, we feel like we're kind of in the Wild West of the digital economy now. And now with mergers coming forward. Can you commit to us, these large mergers that are before us, they may be different from each other, but can you commit to us here that the FCC will carefully scrutinize these deals? With a focus toward public interest?

WHEELER: Without hesitation. And with complete affirmation.

MATSUI: OK, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: Chair now recognizes former chairman of the full committee, Mr. Barton, for his questions.

BARTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to echo the last question you asked Chairman Wheeler about low powered television. You and I are working on a bill, hopefully, to give them some protection. We understand that under current law they - they - they don't have standing when they repackage, but we hope to give them some at least priority or some help if and when we do do these repackaging of the spectrums. So I wanted to commend you for that last question.

I've listened Chairman Wheeler, to my friends on the Democratic side repeatedly talk about the Open Internet and whether you should try to regulate it under Section 706 or Title II. I think you're asking a false question. The Internet is open.

The question is what does the FCC do in terms of monitoring to make sure that it stays open? And, the analogy I'm going to use is not perfect, but I think it is instructive and educational. The airways

that we fly back and forth from Washington to our districts are open, but they are regulated and monitored for a number of reasons by the FAA. If I call up American Airlines, and I say, I want to go from Washington -Reagan to DFW, they quote me a price, let's say it's $350 one way. But when I show up with my ticket, I get one seat on that plane. I don't' get to take a hundred of my friends, and put them on the plane with me because I happen to buy the ticket first, and show up first.

BARTON: So, it's obvious that it would be great for $350 if I could fill the plane.

But we allow the airlines to price by volume. You want one ticket, it's $350. You want two tickets, it's $700. Maybe if you want to buy the whole plane, they do give you a discount. It's only $250, but we don't let the first person to buy the ticket use the whole plane for $350.

And for all the bold talk about open access, what people are really trying to do is, you know, I want to pay a minimum price and get all this broadband, and I want to download everything from Netflix, and I don't want to pay if I download every movie they rent, or vice versa.

Netflix pays a basic price, and they can service 10 million people, instead of whatever it would be. So, you know, this -- this -- the broadband providers who have spent billions and billions of dollars, and have -- have networked this country and provided access through the competitive market principles, are not going to somehow, all of a sudden decide, as long as the FCC, which under your chairmanship, makes sure that it stays a competitive model.

They're -- they're going to continue to provide an open internet, but they may want to provide based on volume of use, some sort of a pricing system that allocates that it isn't a limited spectrum.

I see no reason to try to shoehorn some sort of a regulatory approach into either Title II, or Section 706, you know. Explain to me why my approach, which is what we've been doing and which works, is the wrong approach.

WHEELER: Let me see if I can respond to both parts of your question. First, on LPTV, we -- as I said to the chairman, we do not want to move those who don't have to be moved as part of it.

We also believe that there is opportunities to go to digital and the new efficiencies that that brings, just like it did in the -- in the Class A stations. And thirdly, we're opening a new rulemaking to specifically deal with that. So because we agree with the importance of low power and -- and translators.

To your -- to the second part of your question, let me take the chairman's hat off, and put my consumer hat on for a second, because two weekends ago, I called my ISP, and increased my capacity, because I wanted faster true plan (ph).

And they said for another $10 a month, we'll give you another, what turned out to be like, 20 MB. That's a marketplace transaction. That's something that's accepted now. That is not something that is part of the open internet rules.

What the open internet rules are trying to say, is that when I buy that capacity, I've bought that ride to every place on the internet, that somebody can't turn around and say oh, but you can't get that, or somebody can't turn around and say well, you can deliver that, Tom, but you've got to pay me an extra fee.

And so the concept of the open internet is that I have bought this broad pathway, and I have the right to use it, unfettered, in a -- on an open basis, and that's what we're trying to deliver in this rulemaking.

BARTON: I'm not -- my time's expired. I'm not trying to oppose that, but if you want -- you're looking at it from the consumer standpoint, that everybody should have access, but if you are a provider of content, you should be willing to pay more based on the number of items you're going to put at any given time on the open internet, so that everybody has access to it.

Because if you have a constrained pipeline, somebody has to make a decision how you put things into the pipeline, whether it's the airplane, or whether it's the airways, or the internet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

WALDEN: Gentleman yields back, the chair now recognizes the former chairman on the Democratic side, Mr. Waxman.

CHAIRMAN HENRY WAXMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Wheeler, I commended your leadership earlier in my opening statement, about the spectrum auction, so I want to ask questions about a different subject, and that's net neutrality.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

WAXMAN: I commend you for tackling this issue, and for seeking comment on a broad range of issues, but I have serious concerns about some proposals that have been discussed. You've said that there would be presumption against broadband providers like Verizon, AT&T, and Comcast, entering into arrangements that give exclusive advantage, to their affiliates. Is that right?

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

WAXMAN: OK. What I don't understand, is why this presumption against exclusive arrangements would be limited to affiliates. Suppose Netflix entered into an exclusive arrangement with AT&T or Comcast for faster speeds for its videos that block competitors like Amazon Prime, from getting similar service.

I think that would be a serious threat to competition and an open internet, yet your proposal does not create a presumption against these exclusive arrangements. Why would you allow any exclusive arrangement that guarantees some content providers faster speeds than competitors can access?

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Waxman. This goes to the -- back to this virtuous (ph) cycle that the court talked about, and you know, it was interesting, yesterday in the Wall Street Journal, there was an article that interviewed a bunch of infrastructure manufacturers about the impact on that neutrality.

And they flat out said that if you offer fast lanes for some, you're going to degrade service for others. And I think that's at the heart of what you're talking about here. That would be commercially unreasonable under our proposal.

WAXMAN: OK. The problem with exclusive arrangements is they would let some companies block their competition from similar advantages. In markets where there are -- there is no, or only limited choices of broadband providers, that would stifle openness and competition.

I just want to say to you that I'm opposed to any form of paid prioritization. Paid prioritization divides the internet into the haves and the have-nots, and it will entrench the big companies at the expense of startups.

My understanding is that you've asked comment on a multi-factor test for determining whether -- determining when paid prioritization is permissible, and when it would be prohibited. My concern is that this will create a lot of ambiguity, and a lot of litigation.

I believe right lines would be much better for the market, and for innovation, so I'm going to ask you to consider a presumption against all paid prioritization as you develop final rules. Will you -- will you agree to consider this option?

WHEELER: Absolutely, and we have asked in the NPRM (ph) specifically whether, and if so, how do you accomplish it? So that is -- that is a ripe debate that is in the NPRM right now, sir.

WAXMAN: My understanding is that the reason you had proposed a complicated, multi-factored test, is concern about the court ruling. And I agree that if you're limited to acting under section 706, your options could be limited.

But if you are not limited to Section 706, you could establish a presumption against paid prioritization under Title II, and that's why it's so important for us -- for you to use your Title II authority as back stop authority.

You don't have to settle for a weak open internet rules if you exercise your full powers. And I'm glad you're looking at that possibility. Let me close by thanking you for seeking comment on the back stop proposal in the proposal adopted last week.

I'm committed to working with you to ensure the commission adopts strong and open internet protections for consumers and innovators, while encouraging continued investment in the online content and services we all rely on and enjoy today.

I think it's important that we get the substance right. We tried three times, we meaning you, at the FCC, because of the concern that the consumer have full access to what is on the internet, and full access to be able to use the internet to its greatest and maximum potential, and I would hate to see that net neutrality in any way be diminished if we have an opportunity under the law, as we look at it, to make sure that we get the substance right.

WALDEN: Thank you.

WAXMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back his time, and now turn to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio, the vice chair of the subcommittee, Mr. Latta.

LATTA: Well thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and again, Chairman Wheeler, thanks very much again for being here. There has been some discussion on Title II, and I'd like to follow up on some of that questioning.

Central premise of Title II regulation always been that the regulation was a substitute for competition. And two parts with a question, then. What types of findings have the commission made to justify entertaining the idea of Title II regulation of the internet?

And then do you believe the SEC should have to make a specific showing that of a market failure reform proposing rate regulation, or reporting requirements, that are the precursor to rate regulation?

WHEELER: So again, this -- these are the kinds of questions that we have tried assiduously not to decide on, but to ask about in this rulemaking. We're going to have to make a decision on exactly those questions at some point in time.

But what we want to achieve, is a record that gives everybody the opportunity to opine on that, so that we can be appropriately informed.

LATTA: Well let me ask you, what's your time line on that, then?

WHEELER: So we've got 60 days for comments, and then 45 days for reply comments.

LATTA: OK, so are you saying then that you're not ruling out rate regulation?

WHEELER: I'm saying we have asked the question about Title II, and -- and the full panoply of Title II. Yes, sir.

LATTA: OK, well -- let me ask you this, what have you been hearing from the community thus far, especially when you're saying that you are asking those questions, what have you -- what have you been hearing out there?

WHEELER: Excuse me. Well we have -- we've heard very little on the record thus far. There has been a great outpouring of people speaking to us through the press, people speaking to us through letters, and this sort of thing.

And as I indicated at the outset, there are two, diametrically opposed positions. One is that you should not do anything, and the other is that it should go all the way to being regulated like a public utility.

And our job is to find that which is best for consumers and best for encouraging investment in the internet, which itself is best for consumers.

LATTA: Let me go on with this question, while you've resolved some of the issues in the 5 GHz rulemaking, there are number of issues outstanding that have the potential to open up another 195 MHz of spectrum for unlicensed use. What is the FCC's and your plan for tackling the open issues?

WHEELER: In the 5 GHz?

LATTA: Right.

WHEELER: So there's -- there's -- actually think about 5 GHz, and 3 bytes. The first byte we've -- we've dealt with. That's the lower end of 5 GHz. In the middle component of 5 GHz, there are lots of national defense kind of activities, radar, and this sort of thing.

And the question is how can you work out sharing arrangements there? And we're working with those parties. On the upper end, is where you have spectrum that has been identified for intelligent traffic, ITFS, kinds of activities.

And that is based around the 802.11 standard. There are strong feelings about the need to protect that. I believe that it's possible to work together to meet both sets of needs, since it's based around a common 802.11 standard.

LATTA: Yeah, and in my remaining time, let me ask this last question, the SEC's 2011 universal service transformation, or transformation order, requires phone companies to set minimum prices that they can charge their consumers if they -- if the provider wants to continue receiving the same amount of funds from the US (inaudible) to support the high cost of the business.

So as a result, many of our rural consumers, the lot that I represent out there, will see the rate forward (ph) go from $14 to about $20.46. And while the communications act requires rural rates to be reasonably comparable to rates in urban areas, as affordable, reasonably comparable does not necessarily mean that the rural rate should be exactly the same as the urban rate when the rural customer might be able to call, only a few thousand people locally want urban call many times more than that.

And then should the rate be the same in the rural areas where the average income is significantly lower than it might in fact not be as affordable. The rate floor continues to be a concern for many of our telecommunications providers in my district, and other servicing rural America, where I understand that the SEC has agree to phase in the increase at $2.00 per year, and proposed a start date until -- or postponed that start date until after 2015.

Can you explain why the FCC interprets the reasonably comparable rates to mean exactly the same rates between urban and rural areas, considering the smaller pipe (ph) relation of rural calling areas, and in fact, that it was what is affordable in the largest urban areas is not what is also affordable to consumers in the rural.

WHEELER: Thank you. I'm glad you asked that question, it's an important question. The -- so -- so, as you stated, we're supposed to make sure that things are reasonably comparable. The reason for that is to make sure that the subsidies that some Americans are paying to deliver service to other Americans, don't end up being subsidies that some Americans are paying to reduce the bills of other Americans, but to overcome the high cost of getting it to them.

In some instances, it has been unfortunately the former, there are in 16 states, there are situations where consumers are paying -- some consumers are paying $5.00 a month for telephone service, because they're being subsidized by people in your district and other districts.

We need to get our arms around that. So what we've done, is to say OK, step 1 is Jack (ph) goes into effect January 15. Then what we're going to do is -- and that can't be more than $2.00 by the way.

And then what we're going to do is go back out with another survey that hits the kind of granularity you were talking about in terms of service, including long distance and these kinds of things, so that we have a better understanding of exactly what comparable means, and then lock at that issue again.

LATTA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My time has expired and I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back. The chair now recognizes chairman emeritus of the committee, the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. Dingell.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, I thank you for your courtesy, and I commend you for holding this hearing. I'd like to welcome our old friend, Mr. Wheeler, back, fine public servant, and we're looking forward to good things of him.

Mr. Chairman, last week's open meeting, the commission adopted a number of big ticket items, including a new net neutrality NPRM, and draft rules for the upcoming incentive auction of broadcaster spectrum.

Concerning the former, I commend you for your efforts to keep the internet open, and will be watching the matter closely, as it goes forward. It's my hope the commission will work with this committee to ensure that any final action it takes to conform to its statutory authority, especially concerning Title II reclassification.

Now with respect to the incentive auction, I am interested in what the committee intends to do about treating broadcasters fairly. My questions will require a simple yes or no answer.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to begin with a parochial matter. Section 6403 B1 of the middle class tax relief and job creation act specifies that the commission may, subject to international (inaudible) along the border with Mexico and Canada, reassign and relocate and reallocate broadcast frequencies. Is that correct?

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Now Chairman Wheeler, in the commission's joy (ph) to 2013 response to my letter of inquiry about the reverse auction, Gary Epstein, head of the commission's incentive auction taskforce stated the following, the language used in section 6403 B1 of the action is quote, identical to that used by the commission in describing its handling of the earlier DTV transition, in which the commission adopted our proposed allotments for these statements, subject to our continuing negotiations with Canada, notwithstanding the broadcaster's request.

To the contrary, one here could reasonably assume, based on the statement, that the commission may reassign and reallocate broadcast frequencies pursuant to the act, while negotiations with Canada and Mexico are still ongoing. Is that correct?

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: I'm going to ask you to submit for the record how you're going to assure protection to the broadcasters and the viewers in that process.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Now Mr. Wheeler, does the commission believe that concluding negotiations with Canada and Mexico, prior to commencing the reverse action, will give broadcasters, particularly in border regions, greater certainties and likely to increase the unwillingness to participate in this auction? Yes, or no?

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Wheeler, does the commission expect to conclude negotiations with Canada and Mexico prior to commencing the reverse action next year? Yes, or no?

WHEELER: The expectation is it is the goal.

DINGELL: You may not make it, is what you're saying.

WHEELER: It is -- it is the goal, and as we -- as I answered you in your previous point ...

DINGELL: Would you notify -- would you notify this committee as soon as that becomes likely or dangerous?

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Now in this matter, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to state for the record that it's my understanding, based on exchange with counsel at the energy and commerce subcommittee on communications and technology, December 1, 2011, markup of the border of the act, that border negotiations are to be completed before the commission reassigns broadcast channels.

I hope that Chairman Wheeler will honor that understanding. I hope, Mr. Chairman, you understand I have great apprehensions about that, because of the impact it should have on the broadcast, and also on my constituents.

WHEELER: Mr. Chairman, this is -- I share your deep concern about this, not only because of the very legitimate concern you have about your constituents and other Americans getting service along the border, but also the candlevering (ph) effect, if you will, as it then -- as spectrum allocation then goes into the middle of the country.

I can assure you this is an incredibly high priority. I can also assure you that our Canadian colleagues have been very forthcoming and very helpful ...

DINGELL: I would like to have this submitted for the record in response to correspondence. Now, Mr. Chairman, I note that the commission proposes to use a method called quote, scoring, to set individual prices for each broadcast station participation -- or participating in the reverse auction. Is that correct?

WHEELER: It is one of the things we're considering ...

DINGELL: One ...

WHEELER: We have not made the final decision yet.

DINGELL: There are others?

WHEELER: There -- we're looking at others ...

DINGELL: I'm going to ask that you submit, in response to correspondence, a proper answer on that ...

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: ... particular point. Now, Chairman Wheeler, is the commission concerned that scoring, as opposed to competitive bidding, will decrease broadcasters willingness to participate in the reverse auction? Yes, or no?

WHEELER: No.

DINGELL: Now Chairman Wheeler, in general, do you intend to work in good faith with broadcasters as the commission defines the rules for reverse auction in order to situate (ph) that their needs are met, as the action (ph) specifies -- as the act specifies, to the best of your abilities? Yes, or no?

WHEELER: Absolutely.

DINGELL: I want to quote Admiral Rickrover (ph), who once observed, the devil's in the details, but so is salvation. I'm hoping you're going to see that the salvation is there and not just that we are going to find ourselves amidst trouble because of carelessness, not by you, but by some of your over-enthusiastic and less-than- competent predecessors. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield my time.

WALDEN: The gentleman's time has expired, and has yielded back. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. Shimkus for five minutes.

SHIMKUS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Chairman Wheeler, welcome. I'm going to try to get through three pretty quick points if I can. As you know, there's a lot of concerns on this side of the dials (ph) and this Title II debate ...

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

SHIMKUS: ... and -- and the basic premise is how do you -- for me, is how do you build out? You want -- we want more, not less. Does a regulated monopoly incentivize more build out, more pipelines, or does a competitive, capital-intensive, incentivized, market-driven process?

I believe the second. So that's -- we've gone from copper, to cable -- collective (ph) cable, satellite, cellular, fiber, a lot of different ways for data to now flow. And we want to encourage that.

And I don't -- I think only -- I kind of like the idea of incentivizing people who want to use more, making them pay more, to incentivize those who carry, someone may want to build out more. That's kind of where I come from. My position is more pipes, not less, more pipes not regulated pipe, competitive markets versus controlled markets.

So because here's an example of that -- a recent -- on May 16th, the Wireline Competition Bureau released a public notice seeking comment on state regulation of dial-up internet traffic. Dial-up. I mean that's a dinosaur. It's hardly used.

So there's -- there is no -- you want to talk about uncertainty for the state and for the providers, when we're still in this process, more than 15 years after the SEC first discussed the treatment of dial-up, we're -- we're now to this process? So that's just kind of a statement. That doesn't create certainty. Would you -- would you agree?

WHEELER: Well what we're trying to do, Mr. Shimkus, is to -- is to create an environment that assures consumers and those who rely on the internet that there is openness, while at the same point in time, encouraging investment.

SHIMKUS: Well let's just go back. I get that, but does that -- this is dial-up.

WHEELER: We still -- so if we're dealing with the dial-up -- I mean that's really -- that's a -- that's a different topic ...

SHIMKUS: Well it is, but it's not, because it's -- it's the whole debate about certainty, and if -- we actually have a dinosaur application, then why are we even ...

WHEELER: So we still have 40 percent of our consumers on dial-up telephone lines. One of the challenges that we have is how do we evolve that into an all IP environment, which would be, you know, an internet-like environment.

And one of the things that I have -- I have said to this committee is that we believe that this IP transition is a crucial part in how do we ...

SHIMKUS: OK, I get it, I'm going to try to (inaudible) ...

WHEELER: OK, sorry, sir.

SHIMKUS: In one deals in both of our sweet spot is kind of the public service, 9-11, the spectromac (ph) call for the creation of the do not call registry, and the automatic dialing issue. The commission keeps saying there's not enough money to do this.

I would ask you to check into that. I think there's a lot of money in the FCC. And because obviously this automatic dialing freezes up lines, and it's a public safety concern, and I would hope that we would work together to try to -- you would take that into consideration.

WHEELER: I would take a look forward to that. Let me -- let me get back, and I will come to ...

SHIMKUS: And you know, myself and the ranking member have been better (ph) involved in this issue, as you have in -- in the early days also. The last thing I want to -- from rural America, is kind of just there seems to be a de facto freeze on this shared service agreement.

And this isn't a broadcast sector, as you know. The local -- when you represent a third of the state of Illinois, as I do now, 33 counties, these shared agreements are now helping to provide, and we've got real-world cases, better local service to the local folks, than -- than less.

And I guess the basic question in my last minute is what's your plan to ensure that FDAC (ph) action on television transfer application is predictable, consistent, fair, and timely?

WHEELER: So -- thank you, Mr. Shimkus. What we -- what we have done, is to put out a public notice on how we look at transfers. And I consider this to be a procedural reform. Because the way it used to be, was broadcasters would -- would -- would come together in some kind of a -- a -- a merger situation, and they would come to the commission, which was a black box, that had constantly changing, well, this we'll look at it this way, we'll look at it that way.

And what I wanted to do was to say OK, what are the things that we will look at? So that everybody has notice, everybody understands, and it is not a black box. And that's the process that we have now established to be able to make those kinds of decisions.

SHIMKUS: Thank you. I know my time has expired. I appreciate it if you'd keep me in mind as these things move forward, it would be helpful.

WHEELER: Yes, sir. Thank you.

WALDEN: The chair now recognizes the gentlelady from Colorado, Ms. DeGette, for five minutes.

DEGETTE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to follow up, Chairman Wheeler, on this discussion about the open internet NPRM (ph). Leading up to the commission's vote last week, there was a robust public exchange among ISPs, and edge (ph) providers, and others, about the impact of paid prioritization on their business models. And as Ms. Matsui said, we've been hearing from a lot of our constituents about this as well.

Now you talked very briefly about -- a few minutes ago, about what the FCC is doing in its review process to look at the effect of paid prioritization on consumers' broadband bills. Wondering if you can comment about what you think the proposed open internet rules will have on access to new and innovative content online. Because that's one reason why we're concerned about these proposed rules.

WHEELER: The -- it should be encouragement of new and innovative programming, because of the fact that it assures that they will be able to reach the consumer, unfettered, and without having to pay special fees.

DEGETTE: And what impact do you think that the rules will have on average broadband speeds, network investments, and overall quality of service?

WHEELER: That's a terrific question ...

DEGETTE: Thank you.

WHEELER: ... I'm glad you asked it. You know, one of the fascinating things is that 2010, when the open internet rules were first proposed, since then, there has been hundreds of millions of dollars of broadband investment made. So the rules don't seem to have a chilling effect. And, speeds have been doing this, going up. And this is what the court was talking about when they talk about this virtuous cycle because everything -- in the internet ecosystem everything adds to everything else.

DEGETTE: So what do you think that the new rules, what effect will they have on these issues?

WHEELER: I believe ...

DEGETTE: You just talked about what's been happening...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: Yes, we believe that the rules that we have designed will continue to encourage investment in broadband, continue to encourage increases in throughput and as a result continue to encourage innovation from edge providers.

DEGETTE: And so are you saying also that average broadband speeds will increase?

WHEELER: Yes ma'am.

DEGETTE: And overall quality of service will increase?

WHEELER: Yes ma'am, they'll need to.

DEGETTE: All right. OK, one last thing no one has raised yet, is the issue of industry consolidation. And this year we've seen two major merger proposals in the telecom industry. Now clearly the industry's going through a period of significant technological and economic change. And some folks think that consolidation is the best approach to this. So all things being equal, do you think industry consolidation is good or bad for the consumers?

WHEELER: So, I read the other day that we are probably the -- in the last decade the biggest year for telecom mergers and what we're doing is opening a record on each of them. And we'll make that decision based on the record that is developed for each...

DEGETTE: ...So you don't have an opinion at this point?

WHEELER: I don't want to prejudge the record.

DEGETTE: OK. And as you know congress has recognized the importance and unique character of the telecommunications marketplace by giving the FCC the authority to review mergers under the public interest standard. Do you think the conditions the FCC placed on the Comcast/NBCU merger were effective at promoting the public interest?

WHEELER: Oh, wow, you know, that is something that -- a decision that my predecessor made. I know that it had impact. My goal is to look at the record that we have presented before me and my colleagues and make a decision on those.

DEGETTE: Do you think it promoted the public interest? Yes or no.

WHEELER: I think that there were multiple things in it that promoted the public interest.

DEGETTE: And what other lessons do you take away from commissions previous attempts to promote the public interests by placing conditions on mergers as you go forward?

WHEELER: That it is an important role that the commission has. You know, there is a lot of discussion as to why should there be any authority of the FCC to look at public interest obligations.

DEGETTE: Right.

WHEELER: I strongly believe that there is a big difference between the kind of statutory rigidity that the justice department is required to look at mergers with and the kind of broader public interest issues that you've raised that the statute asked the FCC to look at.

DEGETTE: Chairman, I just asked if you could supplement your testimony with some specific takeaways that this has given you. Thank you very much. Thanks Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: Gentlady yields back. The chair now recognizes -- I'm sorry the chair recognizes the Chairman.

(UNKNOWN): I just wanted to clarify one thing to make sure I heard it right. Did you say 40 percent of Americans are still using dial-up for internet access?

WHEELER: No, I'm talking about dial-up phone service writ large.

(UNKNOWN): OK because I was saying it's more like 3 percent.

WHEELER: No, dial-up phone service writ large.

(UNKNOWN): Thank you. And I thank the courtesy of the chair.

(UNKNOWN): Thank you for clarifying that, sir.

WALDEN: Thank you.

The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska for five minutes Mr. Terry.

TERRY: Thank you. It's good to know that my 82-year-old father is in the 3 percent, that makes him very elite. I'm trying to talk him out of that, but that's a...

(CROSSTALK).

WHEELER: I remember the days when we were thrilled to get 56kb, right?

TERRY: Yes.

So switching gears just a little bit. I wanna ask about quintile (ph) aggression analysis progress and I do think that you have probably captured its deficiencies better than anyone else has and I appreciate that work. I was glad to see the commission's follow-up by repealing the QRA formula.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

TERRY: So congratulations, I appreciate that. I'm curious on your thoughts of how it should be replaced and if you could walk me through what factors are going to be used in any decision making and time tables and process.

WHEELER: I respect the question, but I can't really answer it right now because we're in the process of -- there's several proposals and we're in the process of looking at what the best components of each are. And I don't want to hip shoot here, but we do have proceedings underway to say, OK, what is it we will replace QRA with?

TERRY: So, where are we within the process of those?

WHEELER: I think that we're probably heading into something that you would see before fall.

TERRY: Before fall?

(UNKNOWN): Early fall, football season.

TERRY: Well, I don't want to get distracted.

WHEELER: Well if you joined the big team.

TERRY: Do that when we McNeese State and I would appreciate that.

WHEELER: Yes sir.

TERRY: For the rest of you, that was humor. Now then let me go to a broadcast question since we succinctly dealt with one I thought would take all of five minutes. The spectrum deal that was authorized in incentive auctions and passed through the committee was a bipartisan bill and unfortunately the order removed the FCC was not bipartisan. And some commissioners, particularly republicans, stated that the order treats (ph) TV broadcasters that choose not to participate in the auctions unfairly and that has me concerned.

Congress set aside the 1.75 to reimburse broadcasters for us to move part of the incentive option in the range to fully recover their expenses. Why did the FCC not adopt the number as its repacking budget and ensure that broadcasters would not have to go out of pocket when forced to the FCC to move?

WHEELER: Thank you. Congress said a billion 750 million is the max that can be spent on repacking. We think that will be sufficient. There have been broadcasters who have expressed a concern that it might not be sufficient. So we have said, OK, we don't think that's going to happen, but we will put in place a process that will have a structure in place if and when that should happen. Sir, I don't expect that we're going to get there.

TERRY: All right. I'll just yield back my time. Thank you, sir.

WHEELER: The gentleman yields back and the chair now recognizes the gentleman from Utah, Mr. Matheson for five minutes.

MATHESON: Thanks Mr. Chairman and Mr. Wheeler thanks for your testimony. I appreciate your candor and your articulate way you answer questions.

WHEELER: Thank you, sir.

MATHESON: I also want to commend you on your efforts to open up more spectrum for our license uses. The FCC took an important step last month by opening up the 100 gigahertz for spectrum for unlicensed uses in the 5 gigahertz band and I'm pleased to see in your testimony that the FCC is actively participating in an ongoing effort to free up additional unlicensed spectrum in the 5 gigahertz band. Can you provide an update on where things currently stand with resolving the technical issues in the ITS band currently used for vehicle-to-vehicle communications and the parts of the band used by the DOD for military radar?

WHEELER: Yes. So, as we talked, there's three slices to 5 gigahertz.

MATHESON: Right.

WHEELER: There's lower slice that we took care of. The middle, as you suggest, is DOD. We are having ongoing discussions with them. I have been personally involved in those discussions about a wide range of spectrum issues including this. There are strongly held beliefs on both sides, sir. I continue to believe, however, that people of good faith can find answers if you sit at the table long enough, and that's the goal.

And so far as the high band in 5 gig, yes, that's intelligent transportation, which offers such great opportunities with Google Smart Card and all this sort of thing. The thing that's really encouraging is that that's an 802 type of standard. It's not a dissimilar reality, however. Where we need to make sure that people are sitting around the table looking for commonalities rather than looking for differences.

MATHESON: Something we got to do around congress a little.

WHEELER: You have a little experience.

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: But that's the goal of what we're trying to do here.

MATHESON: Do you have a sense of what the -- do you have a timeframe for when this additional spectrum could be freed up?

WHEELER: I wish I did. I would be misleading you, sir, if I gave you a date right now.

MATHESON: I understand. Another issue I wanted to mention. The administrations ConnectED program, the goal to bring 100 megabit broadband to every school in the US. To the extent that this initiative is implemented through the ERAY (ph) program, what can the commission do to maximize efficiency and get the most bang for their buck?

WHEELER: Wow, thank you. Great question. There are multiple challenges in that. One is that we need to spend our money, the people's money, on 21st Century high-speed broadband solutions not 20th century solutions like dial-up telephone service and a long distance. Right now about half of the $2 billion, $2.4 billion that's being spent is spent for old stuff. Not today, half today (ph). Second part is that we have to design a system that helps schools and library administrators find their way through the maze that is telecom.

I mean, we put them in those jobs to educate students, not to be telecom wizzes. So we're trying to develop a process that says, you know, here's what you ought to be paying. Here's what somebody next door is paying. Here's like situated, so that they can go in and understand where they're bargaining positioning is.

We're going to be talking about being able to have longer contracts because buying it on a monthly basis, as we all know, is the worst way to buy. So let's talk about several years. We're going to be

encouraging concertia (ph) so that you can buy in bulk and get better prices. And I just think that there are a myriad of things that we can do to get more efficiency out of the existing bucks, and we intend to do that.

MATHESON: That's great. Does the FCC plan on using the national broadband map to identify fiber that is already in place in a given community so it can be leveraged toward these ConnectED (ph) goal?

WHEELER: Absolutely and we have now taken over the ownership of the broadband map, so yes, sir.

MATHESON: OK, I appreciate that. I will yield back, Mr. Chairman.

WHEELER: Thank you very much. The gentleman yields back balance of time and the chair now recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Lance for five minutes.

LANCE: Thank you very much and good afternoon to you. I believe that some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would prefer a title 2 reclassification. And if the commission were to decide to proceed in that direction, I'm concerned that it might trigger a lot of ill-fitting regulations that might not make sense in the context of these services. In your opinion, Chairman, would the process of going through forbearance to separate the wheat from the chaff, could it be a messy exercise and might it lead to more years of litigation and uncertainty is my real concern, sir?

WHEELER: Thank you, Congressman. That's one of the things that gets teed up in the imperium (ph) when we ask about title 2 versus section 706. And I presume that that will be exhaustively discussed in the responses. And that's exactly the kind of questions that we're asking.

LANCE: Thank you. One concern has been raised about the proposed net totality rule making process protections that would be afforded companies use a carrier that's providing the same service as another carrier. For example, the large carriers are beginning to bundle services that go well beyond phone service, the internet and television, to include smart phone services such as temperature control, home health monitoring, which of course is important to another subcommittee of this committee, as well as alarm services such as monitoring of home intrusions and fires, video surveillance or personal emerge response systems. What protections will the FCC provide to ensure that the carrier does not give its service provider a preference over a company using them as a broad-based carrier?

WHEELER: I'm not sure I exactly understand. What your concern is will there be preferences among providers of those services?

LANCE: Yes, Chairman.

WHEELER: That's contrary to the concept of an open internet.

LANCE: So, you can assure us as the American people that that will not be the case as these other services are provided moving forward?

WHEELER: Let me give you an example personally.

LANCE: Yes, sir.

WHEELER: I just switched out ADT in my home security system for another company. And I was able to access both of them over the internet and both of them over my mobile device and there should be no interference with my ability to move from ADT to the other provider.

LANCE: Thank you, and that's the goal of the commission and you will assure us that that is how you will proceed moving forward?

WHEELER: There needs to be open access for all providers.

LANCE: Thank you. I look forward to working with you. I understand you're a proud graduate of Ohio State, is that?

WHEELER: You bet, yes, sir.

LANCE: Please be gentle with Rutgers now that Rutgers has entered the big, whatever it is, the big 16 or whatever it is.

WHEELER: It's the big 10 that can't count.

LANCE: The big 10 that can't count. I defer back to the Chairman the balance of my time, a proud representative from Ohio.

WHEELER: Well thank you very much. For the gentlemen yielding back his balance of his time. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Butterfield for 5 minutes.

BUTTERFIELD: Thank you very much gentlemen for yielding time and thank you to you Chairman for your service and thank you for your testimony today. I especially thank you for your clarity. I told you that the first time that I met you and whenever I hear you speak it is unambiguous. At least until the subject of your home security system comes up and you are a little ambiguous with who the new provider is but thank you so very much.

Mr. Chairman in the communications act congress mandated that the commission ensured diverse participation in media and telecom and that includes participation in minority and women own businesses. The quote from the statue basically says that the mandate is to promote economic opportunity and competition by disseminating licenses among a wide variety of applicants including small businesses, rural telecoms and businesses owned by members of minority groups and women. End of quote.

It seems to me that the response of the commission to judicial criticism of the FCCs inaction in this area and the lack of meaningful study and progress as well as the low level of minority of women on participation and media and telecom licensing that the commission seems to me is not committed to these diversity goals. And if I am wrong about this, I would ask that you correct me.

On May the 14th, members of the congressional black caucus including Congressman Rush and myself addressed these concerns -- these diversity concerns in a letter to you. I suppose the letter may not have made its way to your desk yet, but I ask that you look at it very carefully when you do. Question, what precisely do you need beyond the congressional directions and judicial criticism to get the commission to make progress in creating opportunities for diverse communities.

WHEELER: Thank you, Congressman, and I got the letter this morning, so thank you. First of all, I agree that we have a mandate to have a broad swath of opportunity for all Americans to participate in all aspects of telecommunications. I can assure you that that's a goal of mine. Now let's talk about some specifics.

Number one, I think what we did on the JSAs in the broadcast space actually opens up opportunities for minority and small operators. That's why it was supported by more than a dozen representative minority groups. Secondly is, we are going to move on the AWS3 (ph) auction to make sure that there are appropriate steps taken to assure that minorities can participate through waivers in other kinds of processes in that auction. Thirdly, we are going to have -- and I should pause and in all of these call out Commissioner Clyburn, who has been the constant pusher on all of these issues.

There will be designated envy rules for the incentive auction that will create bidding credits for appropriate designated entities. And I very much take to heart both as an institutional responsibility and as a personal responsibility the language that you read.

BUTTERFIELD: And so when the spectrum is auctioned you are making a commitment that diversity will be an overriding concern of the commission?

WHEELER: What we want to do is make sure that there are opportunities for designated entities to get bidding credits to that, for instance, they can bid with 75 cent dollars against AT&T and Verizon's 100 cent dollars.

BUTTERFIELD: Let me get this last one in if I can. In light of the demographic changes of caring in our country and the growing numbers of mergers in the communications industry, how is the commission encouraging companies to partner with diverse businesses in the secondary market?

WHEELER: We have been doing that in both formally and informally, that there are great opportunities when there are transactions for minority companies. They, you know, grain telecom comes to mind, which is now operating spectrum I believe for both AT&T and Verizon, which they purchased as a part of some settlements with the commission. And those kind of opportunities are important and worthwhile. I also believe that there can be new opportunities in the broadcast space particularly after the auction in terms of being able to share spectrum and offer other kinds of services.

BUTTERFIELD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WHEELER: Thank you very much. The chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky, Mr. Guthrie.

GUTHRIE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for coming today. I know you had a busy week so your time is appreciated. My colleague from California Ms. Matsui have spent a lot of time on spectrum issues and we've founded a congressional spectrum caucus and -- and looking for different ideas on how we can move forward on that spectrum.

And I appreciate the efforts that you've done to move the incentive auction forward. And have a couple of questions about the guard bands and the 680 megahertz band. It appears to me that the band plan for spectrum cleared in the broadcast incentive auction carefully considered the importance of maximizing license spectrum and adhered to the technically reasonable standards set by congress for creating a duplex gap. And I applaud the commission for this area in this regard. Quick two questions, one how do you foresee going forward with unlicensed spectrum in the duplex gap? As you know it would be important for those who bid on adjacent license spectrum to have as sure there will not be interference and are you confident the FCC will have technical guidelines to have assurance for those who bid for license spectrum there will be no interference in the duplex gap from our lines (ph)?

WHEELER: Yes, sir. The answer to both you just identified technical standards. And so for instance we're going to have technical standards proceeding for wireless mics and others who would be using the unlicensed spectrums, so yes, sir.

GUTHRIE: OK, and we've been using social media to reach out to interest Americans and so we're here for representing the American people and one came from Kelly on Facebook and Kelly asked this question -- well Kelly submitted this question through Facebook who would like to ask the question about your plans for future spectrum policy and can you give Kelly a brief answer to her question about why just broadly future spectrum policy?

WHEELER: Thank you Kelly. The answer is that, you know, they're not making it no more and so what we have to do -- I believe that we are today on the cusp of the new Verizon on spectrum policy with two things that we are doing. One is the incentive auction that you all created. Because when you boil everything down it ultimately comes to economics. And if you can address the other person's economics you can probably go along with solving your economics issue. And that's what the auction does.

The other component is spectrum sharing. And the days of hearing this is all yours who uses it are over and fortunately digital allows that kind of sharing. You know, think about going into a Starbucks and everybody is sharing that Wi-Fi spectrum. You put those two together and that's I think the answer to Kelly's question as to where is spectrum policy going. And we're in the middle of making both of those work right now, which is why what we're doing is so terribly important.

GUTHRIE: Yes, I often use the metaphor there's a very simple metaphor compared to a complex physics in this, but we don't have special highways for ambulances or fire trucks, we get out of the way when they need to go down the highway. So sharing that's kind of a simple way to look at the metaphor. There's in one of your statements and I'm putting my hate as a former state legislature so I was the Senator in Kentucky before here and there's been some concerns of places like Utah and Oregon where there's been municipal broadband deployed and the project have failed and there's (ph) were their competitive providers and these projects have resulted in putting millions of dollars in municipal bonds, property taxes, selling franchise taxes at risk and I believe the I probo (ph) sold to Google for a dollar and leaving city tax payers on the hook repaying tens of millions of dollars.

My understanding is five states or so have passed laws saying that cities can't do this -- because the states usually something happens to the city the states kind of on the hook for it as well and I believe in your prepared your written testimony you said that you believe the FCC could do perimption (ph) over this area in the state law and I just wanted you to clarify that. And why you think Washington could have a better view of this than Frankfurt, for example, in Kentucky.

WHEELER: So there are about 20 states that have put some kind of restrictions in place. And I see it through just exactly the opposite end of the telescope with all due respect, that if the citizens of a community want to organize through their local government to say to bring competition in broadband provision, they should not be inhibited.

GUTHRIE: No. They inhibit it by their elected...

WHEELER: They should not be inhibited by the fact that the incumbents have been urging the adoption of legislation that would ban it. And if we believe in competition, we ought to let competition flourished.

So what I have said is that I'm following again Judge Silverman's comments in his dissent nonetheless in the open internet case in which he said, "If there's ever an example where 706 would apply, it is in the ability to -- to say the States, 'You cannot get in the middle of this virtuous cycle and prohibit consumers from being able to have access to a competitive service'".

GUTHRIE: So -- so your perception is that government should be doing that because of the incumbents or because they don't want to be on the hook for an I-provoke-type situation.

WHEELER: So the -- I go back to first principles with -- that is this is a decision that ought to be made by the people of the community. And that that if they want to take the risk, if they own it themselves, but you don't have to own it yourself.

It is also -- the gentleman from Utah has left. But for instance in Utah, there's a group of cities that have banded together to -- to solicit bids for somebody else to own that they would have a participation in.

That kind of structure -- if the people say that's what we want; this -- we want this kind of competition, then I think they ought to be encouraged together. And competition has clearly been shown to be the best tool.

GUTHRIE: Well, I don't disagree with you on that. But my time actually has expired. I know that Chairman's ready to gobble me down, so I yield back. Thank you.

WALDEN: Thank you very much. The -- the Chairman would never do that to the gentleman from Kentucky. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Vermont, Mr. Welch.

WELCH: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Wheeler, I have five questions. We have five minutes so we can go look at this split.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

WELCH: First thing, Bob Latta and I started the Rural Caucus. We so appreciated you coming an enormous concern in rural America that we get access to the internet. It's essential for our future. That neutrality is a big deal. That's the big topic. You've been getting comments.

There's an enormous amount of concern that if we make the wrong decision, the big guys are gonna get the fast lane, the little guys - many in rural America are gonna get the breakdown lane.

Can you give us some reassurance that at the end of this process, we're gonna have access, on equal terms, for folks in rural America to the internet?

WHEELER: You want a quick answer? Yes.

WELCH: Yes.

WHEELER: Yes.

WELCH: And that's a full sentence. You can give a full sentence to reassure all of us especially rural America...

WHEELER: There should...

WELCH: That we're gonna be driving in the fast lane.

WHEELER: There should not -- there is one internet. There is not a fast internet; there is not a slow internet. There is not an urban internet; there is not a rural internet. There is one internet. Everybody ought to have open equal access to the capacity delivered by the internet.

WELCH: Okay. Thank you. Now, getting the internet, rural America is spread out, and the investors want to put their money where they can make the money. We all understand that. That was true for electricity. But we've got to get that internet out into rural America so we can be part of the modern economy.

And we have a Universal Service Fund with the -- with the Mobility Fund, whereas we need to have that. And I'm wondering if you could comment on the status of that and what we need to do to make sure that the funds are there to build out that broadband.

WHEELER: Specifically on the Mobility. Here's the interesting question that gets raised by Mobility. Broadband wireless is LTE. It is being built out across America. Recently just one of the major carriers announced a new initiative in rural America with LTE.

The question becomes, that we're wrestling with, is should we subsidize something if it's already happening? And that prudent fiscal responsibilities suggest probably not.

WELCH: Well, I got three more questions.

WHEELER: OK.

WELCH: So we wanna work with you on that to make it rational and not have us investing on things that aren't working but invest in things that are going to help rural America gets the best.

WHEELER: That's true. That's -- that's what we're trying to get to.

WELCH: All right. Third, we've got to work with you and your entire Commission, the Republicans and the Democrats. And when you came into our rural working group, you explained a couple of problems you had each in IT and also procedures where I guess it's easier to hire a lawyer...

WHEELER: Yeah.

WELCH: Than an engineer.

WHEELER: Yes.

WELCH: I'm a lawyer so maybe I'd like that, but I wouldn't be very much use to you. What are the things that this committee can advocate to help your entire Commission, Rs&Ds who want to do the job so you have the tools you need to do it?

WHEELER: Thank you for asking. Our IT infrastructure is worthy of this Masonian. I came from a business background. The things that you cannot do is -- that are common sense in the business world. The fact that we're still using computers that have known cyber risks associated with them. The fact that we can't organize a consumer complaint process online for American consumers because our IT system isn't up to us -- up to it is ridiculous.

So, we have serious problems there on the issue of lawyers versus engineers. Far be it for me to take a side on that but we do need more engineers, sir.

WELCH: OK. Thank you.

WHEELER: And economists.

WELCH: Right.

WHEELER: And economists.

WELCH: Well, I'd like our committee to work with you on that. Next, Section 706. There's a lot of concern about whether you have the sufficient authority under that section in order to give you the rulemaking power to guarantee the outcome being net neutrality. Can you comment on that? Do you still feel that that is sufficient and the court gave you a roadmap forward?

WHEELER: I think -- I think that we do have sufficient authority and then when the court talked about this virtuous cycle and they said, "Anything that interferers with that virtuous cycle is a violation of 706", that that is a very broad grant of authority.

WELCH: OK. My last question in 26 seconds. Retrans consent and blocking online content, we've seen that in the broadcast area where there's a dispute and people can't get access to the signal. Now, that's starting to migrate into the online content. Is this the beginning of the cabalization of the internet?

WHEELER: Sir, I think it is the right question. Our authority goes to the -- retransmission and program access goes to the authority of good faith negotiations. I think there is reason to be concerned when because I happen to subscribe to an ISP who is in a dispute with a program provider. That the program provider blocks all access from all IP addresses coming from that ISP. I think that is something that is -- is -- is of concern and that we all should worry about.

WELCH: Okay. I yield back. Thank you very much, Mr. Wheeler.

WHEELER: Thank you, sir.

WALDEN: Thank you very much. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas, Mr. Pompeo.

POMPEO: Thank you, Mr. WALDEN: Thank you for being here today. I don't want to spend a lot of time on net neutrality. We have different view. I view it is nothing more than a price control. I think we've seen how that works in creating supply. And so I think -- I think it's a very dangerous path that you're headed down.

I do want to ask a couple of process questions related to that. Have you spoken to anyone at the White House or OMB in the last month regarding net neutrality?

WHEELER: Only to keep them appraised. They have been assiduous in their recognition that we are an independent agency.

POMPEO: And did you call them or did they call you?

WHEELER: I called them.

POMPEO: And has anyone else on your staff spoken to folks at the White House or OMB in the last month?

WHEELER: Not in my...

POMPEO: With this issue?

WHEELER: Well, on -- the answer is I'm sure. On -- on this issue, I don't know but I can assure you from my discussions with everybody, from the President on down, the recognition of the independence of our agency; and I'll go further and assure you that never have I or to my knowledge anyone of my staff felt any pressure to decide any issue.

POMPEO: I appreciate that. Thank you. I want to follow-up on something. Representative Guthrie was saying you believe the FCC has the power to preempt state law to ban competition from community broadband.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

POMPEO: Under Section 706.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

POMPEO: Do you believe that State have the same authority.

WHEELER: I think that's the -- the issue that I believe is do we have the authority to preempt. That raises the question of what is the authority of the State. And I think that we have preempt authority. I think we'll probably end up having this answered in court.

POMPEO: Wait, look. I -- I just read the statute that they have the same authority that the -- the FCC does. The language is identical. It says you would have authority as you have in that.

WHEELER: Well, it says State Commissions.

POMPEO: Right.

WHEELER: If you will. Yes. And -- and it says that we have -- we have preemptory authority over State Commissions.

POMPEO: So State Commissions have the same authority that you do. Do you agree with that?

WHEELER: Don't I?

POMPEO: That's a simple statute, I mean it says the same thing I just said.

WHEELER: No I think that I -- I think that it says that that -- that both of us have authority, but that we have preemptory authority on this issue. And I think that's what Judge Silverman was saying in his dissent in that Verizon...

POMPEO: Great. Not all dissent. Chairman, will the FCC's Media Bureau recently issued new, they call them "Processing Guidelines for Broadcast Transactions"; and this broadcast talks not only about

future broadcast transactions but also pending applications. I have three questions with respect to that.

First, how many applications have been singled out for a closed scrutiny since that new guidelines have been issued? How many have been approved in those two months? And when might those broadcasters see the resolution of their applications?

WHEELER: I don't know the answer to any of -- of those three for the -- off top of my head. But I'll be happy to get it for -- get it for you for the record.

POMPEO: OK. You can understand these are pending applications submitted under the set of rules. You've now moved the goalpost on them. This is -- this is...

WHEELER: No, actually, I -- yes, sir, I understand your point. What we're trying to do is not move the goalpost but to open up the process so that everybody knows...

POMPEO: But that's what you did.

WHEELER: ...what the rules are.

POMPEO: But that's what you did. I mean you changed -- you changed the rules with respect to applications already submitted under preexisting set of standards. So, and I don't know how you could describe that as anything but moving the goalpost.

WHEELER: With all respect, sir. We had -- we had a series of transactions that were in placed. And in the decisions on those transactions, we said, note, "Going forward, there will be a new look at what financial structures are in transactions", not in these transactions that we're approving.

Then we put out a public notice that said, "Here is how we are going to open up this black box and here is what is gonna be going on." And it is that standard. So there was -- there was notice as a part of a decision that was not affected. Then there was notice through a public notice. And now those that they -- the Bureau is reviewing are subject to both of those.

POMPEO: And my last 20 seconds. And with net neutrality, there are also cyber security issues. Do you plan to explicitly give network providers liability protections in their efforts to protect their network from cyber security as part of your rulemaking and --for net neutrality.

WHEELER: It was not considered as a part of the rulemaking to have -- have that.

POMPEO: All right. Mr. Chairman, I yield back my time.

WALDEN: Thank you very much. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Mexico, Mr. **Lujan.**

LUJAN: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. Chairman, we thank you so much...

WHEELER: Mr. **Lujan.**

LUJAN: ...for being here as well. Chairman Wheeler, two weeks ago, this committee added my amendment calling on the FCC to conduct a study on reforming the designated market area system to the STELA Reauthorization Bill.

As you know, DMAs are currently defined by a map drawn by Nielsen, a for-profit marketing research company based upon the reach of television broadcast antennas. This kind of work of antennas is based upon technology deployed back in the '40s and '50s. Americans could have a multitude of viewing options via technology such as cable, broadband and wireless internet. But current DMA rules prevent the viewership of much of that content.

I believe that a system embraced by these technologies could revitalize television broadcasting with new affiliates reaching viewers who have more in common than their placement on Nielsen's old map.

It is my hope that the Commission takes this study seriously and bring the policy into the 21st century, Mr. Chairman. So I hope that we might be able to work...

WHEELER: Thank you for your leadership on this, Mr. **Lujan.** And that I assure you that we will take it seriously.

LUJAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And Mr. Chairman, it wasn't too long ago that a company would not allow access to another companies upside. There was a question a few years ago with AT&T and FaceTime, an Apple product.

WHEELER: Yes, sir.

LUJAN: As I talked about fixed versus mobile. They defended it by saying it was allowed under the FCC's net neutrality rules granted this was under 3G.

Section 62 of the proposal suggests no -- no blocking rule -- that sorry, the no blocking rule was applied to different standard to mobile broadband internet access and mobile internet access service was excluded from the unreasonable discrimination rules. We're seeing mobile getting fast -- faster now and with the new spectrum options, even faster than fixed.

I appreciate and I agree with you that we're talking about one internet with open and equal access. With my colleagues in rural areas, I shared with you before that there's a conversation about taking phone calls and with bandwidth capabilities as well as streaming of content on airplanes. In rural America, we should be able to get the same treatment. I do not understand why we're not there yet. But nonetheless, it's common.

So I'm hopeful that as we have this conversation that we're able to have equitable treatment. I know that there is a, as I read in the proposal, that there is elements of asking for a look into this...

WHEELER: Right.

LUJAN: ... in the rule. But I'm certainly hopeful that this will be treated with the same scrutiny and level of attention. And again, as I talk about an old antiquated rule within the '40s and '50s, we talked about dial-up, that this is another area that we're going to have equitable treatment as well especially with new gigabit access as well.

Mr. Chairman, in another area, I know that there's a number of my colleagues who join me in their concern for recent reports of interconnection deals particularly the one between Comcast and Netflix. You stated that peering is not a net neutrality issue, there is a matter of the -- that there is a matter of the open internet and there is a matter of the internet connection among the various disparate pathways that become the internet.

Well, I understand that net neutrality refers only to the behavior of internet service providers blocking or throttling the speeds of certain websites. My question is how is an interconnection agreement that essentially throttles content substantially different?

WHEELER: So, thank you. So that's -- that's a very good question. They -- you can -- you can think of the internet in -- in three parts. There is the -- well, actually four parts. There is somebody like Netflix getting on the internet and then writing so- called middle mile providers to a peering point which is just a fancy word for interconnection where they then have access to Comcast Verizon, whoever the case maybe.

The consumer buys from their computer up to the peering point. Traditionally, peering has been I'll take mine, you take yours, back and forth kind of a thing; and -- and -- and for free. That has begun to change overtime.

LUJAN: If I may apologize, my time has been elapsed, so maybe what I'll do is if we could get that into the record. All that I would add is once upon a time peering agreements didn't have an exchange of money. People find a way to...

WHEELER: Exactly right.

LUJAN: ...each other. And I'm hoping that we can get some certainty with the treatment of fixed versus mobile in that area. And lastly, I -- I'd like for the record if there's any way that you might be able to provide us more specifics and details with what's been talked about as commercially reasonable...

WHEELER: Good.

LUJAN: ...as well as we talk about now pretty smaller companies have disadvantages. I apologize again, Mr. Chairman. I could always sit and visit with you. And the last thing that I would say is President Obama isn't in support of an open internet and I would encourage you to speak with him. So thank you very much for that as well.

WHEELER: Let me just -- Congressman, so am I.

WALDEN: Thank you. Thank you very much. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana, Mr. Scalise.

SCALISE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman for having the hearing and thank you Commissioner Wheeler for being here today and answering our questions. And there was -- as we look at the potential changes that have been proposed, a lot of us that want to continue to maintain a free and open internet want to make sure that we're going about it the right way. I know you've got some concerns with the fact that the FCC would even consider going to Title II route in terms of reclassifying broadband, you know.

And a lot of us had reached out for our constituents to -- to have them also give us suggestions on things that they would like to ask you as well. And a lot of the -- the comments that we got I know that I got in my district were just concerns about maintaining that open internet, and keeping the government out of regulating it, and -- and trying to make sure that the government doesn't impede the ability for the innovations that we've seen which have been so dramatic and revolutionized to not only the country, but revolutionized the entire world. And it's a lot of innovation that -- that's made in America. And we want to continue to see that innovation thrive.

When you -- when you look at going into the reclassification, and there's a proposal that's out there. I know, like I said, I've got concerns about that. But in your written statement, you assert that the private sector must play the leading role in extending broadband networks to every American. That if it were to be reclassified under Title II, who -- who would pay for extending those networks if they're subject to common carrier regulations.

WHEELER: Private sector.

SCALISE: But then when you look at the -- the Title II route, would the FCC have the authority to regulate broadband pricing?

WHEELER: So in the vastness of Title II, that is conceivable. One of the reasons that we are asking for Title II versus Section 706 comments in this proceeding is to be able to specifically zero-in on what are issues such as that. What are the...

SCALISE: So you think you may have the ability to regulate broadband pricing, is that something you -- you think could be an open...

WHEELER: Now, let's...

SCALISE: ...possibility for the FCC?

WHEELER: Should a full Title II regime be chosen, which should has not been, we are proposing...

SCALISE: But you're making the proposals.

WHEELER: ...Section 706.

SCALISE: Right.

WHEELER: No, we're -- we're -- no we're not. What we're doing is we're proposing Section 706 as the approach and then we've asked questions about Title II. And these are the kinds of issues that come up -- will come up in that discussion and that are gonna warrant...

SCALISE: But if -- if you'd in them telecommunication services. You know, because that puts broadband into a different realm than it is today. It's not there right now. If you do choose to try to put it there. Which state public utility in the -- in our State. We've got a public service commission. Would those state public service commissions and other related entities in the States be able to -- to regulate broadband at that point?

WHEELER: So what we have proposed is not Title II, it's Section 706. What we have asked is for a discussion of Title II and those kinds of issues. But our proposal for which I've taken a lot of heat is not Title II. I've said...

SCALISE: We don't have to go forward with the proposal.

WHEELER: I've said -- I've said...

SCALISE: So you stop taking the heat right now and...

WHEELER: No, I've said -- I've said that we're -- I said that Title II was on the table. That we're willing to look at Title II. But -- and -- and Mr. Waxman has a specific proposal where he thinks that Title II ought to be a backup and that's a proposal that is important and worth considering. But the proposal that we made is Section 706.

SCALISE: Let me ask you this because you're also -- it seems like a one-way street where you're just targeting this towards internet service providers. I mean there are a lot of content carriers out there too, content providers that, you know, a lot of members have used the Netflix example or, you know, Google and other content providers that also have a play in this realm that that you just seem to be targeting this towards internet service providers.

And so I'm not sure if there's some -- some acts to grind there, but it just seems like it's a -- it's a one-sided approach that you're taking even in the review. And I -- I wouldn't -- wouldn't recommend going down that road for any of these folks. But I just wanted to point that out.

And one last thing coz I know I'm running out of time. In the February report, the FCC, some of your staff in the working group, recommended eliminating some of the reports that are out there, the Orbit report, the International Broadband report, and Modifying Video Competition report and Cable Price and Service, some of those things.

I've got a piece of legislation we've passed out of the Full House twice now, very bipartisan figures unanimous earlier in this Congress called the FCC Consolidated Reporting Act, which really tries to --

to take a -- a broad view and into eliminate a lot of the outdated reports, the streamline reporting process, something that I think you've seen bipartisan's report to do in the House.

We're trying to get the Senate to take that up. I'm not sure if you've got a comment on what you think should happen there, if that's something you're supportive of generally, especially as it relates to -- to the Bipartisan Bill in the House trying to move through the Senate to also would become law to streamline the process as your staff is suggesting some of these areas.

WHEELER: So -- so, you know, in the Senate side, it's Senator Heller who has been...

SCALISE: Yeah.

WHEELER: ...pushing on this. And I know that he and Senator Rockefeller are talking about it in terms of their package of legislation over there. I definitely agree that -- that there are -- there is a plethora of reports and that we are spending a lot of time that could be better organized, shall we say.

SCALISE: Including competitiveness in the telegraph industry which is still on the books, which we're trying to get rid off in this bill over there. I appreciate that and anything you can do to help us advocate for the advancement. I do think that's one area where we found a lot of bipartisans support in the way it passed the House. Hopefully we can get the Heller bill move through the Senate as well on the -- and get that to the present statute.

WHEELER: Thank you, gentleman.

SCALISE: Thank you very much for your time. And I yield back as well my time.

WALDEN: Thank you very much, Mr. Scalise. I do not see any member in the Democratic side. Mr. Kinzinger of Illinois is recognized.

KINZINGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for being here today with us. I know it's a lot of...

WHEELER: Thank you for your patience, Mr. Kinzinger.

KINZINGER: Yeah, you're welcome. I might be the end. Wow. So -- but we had a lot of big issues we want to talk about. I'm just going to hit a couple right now. I'd like to talk to you a little -- I know it was -- it was touched earlier about the E-Rate Program.

I'm a big supporter of the intentions of this program and especially it's modernization. And I appreciate the Commission putting on the recent workshop on this issue. I have a few concerns I want to address.

I represent a rural district with a number of very small schools and libraries. And over the past few months, I've reached out to a lot of these entities and asked them what their concern is and -- and asked them about their participation or their lack of participation in the program to see what concern -- concerns or issues they have with the program itself.

The number one problem raised in these conversations was the complexity involved in both applying for and eventually receiving the funding necessary to move forward in implementing new technology in their facilities through the E-Rate Program.

In hearing this, I actually looked into the issue a little further and found out that the basic application for funding, and this is the process of it, but the basic application is 17 pages long. And with additional technologies not being necessary can run even longer, i.e. Wi-Fi. I would actually probably rather punch myself in the face and be the guy that has to fill this out.

So the complexity of the -- of the application process has actually caused a number of these schools to spend money on outside consultants to help guide them through this process. And this is money that's no longer being spend on our students and automatically puts many smaller rural schools at a disadvantage coz they don't have the funds necessary to pay this out so I can sell them. Essentially, we leave individuals in a technological desert if you will.

As the Commissioner continues these efforts to modernize the E- Rate Program, what are your plans to simplify the application process for these small and rural districts. And also, will you commit to working to address the issues faced by these schools who have routinely told me they simply cannot afford to pursue these funds.

WHEELER: Congressman, I share your shock and dismay. We're gonna fix it.

KINZINGER: Good. All right. Do you have an idea of a timeframe? How long?

WHEELER: Yeah, we're gonna...

KINZINGER: We're busy. We're going home.

WHEELER: It's gonna be part of our -- of our E-Rate modernization program that we'll be bringing forward. There's actually a series of things that we're gonna begin administratively even before that -- that rulemaking takes place. It is -- yes, sir. I mean I...

KINZINGER: All right.

WHEELER: I'm as -- you know, how do we get online. So it becomes an interesting challenge. So here we are talking about broadband access for schools and libraries and we have a 17-page paper process.

KINZINGER: Right.

WHEELER: So unfortunately, it's not something that you can solve just like this because as I've indicated like to Mr. Welch, we have awful IT systems. But what I would like to get to is for your schools and all schools and libraries to be able to get online to make their filling, to be able to track that filling and where things stand, and to do it less frequently than annually.

KINZINGER: Right.

WHEELER: Well, I appreciate that. I want to touch on one other quick issue in this short amount of time. Again, thank you for your consideration with the -- the E-Rate issue.

I'm concerned with the process and policy rationale used to changed the FCC's treatment of broadcast JSAs for the purpose of the broadcast ownership rules. The decision to count TV JSAs' ownership has the effect of tightening ownership restrictions without the comprehensive review of the ownership rules that is required by statute. And your analysis seem to lack an appreciation for the public interest benefited -- benefits fostered by JSAs.

In Rockford, for instance, an area I represent, without these agreements, the Fox station produces actually a Hispanic newscast and they've said that they will not be able to produce that Hispanic newscast, for instance. Well, I don't believe my local TV station should have to fight for a waiver and we can have a broader issue on the whole discussion in general.

I do wanna say in light of your rule, are you gonna make sure that these stations can take advantage of waivers and will there be clear transparent standards for applying for waivers in this process.

WHEELER: Thank you, Congressman because you've raised a really important point about waivers.

The reality was why we had to deal with JSAs is there was becoming a cottage industry in this town, down on K Street of lawyers figuring out creative ways to get around the ownership rules of the Commission's head in place forever. And JSAs were a favorite way of doing that.

What we have said is that you have to have attributable ownership as you've indicated. But that there is a waiver process to address exactly what you're talking about in Rockford. And yes it's an expedited process, and it is a -- it's a -- it's a situation unfortunately where -- where the process took over and perverted the underlying rules and the basic concepts of ownership.

KINZINGER: We can -- and -- and we can have that broader discussion when I have more time. My time is expired but I will say I've heard a lot of concerns from local TV stations even on my district. And I hope that, you know, while we disagree with the rule, I hope that you make it very clear how they can apply for these waivers and how they can get this thing carry them. Mr. Chairman, I yield back and thank you.

WHEELER: Yes, thank you.

WALDEN: Thank you very much. In behalf of Mr. Matheson and of myself, thank you Chairman Wheeler for your testimony this morning. We look forward to working with you in the future. And the hearing is now adjourned.

END

LOAD-DATE: May 21, 2014

Targeted News Service

May 20, 2014 Tuesday 2:51 AM EST

Lujan Highlights USDA Funding Aimed at Fighting Poverty in Rural New Mexico

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 242 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today through the StrikeForce initiative that provides assistance to farmers, ranchers, and private forest owners in rural areas. The USDA is providing $15 million in 20 states, including $450,000 for New Mexico, which targets rural communities that experience "persistent poverty."

"Sadly, too many people in New Mexico are living in poverty and struggling to get by. With the economy continuing to feel the effects of the deep recession, rural communities have been hard hit," Congressman **Lujan** said. "This program can help rural farmers and ranchers by providing critical funding for conservation efforts that enable them to improve their land that is so important to their economic wellbeing."

Through the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the USDA will provide technical and financial assistance in the StrikeForce areas, building on efforts that have invested a total of $653 million for conservation efforts since 2010. Funds, which are provided through the USDA Environmental Quality Incentives Program, can be used for conservation activities, including water conservation improvements and soil protections. Applications for funding are accepted at local USDA Service Centers.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140521-4741606 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: May 21, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

137 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

May 19, 2014 Monday

Journal selections for U.S. Senate and House

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. A6

LENGTH: 827 words

Today the Journal continues its endorsements in contested races in the June 3 primary election.

U.S. Senate - Allen Weh

Republican Allen Weh has earned bachelor's and master's degrees; did three tours of duty in Vietnam; was shot three times and awarded three Purple Hearts; created a $160-million-a-year aviation business on a $25,000 loan; served in the Gulf War, Somalia and Pacific Command; and ran a competitive campaign in a crowded field for governor in 2009.

Summed up, he gets things done and does not suffer fools lightly. The U.S. Senate could use both his patriotism and pragmatism to move the country forward.

Weh says he's "suiting back up" and making another run at public office because of Benghazi, specifically that the country needs wisdom and experience to set an actual foreign policy, to build a strong economy that in turn strengthens national defense, to draw appropriate red lines and then hold strong.

He says he would be only the second combat veteran in the current Senate, and "because I've been shot, I'm twiceascautious"about sending American military personnel into harm's way. A retired

colonel, he remains committed to safeguarding bases and military missions and committed to ensuring veterans are given their due when they return home.

Weh supports a budget approach similar to the Simpson-Bowles recommendations that would have reduced the deficit by $2.5 trillion over a decade; immigration reform that secures the border, provides for guest workers and sets a fair path to citizenship; a balanced approach to federal regulation; investment in the nation's infrastructure; and a collective effort to reform the Affordable Care Act rather than a repeal that reinstates a broken system.

His formative years gave Weh "zero tolerance for poor leadership and incompetence." Washington could use more of that. The Journal recommends Republican voters select Weh to represent them on the November ballot against Democratic Sen. Tom Udall.

U.S. House District 1 - Richard Priem

Republican Richard Priem started out his professional career as a reporter and disc jockey. His ability to communicate has seen him through bachelor's and master's degrees as well as doctoral coursework, and enabled him to teach leadership at the West Point Military Academy, improve the chain of command during Desert Storm, help the State Department train foreign officials, develop training for first responders and successfully sue a former employer for $12 million that was returned to American taxpayers.

A 21-year Army veteran, Priem says he knows bureaucratic inefficiency when he sees it and hopes to refocus attention on what matters. "I'm outcomes, not process, focused," he explains.

Priem also has a strong opinion on serving the nation's military veterans and wants the entire VA chain of command called on the carpet for the recent hospital scandal.

He supports a replacement to the Affordable Care Act that emphasizes a private-sector solution that takes care of people, would fight unconstitutional surveillance by government agencies, would downsize government and champion a secure electronic system of remote voting for House members so they could spend more time in their districts.

Immigration reform must be compassionate and understanding, Priem says, with border security and a guest worker as program important steps.

The Journal recommends Republican voters in District 1 select Priem to take on Democratic Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham in November.

U.S. House District 3 - **Ben Ray Lujan**

Incumbent **Ben Ray Lujan** has shown he is a good fit for his northern New Mexico congressional district and a good addition to the U.S. House of Representatives. **Lujan**, a Democrat who took office in 2009, has moved beyond being a new kid on the block.

Before winning election to Congress, **Lujan** served on the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission, was a deputy state treasurer and an administrator in the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs.

In Congress, **Lujan** is a champion for New Mexico families, consumers and small businesses. He voted for the Affordable Care Act, cosponsored the Credit Cardholders Bill of Rights which increases protections against unfair and misleading credit card practices and included an amendment to legislation to reform Wall Street and voted for increased charter school funding.

Lujan supports renewable energy, training for clean energy jobs, more scientific research by New Mexico's labs and protecting New Mexico's natural resources. He introduced legislation to protect the Sabinoso Wilderness and for the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument.

He also cosponsored the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act to help improve health care services to veterans.

Lujan has shown that he takes the needs of his constituents seriously and follows through with action.

The Journal endorses **Ben Ray Lujan** for the Democratic nomination in Congressional District 3 to take on Republican Jefferson L. Byrd on Nov. 4.

LOAD-DATE: May 19, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

138 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

May 18, 2014 Sunday

Democrat seeking to unseat U.S. Rep. Luján faces 'super uphill battle'

BYLINE: Patrick Malone, The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 964 words

May 18--The race for the Democratic nomination in New Mexico's 3rd Congressional District pits a handsomely funded incumbent with an established political name, **Ben Ray Luján**, against Robert Blanch, an upstart transplant running on a populist platform and a shoestring budget.

Luján, 41, is the son of the late New Mexico House Speaker Ben **Luján** of Nambé. He has represented the northern third of New Mexico in Congress since 2009. Before that, he served as an elected member of the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission, as chief financial officer at the state's Department of Cultural Affairs and as deputy state treasurer. **Luján** speaks the lexicon of Washington, D.C., politics fluently and has clear priorities regarding issues facing the state he represents and his positions on them.

Keeping Amtrak's Southwest Chief on its current route through Northern New Mexico, accelerating the path for research and development concepts hatched in New Mexico to reach the marketplace, preserving Internet neutrality, increasing firefighting resources, continuing the work he's done to foster science and math emphases in schools, promoting renewable energy and overturning freewheeling campaign spending practices allowed by U.S. Supreme Court rulings -- these are just a few of the objectives on **Luján's** platform.

Both candidates agree that priority No. 1 on the minds of voters is improving the economy and fostering job creation.

Blanch, 51, moved from Silicon Valley in California to Albuquerque about four years ago. He quit his $46,000-a-year job as a prosecutor with the Bernalillo County District Attorney's Office in February to campaign full-time, and he dipped into his personal retirement funds to finance his run for Congress.

Blanch's stance on particular issues is intentionally ambiguous. He said if elected, he would take a cue from the majority of his constituents.

"There will probably be issues that will come up that I haven't taken positions on," Blanch readily admits. "But I mainly want to reflect the voices of the people I represent. I'm focused on being a listening-centric type of congressman rather than a talker. Basically, what the majority wants is how I'll vote."

He said the preferences of constituents would be gleaned from town-hall meetings, where unaffiliated voters and Republicans would be as welcome to express themselves as Democrats.

"Should I raise taxes by 20 percent? Should I lower them by 20 percent?" Blanch said. "It really depends on what people want."

Blanch's wife works at Sandia National Laboratories, and although the lab wasn't affected as directly as some agencies by last fall's federal government shutdown, Blanch said the gridlock and resulting uncertainty inspired his run for Congress.

"It looks like in Washington, all they're doing is fighting and not getting anything done," he said.

Blanch came of age during President Jimmy Carter's administration, and his distaste for its policies led him to register as a Republican at age 18. He became a Democrat in 1990, realizing that his stances on social issues clashed with the GOP.

Before moving to New Mexico, he practiced law in California, Illinois and Massachusetts. He tackled cases involving international intellectual property disputes, among other things, and says his professional experience negotiating thorny conflicts would serve him well in Congress.

Blanch drew annual incomes as high as $225,000, according to his résumé on file with the Bernalillo County District Attorney's Office.

But in this congressional race, **Luján's** finances dwarf Blanch's. Blanch estimates his expenditures and contributions -- mostly his own money -- add up to less than $30,000. As of the end of March, **Luján** had raised nearly $700,000, and had about $590,000 left to spend, according to the Federal Election Commission.**Luján's** political action committee, Turquoise PAC, has pumped approximately $80,000 into targeted congressional races and New Mexico legislative races to help Democrats, and has another $13,000 on hand.

"Right from the start, it's been a super uphill battle," Blanch said. "[**Luján**] has a ton of money. I have limited resources, borrowing against my own 401(k) to make this work."

He said during his road trip on the campaign trail, Northern New Mexico residents have expressed that they feel forgotten by **Luján**.

"They don't think they're being represented," Blanch said.

Luján stands by his connection to his constituents and cited about 270 public outreach events during his time in office.

"I'm proud of the fact that I travel a lot of New Mexico's roads," **Luján** said. "I'm proud of the fact that I'm from New Mexico, grew up on a small farm, working the acequias."

Luján confessed that he knows little about his opponent. He said who he is running against is secondary to his firsthand knowledge and commitment to solving the problems that matter most to New Mexico.

During the current congressional cycle, **Luján** has carried 16 bills. The average throughout the U.S. House of Representatives is 10.

"That comes directly from working with the community and trying to represent all sides of an argument, but also representing what's important to New Mexico," **Luján** said. "It's taking those ideas. It's trying to make a difference."

The winner of the Democratic primary will face the sole Republican in the race, Jefferson Lee Byrd, a Tucumcari rancher who lost in the general election to **Luján** two years ago. Byrd's campaign as of the end of March had raised about $5,500, according to the Federal Election Commission.

Contact Patrick Malone at 986-3017 or pmalone@sfnewmexican.com Follow him on Twitter @pmalonenm.

___ (c)2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: May 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20140518-SF-Democrat-seeking-to-unseat-U-S-Rep-**Luján**-faces-super-uphill-battle-0518-20140518

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican

Targeted News Service

May 18, 2014 Sunday 3:05 PM EST

Congressional Votes for New Mexico the Week of 05/09 - 05/15/2014

BYLINE: by TARGETED NEWS SERVICE, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 2439 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, May 18 -- There were seven key House votes in the week ending Thursday; there were 10 key Senate votes. There were eight House roll call votes in the week, and 18 roll call votes in

the Senate. The most important House vote was to pass a bill to make the tax credit for a company's research expenses permanent. The most important Senate vote was to reject the end of debate on a bill to extend a package of tax credits that expired at the end of 2013.

In addition to roll call votes, the Senate also passed a resolution (S. Res. 402), sponsored by Sen. Al Franken, D-Minn., to express the Senate's regret for having passed section 3 of the Expatriation Act of 1907, which revoked citizenship for women who married foreign nationals.

Here's a look at how area members of Congress voted over the previous week.

HOUSE VOTES:

House Vote 1:

MAKING RESEARCH TAX CREDIT PERMANENT: The House has passed the American Research and Competitiveness Act (H.R. 4438), sponsored by Rep. Kevin Brady, R-Texas. The bill would make permanent the tax credit for a company's research expenses. Brady said making the research tax credit a permanent part of the tax code would give companies certainty and thereby encourage "energy innovation and manufacturing innovation that will create good-paying jobs and good-paying wages for Americans." A bill opponent, Rep. Steny H. Hoyer, D-Md., called the bill "very bad policy" because it was not paid for by an offsetting tax increase or spending cut, and therefore would add billions of dollars to the debt. The vote, on May 9, was 274 yeas to 131 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

House Vote 2:

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AT CHARTER SCHOOLS: The House has rejected an amendment sponsored by Rep. Kathy Castor, D-Fla., to the Success and Opportunity through Quality Charter Schools Act (H.R. 10). The amendment would have required the Education Secretary to develop and enforce guidelines to prevent conflicts of interest at charter schools that receive federal funding. Castor cited numerous examples of conflict of interest at the schools in which officials have enriched themselves at the expense of taxpayers, and said "it is clear that we need more accountability and better procedures in place to protect taxpayer investment" in the schools. An amendment opponent, Rep. John Kline, R-Minn., said the amendment was unnecessary because the bill already covered the issue, and conflicts of interest were best addressed at the state and local level, not by involving the Education Department in local charter schools. The vote, on May 9, was 190 yeas to 205 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

NAYS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 3:

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE BY CHARTER SCHOOLS: The House has rejected an amendment sponsored by Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, D-Texas, to the Success and Opportunity through Quality Charter Schools Act (H.R. 10). The amendment would have required that states ensure charter schools publish on their websites information about their policies for student recruitment, orientation materials, enrollment criteria, student discipline policies, behavior codes, and parent contract requirements, including fees parents pay to the schools. Jackson Lee said the disclosure requirement would give parents vital information to help decide whether to enroll their children at a given school. An amendment opponent, Rep. John Kline, R-Minn., said it would unfairly put "additional reporting requirements on the charter schools that are not required of traditional public schools." The vote, on May 9, was 179 yeas to 220 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

NAYS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 4:

DISCLOSURE RULES FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Frederica S. Wilson, D-Fla., to the Success and Opportunity through Quality Charter Schools Act (H.R. 10). The amendment would require states to ensure that charter schools provide the same information to the public that public schools must provide. Wilson said: "When public charters are held to the same standards of accountability, equitable access, and transparency, as in traditional public schools, all of our students receive a better education, but when public charters are not held to these standards, a student's learning suffers, and taxpayers' money is wasted." The vote, on May 9, was 373 yeas to 32 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 5:

CAREER COUNSELING AT SCHOOLS: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. James R. Langevin, D-R.I., to the Success and Opportunity through Quality Charter Schools Act (H.R. 10). The amendment would include comprehensive career counseling practices among the factors for the Education Department to consider when prioritizing grants to local educational agencies. Langevin said the provision would help "give school counselors the most up-to-date information and training that they need as they are advising their young students about their career path forward." The vote, on May 9, was 378 yeas to 27 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 6:

BEST PRACTICES AND CHARTER SCHOOLS: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Suzanne Bonamici, D-Ore., to the Success and Opportunity through Quality Charter Schools Act (H.R. 10). The amendment would request states to report to the Education Department on whether best practices adopted at charter schools have been shared with the public school system. Bonamici said given that charter schools receive government funding, it was reasonable to ask the schools to provide information about best practices to benefit students in public schools. The vote, on May 9, was 363 yeas to 41 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 7:

GRANTS FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS: The House has passed the Success and Opportunity through Quality Charter Schools Act (H.R. 10), sponsored by Rep. John Kline, R-Minn. The bill would establish a revised five-year program of charter school grants to states and have the Education Department research the effectiveness of the grant program. Kline called the bill "a commonsense proposal that will improve educational opportunities for students across the board and provide families with additional school choice options." A bill opponent, Rep. Kathy Castor, D-Fla., said it lacked safeguards against wasteful and fraudulent spending by charter school operators. The vote, on May 9, was 360 yeas to 45 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

SENATE VOTES:

Senate Vote 1:

APPEALS COURT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Robin S. Rosenbaum to serve as a judge on the U.S. Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. A supporter, Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., cited Rosenbaum's unanimously well qualified rating from the American Bar Association, her two years of experience as a federal district judge for the Southern District of Florida, and the pressing need to fill vacancies on the Eleventh Circuit Court to handle the court's heavy caseload. The vote, on May 12, was unanimous with 91 yeas.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 2:

DEBATE ON ENERGY EFFICIENCY BILL: The Senate has rejected a cloture motion to end debate on the Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act (S. 2262), sponsored by Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H. The bill would establish stricter national model energy efficiency standards for residential and commercial buildings, direct the Energy Department to work with industry on the development of efficiency technologies, and establish an initiative for financing efficiency upgrades at commercial buildings. A supporter of ending debate, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, said the bill "will make our country more energy independent and protect our environment. It will also save consumers and taxpayers money, and lots of it." An opponent of ending debate, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, said Republican senators were entitled to offer their relevant amendments to the bill for vote by the Senate, but Democrats were blocking them from doing so. The vote, on May 12, was 55 yeas to 36 nays, with a three-fifths majority required to end debate.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 3:

EXTENDING TAX CREDITS: The Senate has passed a motion to close debate on the motion to proceed to consideration of the Hire More Heroes Act (H.R. 3474), sponsored by Rep. Kevin Brady, R-Texas. The bill would extend for two years more than $85 billion of tax credits that expired at the close of 2013, including the wind production tax credit for wind power farms and the research and development tax credit for companies. A supporter, Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., said the tax credit extensions would help the economy and provide tax policy certainty for businesses and families while Congress works on longer-term efforts to reform the tax code. An opponent of closing debate, Sen. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., cited the wind tax credit as one example of "wasteful extenders which are really just subsidies" benefiting a certain industry but not the broader economy. The vote to end debate on the motion to proceed, on May 13, was 96 yeas to 3 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 4:

ARIZONA DISTRICT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Steven Paul Logan to serve as a U.S. District Judge for the District of Arizona. A supporter, Sen. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., noted Logan's distinguished military record, including receiving a Bronze Star, and the experience he has gained in dealing with immigration issues as an assistant U.S. attorney in Minnesota and in Arizona. Flake added that Logan's confirmation would help ease a crippling shortage of judges serving in the Arizona district court. The vote, on May 14, was unanimous with 96 yeas.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 5:

SECOND ARIZONA DISTRICT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of John Joseph Tuchi to serve as a U.S. District Judge for the District of Arizona. A supporter, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., cited Tuchi's more than 15 years of experience as a prosecutor in the Arizona U.S. attorney's office and

previous experience as a clerk in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. McCain said Tuchi "has the qualifications to be a district judge based in part on his dedication to public service, extensive trial experience, and practice before federal courts." The vote, on May 14, was unanimous with 96 yeas.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 6:

THIRD ARIZONA DISTRICT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Diane J. Humetewa to serve as a U.S. District Judge for the District of Arizona. A supporter, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., noted that upon confirmation, Humetewa would be the first Native-American woman to serve as a federal judge. McCain said Humetewa "has an impressive legal background ranging from work as a prosecutor and appellate court judge to the Hopi nation. She served the U.S. attorney for the District of Arizona. And hers is a historic nomination." The vote, on May 14, was unanimous with 96 yeas.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 7:

FOURTH ARIZONA DISTRICT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Rosemary Marquez to serve as a U.S. District Judge for the District of Arizona. A supporter, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., said Marquez "has worked as a public defender and prosecutor as well as in private practice. Her extensive experience working in border districts and her Hispanic heritage will be invaluable assets to the federal court." The vote, on May 15, was 81 yeas to 15 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 8:

FIFTH ARIZONA DISTRICT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Douglas L. Rayes to serve as a U.S. District Judge for the District of Arizona. A supporter, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., cited Rayes' 18 years of experience as a private practice lawyer and current status as a judge in the superior court of Maricopa County, in which position he has presided over thousands of cases in family law, criminal law, and complex litigation. McCain said Rayes' "experience and insight will be valuable to the federal court." The vote, on May 15, was 77 yeas to 19 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 9:

SIXTH ARIZONA DISTRICT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of James Alan Soto to serve as a U.S. District Judge for the District of Arizona. A supporter, Sen. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., cited Soto's 13 years of experience as a judge in the superior court of Santa Cruz County, currently as a presiding judge of the court. Flake said Soto "will be a great district court judge." The vote, on May 15, was 93 yeas to 1 nay.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 10:

DEBATE ON TAX CREDITS BILL: The Senate has rejected a motion to end debate on an amendment sponsored by Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., to the Hire More Heroes Act (H.R. 3474). The bill would extend for two years more than $85 billion of tax credits that expired at the close of 2013, including the wind production tax credit for wind power farms and the research and development tax credit for companies. Wyden said failing to end debate on the tax credits would result in allowing many large tax increases to remain in effect that "would punish innovators, punish our small businesses, punish homeowners who are underwater with their mortgages, punish returning veterans looking for jobs, and punish students and classroom teachers." An opponent of ending debate, Sen. Dan Coats, R-Ind.,

criticized Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid for refusing to allow Republican senators to offer amendments to the bill, and asked that his party have the opportunity to add its input as part of the process of deliberation before a final vote. The vote, on May 15, was 53 yeas to 40 nays, with a three-fifths majority required to end debate.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

For more information about Targeted News Service products and services, please contact: Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service LLC, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://targetednews.com.

-1162198

LOAD-DATE: May 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

May 17, 2014 Saturday

Tohatchi student wins Congressional Art Competition

BYLINE: Kathleen Leon Staff writer arts@gallupindependent.com

SECTION: CELEBRATE! 66; Pg. 18

LENGTH: 485 words

DATELINE: GALLUP

GALLUP - Tohatchi High School Senior Davin Nez was awarded this year's Congressional Art Competition winner Saturday, May 4. The announcement was made by Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N. M., during a reception at the City of Santa Fe Arts Commission Community Gallery.

Nez's drawing, entitled "Tribute to the Elders: Navajo Woman," will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the U.S. Capitol for one year. His artwork was among 56 other entries from high schools throughout the entire district. Pieces that placed second through sixth were also recognized and will be displayed in **Luján's** district offices across Northern New Mexico.

"Just as in year's past, the submissions for the 2014 Congressional Art Competition showcased the tremendous talent of New Mexico's young artists." **Lujan** said in a news release May 5. "These students have shown great potential and are continuing a proud tradition of artistic excellence that is a hallmark of New Mexico."

Nez received the first place award alongside his mother, father, two sisters and art teacher, Sharon Swindler. According to Nez's mother, Angela Nez, his family was unaware that he had even entered the competition and they attribute his achievement to his art teacher.

"We are all very excited for Davin, it was a great surprise for our family," she said.

Swindler, who has been Nez's art teacher since the sixth grade, personally asked him if he wished to compete after she received three invitations from Congressman **Lujan**. She stated it was her faith in his exceptional artistic abilities that made her believe he was the perfect nominee.

"He definitely deserved the award, he has always been excellent," she said. "Davin is the first student out of the many years that I have taught to just have a natural ability to draw."

Nez stated he was very grateful his teacher presented him with the opportunity to be a part of the competition. Having mentored him for well over six years of his life, Swindler has been much more to Nez than just a teacher.

"My teacher has taught me everything I know about art," he said. "I'm really glad she got me to enter my drawing, it was worth it."

Nez drew inspiration for the winning art piece from a photograph of his grandmother. He stated that he started the drawing by sketching her eyes and over the progression of four weeks he had completed an entire portrait. Special attention was made to the foreground and background of the drawing that wasn't in conjunction with the original image.

"I wanted to draw her as I always saw her, how I remembered her," he said. "She was always at the table, with a cup of coffee, in mid conversation-I wanted to capture that moment."

Nez is eagerly anticipating his trip to Washington next month, meanwhile he is preparing for graduation next week and his upcoming endeavors. He hopes to continue pursuing an art career by attending the Institute of American Indian Arts in the fall.

LOAD-DATE: May 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: Above, "Tribute to the Elders: Navajo Woman," by Davin Nez, winner of the 2014 New Mexico District 3 Congressional Art Competition. Right, (From left to right) Sharon Swindler, (Tohatchi High School Arts and Music Teacher), Ethel Manuelito (Principal of Tohatchi High School), Davin Nez and Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan,** D-N. M. Courtesy photo

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

May 13, 2014 Tuesday

Dear Senate, charters drive U.S. school reform

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. A5

LENGTH: 441 words

The U.S. House of Representatives, including all of New Mexico's delegation, has voted to expand a proven education reform that is delivering results in the Land of Enchantment.

That reform is charter schools and the U.S. Senate should follow suit rather than depend on a yet-to-be-proposed revamp of the shelved No Child Left Behind Act to supply one-size-fits-all reform.

H.R. 10 authorizes $300 million annually from 2015 through 2020, consolidates two existing federal programs and encourages the replication of existing high-quality charters. Nearly 20,000 New Mexico students - around 6 percent of public school students in the state - attend 94 charter schools. Two of those, the Albuquerque Institute for Math and Science and Moreno Valley High in Angel Fire, routinely make the national lists of the best schools in the nation.

It is important to note that the charter school movement has had problems and bad actors - schools that use tax dollars to pay multiple salaries to individuals and/or don't deliver on their mission. But New Mexico Democratic Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and **Ben Ray Luján** recognize the importance of improving the state's perennially near-bottom rankings and say they will work to ensure any federal charter school law has mechanisms for "transparency and accountability."

That's all any parent, taxpayer, business leader, government official and great teacher should want - a system that wisely uses the finite amount of education spending available to best serve students by preparing them for infinite possibilities in postsecondary education and/or the workplace.

Unfortunately, Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., prefers that the Senate "thoughtfully consider and update No Child Left Behind to improve all schools, rather than focusing solely on charter schools in piecemeal legislation," his spokeswoman says.

But 42 states currently have waivers from NCLB, a well-intentioned but ultimately flawed system of accountability that rightly brought education to the public forefront but set all schools up for failure as it focused on proficiency rather than improvement.

Quality charters are clearly focused on the latter and, in New Mexico, 13, including AIMS and Moreno Valley, have received waivers from the state-mandated teacher evaluations because they have fine-tuned how they measure their students' improvement.

It's that kind of student-centered inspiration, innovation and replication that drives successful education reform, and New Mexico is fortunate to have real leaders in its schools and its government who are making it happen.

Leaders in the U.S. Senate should take a lesson from the House and help expand it.

LOAD-DATE: May 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Targeted News Service

May 12, 2014 Monday 2:45 AM EST

New Mexico Dems: Congressman Ben Ray Lujan: Republican Research and Development Does Not Fund and Actually Refuses to Actually Support Research and Development

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 477 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third Congressional District, a strong supporter of research and development (R&D), today voted against a House Republican bill (HR 4438) that refused to fund R&D. With their bill, House Republicans opted to move forward with a political ploy that jeopardizes the continuation of a number of tax cuts that American families depend upon--including the deduction of out-of-pocket classroom expenses for teachers, the Indian Employment Tax Credit, mortgage debt relief for homeowners, deductions for mass transit benefits, and renewable energy tax credits. Traditionally, these tax credits are passed together as part of an annual extender package that is compliant with House PAYGO rules, a rule **Lujan** supports. By passing this legislation separately and without a budgetary offset, Republicans are neglecting to continue other important tax cuts while increasing the deficit. Furthermore, Republicans are refusing to pass a needed extension of emergency unemployment benefits without an offset--while passing today's legislation which is fifteen times more expensive to the national debt.

Lujan, has long supported the Research and Development tax credit, which drives innovative new industries for New Mexico. As a cochair of the Technology Transfer Caucus--which promotes moving technological innovations to the marketplace--he has been a strong advocate for R&D. Additionally he authored a bill on Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (CRADAs) to help foster relationships between businesses and national laboratories, which are often involved in R&D-related work. **Lujan** also supported a budget that makes the R&D tax credit permanent, closing tax loopholes to offset the costs.

"As an advocate for the R&D tax credit and a supporter of a permanent extension of R&D, I cosponsored the original version of this bill," Rep. **Lujan** said. "However, the bill that was brought to the House floor today is the first of 6 House Republican piecemeal bills that they refuse to pay for-selling R&D short, adding $156 billion to the deficit over the next 10 years, and putting other critical programs at risk.

"This unfunded political ploy has far reaching and disastrous implications because it could risk funding for Medicare, social security, and education-and it also does not include extensions of the tax credits that families depend on.

"It is time for us to come together to support real Research and Development that provides for economic growth and job creation. I believe that New Mexicans deserve a more responsible and effective approach that supports innovation without balancing the books on our middle class families, seniors, teachers, and students."

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage10PkS-140513-30TacordaCheng-4733088 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: May 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

143 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

May 10, 2014 Saturday

Congressmen: Downtown post office will stay put

BYLINE: Steve Terrell, The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 684 words

May 10--Despite earlier plans to move the city's main post office from its downtown location, the U.S. Postal Service has decided the office on Federal Place will stay where it is, members of New Mexico's congressional delegation announced Friday.

Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** said they welcome the news that the idea to move the post office -- 120 S. Federal Place, across the street from City Hall -- has been shelved.

The Postal Service, which has been leasing the downtown Santa Fe space in a federal building managed by the General Services Administration, began raising concerns last year that its rental costs were too high, particularly as the agency was wrangling with a multibillion-dollar deficit. But its plans to move met with opposition from local residents and businesses.

"Moving the post office would be devastating for downtown Santa Fe. While it is critical to ensure the taxpayers are getting the best value for their dollar, the Postal Service never made a valid case to the federal delegation or the city of Santa Fe for why it needed to move out of its current building," Udall said in the news release. "This is very good news for downtown Santa Fe and the Postal Service workers who raised legitimate concerns about whether the proposed alternatives would have been appropriate."

Udall chairs the Appropriations Subcommittee that oversees both the GSA and Postal Service budgets.

Heinrich and **Luján** also said they were happy with the decision to keep the post office in its current location.

"Post offices are critical as they provide essential services to residents and small businesses in Santa Fe and across New Mexico, and they help preserve the unique fabric of our communities," Heinrich said.

"The Post Office is an important establishment in downtown Santa Fe and moving the location would have been detrimental to the community," **Luján** said.

As recently as last September, the Postal Service was proceeding with its plan to move. A spokesman told The New Mexican that the agency was negotiating with a potential new landlord in Santa Fe. "We don't have a specific date for the move," spokesman Peter Haas said. "We anticipate the retail portion of that operation might move in 2014."

Haas and other spokesmen couldn't be reached for comment Friday.

In July 2013, the Postal Service first announced the plan to move, saying it needed to cut costs. In a letter to city officials last year, the Postal Service said it preferred to move to Sanbusco Market Center, 100 N. Guadalupe St.

But Udall and then-Santa Fe Mayor David Coss said they would do their best to convince the Postal Service to drop the relocation plan. City officials filed a formal appeal to stop the move, but the appeal was denied.

Udall last August said the post office building likely would remain empty for a long time if the Postal Service moved out. "The GSA won't find anybody to fill that," he said. "I think it's going to be a big eyesore. You get an empty building like that, and you don't know what'll happen. People start painting graffiti on it, windows get broken. It's not a good situation."

According to a rental agreement obtained by The New Mexican last year, the Postal Service pays GSA an annual rent fee of $855,000, which includes 58 parking spots and a radio antenna. However, Haas in September said the Postal Service had not yet signed the rental agreement. It wasn't clear Friday whether that agreement has since been signed or whether the GSA agreed to lower the rent.

The building is occupied by not only the post office, but the city of Santa Fe, as well as several federal agencies. Besides selling stamps and hosting post office boxes, the Federal Place location is home to a postal distribution center, through which local mail flows to and from the processing center in Albuquerque.

Contact Steve Terrell at sterrell@sfnewmexican.com Read his political blog at roundhouseroundup.com.

___ (c)2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: May 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20140510-SF-Congressmen-Downtown-post-office-will-stay-put-0510-20140510

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican

Congressional Documents and Publications

May 9, 2014

LUJAN: REPUBLICAN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT BILL DOES NOT FUND AND REFUSES TO ACTUALLY SUPPORT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 488 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third Congressional District, a strong supporter of research and development (RandD), today voted against a House Republican bill (HR 4438) that refused to fund RandD. With their bill, House Republicans opted to move forward with a political ploy that jeopardizes the continuation of a number of tax cuts that American families depend upon--including the deduction of out-of-pocket classroom expenses for teachers, the Indian Employment Tax Credit, mortgage debt relief for homeowners, deductions for mass transit benefits, and renewable energy tax credits. Traditionally, these tax credits are passed together as part of an annual extender package that is compliant with House PAYGO rules, a rule **Lujan** supports. By passing this legislation separately and without a budgetary offset, Republicans are neglecting to continue other important tax cuts while increasing the deficit. Furthermore, Republicans are refusing to pass a needed extension of emergency unemployment benefits without an offset--while passing today's legislation which is fifteen times more expensive to the national debt.

Lujan, has long supported the Research and Development tax credit, which drives innovative new industries for New Mexico. As a cochair of the Technology Transfer Caucus--which promotes moving technological innovations to the marketplace--he has been a strong advocate for RandD. Additionally he authored a bill on Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (CRADAs) to help foster relationships between businesses and national laboratories, which are often involved in RandD-related work. **Lujan** also supported a budget that makes the RandD tax credit permanent, closing tax loopholes to offset the costs.

"As an advocate for the RandD tax credit and a supporter of a permanent extension of RandD, I cosponsored the original version of this bill," Rep. **Lujan** said. "However, the bill that was brought to the House floor today is the first of 6 House Republican piecemeal bills that they refuse to pay for--selling RandD short, adding $156 billion to the deficit over the next 10 years, and putting other critical programs at risk.

"This unfunded political ploy has far reaching and disastrous implications because it could risk funding for Medicare, social security, and education--and it also does not include extensions of the tax credits that families depend on.

"It is time for us to come together to support real Research and Development that provides for economic growth and job creation. I believe that New Mexicans deserve a more responsible and effective approach that supports innovation without balancing the books on our middle class families, seniors, teachers, and students."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-republican-research-and-development-bill-does-not-fund-and-refuses-to-actually-support-research-and-development/

LOAD-DATE: May 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

May 9, 2014

Udall, Heinrich, Lujan: Santa Fe's Downtown Post Office to Stay Open;
Heinrich, Martin - (D - NM);
Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 367 words

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Lujan** welcomed news that the U.S. Postal Service has agreed to shelve a proposal to move out of downtown Santa Fe and instead keep the post office at its current site on Federal Place.

Udall, Heinrich and **Lujan** have been instrumental in working to keep the downtown post office open after questions were raised of the Postal Service and the General Services Agency (GSA) about whether a move out of the building would save money and meet the needs of the community. Located across the street from City Hall, the Federal Place building is an important anchor for downtown.

"Moving the post office would be devastating for downtown Santa Fe. While it is critical to ensure the taxpayers are getting the best value for their dollar, the Postal Service never made a valid case to the federal delegation or the city of Santa Fe for why it needed to move out of its current building," said Udall, who chairs the Appropriations Subcommittee that oversees the GSA and Postal Service budgets. "This is very good news for downtown Santa Fe and the Postal Service workers who raised legitimate concerns about whether the proposed alternatives would have been appropriate."

"I'm pleased the U.S. Postal Service heeded our call to keep the downtown Santa Fe Post Office at its current location," Heinrich said. "Post offices are critical as they provide essential services to residents and small businesses in Santa Fe and across New Mexico, and they help preserve the unique fabric of our communities. This is great news for Santa Fe, and I look forward to working with the U.S. Postal Service to ensure quality mail services are available to all New Mexicans."

"The Post Office is an important establishment in downtown Santa Fe and moving the location would have been detrimental to the community," **Lujan** said. "I am thrilled that we were able to come

together to voice our concerns about this important issue and that it will remain at the current site on Federal Place."

Read this original document at: http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/press-releases/udall-heinrich-**lujan**-santa-fes-downtown-post-office-to-stay-open

LOAD-DATE: May 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

May 9, 2014 Friday

LUJAN: REPUBLICAN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT BILL DOES NOT FUND AND REFUSES TO ACTUALLY SUPPORT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 468 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third Congressional District, a strong supporter of research and development (RandD), today voted against a House Republican bill (HR 4438) that refused to fund RandD. With their bill, House Republicans opted to move forward with a political ploy that jeopardizes the continuation of a number of tax cuts that American families depend upon-including the deduction of out-of-pocket classroom expenses for teachers, the Indian Employment Tax Credit, mortgage debt relief for homeowners, deductions for mass transit benefits, and renewable energy tax credits. Traditionally, these tax credits are passed together as part of an annual extender package that is compliant with House PAYGO rules, a rule **Lujan** supports. By passing this legislation separately and without a budgetary offset, Republicans are neglecting to continue other important tax cuts while increasing the deficit. Furthermore, Republicans are refusing to pass a needed extension of emergency unemployment benefits without an offset-while passing today's legislation which is fifteen times more expensive to the national debt.

Lujan, has long supported the Research and Development tax credit, which drives innovative new industries for New Mexico. As a cochair of the Technology Transfer Caucus-which promotes moving technological innovations to the marketplace-he has been a strong advocate for RandD. Additionally he authored a bill on Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (CRADAs) to help foster

relationships between businesses and national laboratories, which are often involved in RandD-related work. **Lujan** also supported a budget that makes the RandD tax credit permanent, closing tax loopholes to offset the costs.

"As an advocate for the RandD tax credit and a supporter of a permanent extension of RandD, I cosponsored the original version of this bill," Rep. **Lujan** said. "However, the bill that was brought to the House floor today is the first of 6 House Republican piecemeal bills that they refuse to pay for--selling RandD short, adding $156 billion to the deficit over the next 10 years, and putting other critical programs at risk.

"This unfunded political ploy has far reaching and disastrous implications because it could risk funding for Medicare, social security, and education--and it also does not include extensions of the tax credits that families depend on.

"It is time for us to come together to support real Research and Development that provides for economic growth and job creation. I believe that New Mexicans deserve a more responsible and effective approach that supports innovation without balancing the books on our middle class families, seniors, teachers, and students."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: May 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

May 9, 2014 Friday 11:31 PM EST

Lujan: Republican Research and Development Bill Does Not Fund and Refuses to Actually Support Research and Development

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 475 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third Congressional District, a strong supporter of research and development (R&D), today voted against a House Republican bill (HR 4438) that refused to fund R&D. With their bill, House Republicans opted to move forward with a political ploy that jeopardizes the continuation of a number of tax cuts that American families depend upon--

including the deduction of out-of-pocket classroom expenses for teachers, the Indian Employment Tax Credit, mortgage debt relief for homeowners, deductions for mass transit benefits, and renewable energy tax credits. Traditionally, these tax credits are passed together as part of an annual extender package that is compliant with House PAYGO rules, a rule **Lujan** supports. By passing this legislation separately and without a budgetary offset, Republicans are neglecting to continue other important tax cuts while increasing the deficit. Furthermore, Republicans are refusing to pass a needed extension of emergency unemployment benefits without an offset--while passing today's legislation which is fifteen times more expensive to the national debt.

Lujan, has long supported the Research and Development tax credit, which drives innovative new industries for New Mexico. As a cochair of the Technology Transfer Caucus--which promotes moving technological innovations to the marketplace--he has been a strong advocate for R&D. Additionally he authored a bill on Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (CRADAs) to help foster relationships between businesses and national laboratories, which are often involved in R&D-related work. **Lujan** also supported a budget that makes the R&D tax credit permanent, closing tax loopholes to offset the costs.

"As an advocate for the R&D tax credit and a supporter of a permanent extension of R&D, I cosponsored the original version of this bill," Rep. **Lujan** said. "However, the bill that was brought to the House floor today is the first of 6 House Republican piecemeal bills that they refuse to pay for--selling R&D short, adding $156 billion to the deficit over the next 10 years, and putting other critical programs at risk.

"This unfunded political ploy has far reaching and disastrous implications because it could risk funding for Medicare, social security, and education--and it also does not include extensions of the tax credits that families depend on.

"It is time for us to come together to support real Research and Development that provides for economic growth and job creation. I believe that New Mexicans deserve a more responsible and effective approach that supports innovation without balancing the books on our middle class families, seniors, teachers, and students."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140510-4731284 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: May 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

May 9, 2014 Friday 2:12 AM EST

Udall, Heinrich, Lujan: Santa Fe's Downtown Post Office to Stay Open

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 366 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The office of Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Lujan** welcomed news that the U.S. Postal Service has agreed to shelve a proposal to move out of downtown Santa Fe and instead keep the post office at its current site on Federal Place.

Udall, Heinrich and **Lujan** have been instrumental in working to keep the downtown post office open after questions were raised of the Postal Service and the General Services Agency (GSA) about whether a move out of the building would save money and meet the needs of the community. Located across the street from City Hall, the Federal Place building is an important anchor for downtown.

"Moving the post office would be devastating for downtown Santa Fe. While it is critical to ensure the taxpayers are getting the best value for their dollar, the Postal Service never made a valid case to the federal delegation or the city of Santa Fe for why it needed to move out of its current building," said Udall, who chairs the Appropriations Subcommittee that oversees the GSA and Postal Service budgets. "This is very good news for downtown Santa Fe and the Postal Service workers who raised legitimate concerns about whether the proposed alternatives would have been appropriate."

"I'm pleased the U.S. Postal Service heeded our call to keep the downtown Santa Fe Post Office at its current location," Heinrich said. "Post offices are critical as they provide essential services to residents and small businesses in Santa Fe and across New Mexico, and they help preserve the unique fabric of our communities. This is great news for Santa Fe, and I look forward to working with the U.S. Postal Service to ensure quality mail services are available to all New Mexicans."

"The Post Office is an important establishment in downtown Santa Fe and moving the location would have been detrimental to the community," **Lujan** said. "I am thrilled that we were able to come together to voice our concerns about this important issue and that it will remain at the current site on Federal Place."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TacordaCheng-140510-4731694 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: May 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

May 8, 2014 Thursday

House members boost charter schools; NM reps. back funding new schools; prospects in Senate appear rocky

BYLINE: Michael Coleman Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C1

LENGTH: 530 words

WASHINGTON - New Mexico's U.S. House members plan to vote for a rare, bipartisan education bill on the House floor today that would help create new charter schools across the country.

The bill would authorize $300million per year from 2015 through 2020 and consolidate two existing federal programs. It would also encourage replication of existing high-quality charter schools and help pay for new buildings. Charter schools, which often boast higher student achievement than regular public schools, typically use taxpayer dollars but are run by outside organizations. Critics contend they siphon money from low-performing schools that need it most.

Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and **Ben Ray Luján**, both New Mexico Democrats, told the Journal this week that they will work to ensure any federal charter school law contains mechanisms for "transparency and accountability." Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., supports the bill.

Nearly 20,000 students in New Mexico - or roughly 6 percent of all public school students in the state - attend 94 charter schools. Twelve percent of Albuquerque Public Schools students are enrolled in charter schools, according to the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools.

"New Mexico has seen some positive results with charter schools, and I am hopeful that we can replicate that success and spur innovation throughout our public education system," **Lujan** Grisham said. "At the same time, we must ensure that federal dollars are spent wisely and that charter schools are held to the same standards as other public schools."

Luján said the bill contains a proposal he offered in the last Congress that calls for charter schools to establish plans for teacher training and mentoring in science, technology, engineering and math.

"Our nation's competitiveness depends upon our ability to educate our students, and while charter schools can offer innovative educational programs, it is important that they are held to the same accountability and transparency standards as traditional public schools," **Luján** said.

"Charter schools provide opportunities and school choices for thousands of New Mexico families," Pearce said. "I fully support this legislation that helps communities and schools thrive and excel."

While the House bill is widely expected to win passage today, a companion bill introduced in the Senate late Wednesday is expected to face a rockier path. Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, who is chairman of the Senate education committee, has said he would rather focus on retooling and reauthorizing the entire No Child Left Behind Act than considering standalone charter school legislation.

Udall said he appreciates that charter schools are good for some families, but agreed with Harkin's approach.

"He is evaluating the bill, but he prefers the Senate to thoughtfully consider and update No Child Left Behind to improve all schools, rather than focusing solely on charter schools in piecemeal legislation," Udall spokeswoman Jennifer Talhelm said.

A spokeswoman for Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., said the senator "has been supportive" of charter school innovations but wants to talk to New Mexico students and teachers before taking a position on the Senate bill.

LOAD-DATE: May 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

150 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Political Transcript Wire

May 8, 2014 Thursday

REP. TIM MURPHY HOLDS A HEARING ON PPACA ENROLLMENT AND THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY

LENGTH: 22084 words

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS HOLDS A HEARING ON PPACA ENROLLMENT AND THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY

MAY 7, 2014

SPEAKERS: REP. TIM MURPHY, R-PA. CHAIRMAN REP. MICHAEL C. BURGESS, R-TEXAS REP. MARSHA BLACKBURN, R-TENN. REP. PHIL GINGREY, R-GA. REP. STEVE SCALISE, R-LA. REP. CORY GARDNER, R-COLO. REP. MORGAN GRIFFITH, R-VA. REP. GREGG HARPER, R-MISS. REP. PETE OLSON, R-TEXAS REP. RENEE ELLMERS, R-N.C. REP. BILL JOHNSON, R-OHIO REP. BILLY LONG, R-MO. REP. JOE L. BARTON, R-TEXAS EX OFFICIO REP. FRED UPTON, R-MICH. EX OFFICIO

REP. DIANA DEGETTE, D-COLO. RANKING MEMBER REP. GENE GREEN, D-TEXAS REP. JAN SCHAKOWSKY, D-ILL. REP. KATHY CASTOR, D-FLA. REP. BRUCE BRALEY, D-IOWA REP. G.K. BUTTERFIELD, D-N.C. REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M. REP. PAUL TONKO, D-N.Y. REP. PETER WELCH, D-VT. REP. JOHN D. DINGELL, D-MICH. EX OFFICIO REP. HENRY A. WAXMAN, D-CALIF. EX OFFICIO

WITNESSES: FRANK COYNE, VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS, CHIEF TRANSFORMATION OFFICER, BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD ASSOCIATION

MARK PRATT, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF STATE AFFAIRS, AMERICAS HEALTH INSURANCE PLANS

PAUL WINGLE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, INDIVIDUAL BUSINESS AND PUBLIC EXCHANGE OPERATIONS AND STRATEGY, AETNA

BRIAN EVANKO, PRESIDENT, INDIVIDUAL SEGMENT, CIGNA

J. DARREN RODGERS, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER, HEALTH CARE SERVICE CORPORATION

DENNIS MATHEIS, PRESIDENT, CENTRAL REGION AND EXCHANGE STRATEGY, WELLPOINT, INC.

[*] MURPHY: Good morning. I now convene this hearing to examine the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and enrollment of the state in federal exchanges here in the oversight and investigation committee--for the committee on energy and commerce. This sub- committee has a long history of trying to get straight answers from the administration on the status of the Affordable Care Act.

Two weeks before the launch of Healthcare.gov; the administration official responsible for the implementation of the ACA Exchanges told this committee that the website would be ready; consumers would be able to go online, shop for select plan and then enroll in coverage. When the federal exchange opened on October 1, consumers instead found a crashing website. The administration excuse for why the website didn't work: volume.

Through this committee's investigation we learned that the administration spent over half a billion dollars on a website that they had been warned for several months, would not be ready and would not work. The fact that the administration officials did not disclose when questioned by this committee during oversight hearings through 2013. Just after the failed launch we asked the administration on October 8th to provide enrollment data for the first week of healthcare.gov; debacle. The administration ignored us. Why? It wasn't because the data didn't exist; it was because the news wasn't good.

When Secretary Sebelius testified before the full energy and commerce committee on October 30th of last year; was asked about enrollment, she stated that she could not provide any data because the administration did not "have any reliable data around enrollment." The very next day, it was reported that there were only six successful enrollments on October 1st. We tried again during a hearing in January before the sub-committee when we asked the head of the office running the exchanges if the administration collected any data on who has paid their health coverage.

This administration official told us that they did not collect this information, "but we will be" as soon as it was finished building the website. While the administration refused to provide straightforward answers to our questions on enrollment, it continues to tout enrollment figures that included individuals who had merely selected a plan online.

When pressed by reporters for information on the number of enrollee's who had paid their premiums, a White House spokesman said that questions about payment "can best be directed to those private insurance companies that are collecting those payments." After months of an administration that refused to be transparent about enrollment, that's what we did. We did exactly what the administration suggested we do. On March 13th we sent a request to each insurance company in the Federal Marketplace and asked them to submit basic information: who selected a plan and who paid for it.

The data submitted by the Insurer's paints an uneven picture about the status of enrollment and payment through April 15th. As of that date, just 2/3 of enrollee's through the federally facilitated marketplace paid their first month premium. Some states are doing better than others. My home state of Pennsylvania, for example, has an 81 percent payment rate. Texas, on the other hand, is much lower at 42 percent. We recognize that many individuals still have time to pay their first month's premium, which is why we have asked the Insurers to update this information on May 20th.

As with any criticism or questions of the Affordable Care Act, the administration predictably protested and attempted to misrepresent the purpose of our inquiry. Let's be clear about why we had to engage in this exercise in the first place. The administration would not be transparent about enrollment and provide the underlying data. For the witnesses today, we ask you to be patient with our questions about enrollment and implementation. After months of promises about the status of Healthcare.gov from HHS officials, we have learned to be skeptical about blanket statements that everything is well.

One purpose of today's hearing is to examine enrollment because it is a key factor in measuring whether these exchanges are viable. We have a number of other questions for the witnesses today about the status of implementation. The ACA is more than a payment rate. We need to know if Americans can expect the premium reductions they were promised. We need to know if they can keep the plan they like. We need to know if they can keep their doctor. We cannot understand the status of the law and its implementation without hearing from you, the Insurance Companies, whose plans make up these exchanges.

Under the Presidents' Healthcare Law, these companies will receive Taxpayer dollars in the form of premium subsidy's and cost- sharing. We expect the witnesses today to provide the committee with facts and information about the first year of coverage under the Affordable Care Act. Thank you for--witnesses being here today and now I'd like to recognize the Ranking Member Ms. DeGette for five minutes.

DEGETTE: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I just want to take a few minutes since the Chairman has walked through the greatest hits of the problems they've had with the ACA, of where we stand now and where we stand after the first en--after the first enrollment period has just closed. So as we continue to get information about how the exchanges and the Affordable Care Act and the enrollment are performing, let's review what we already know.

The first thing is, despite the disastrous beginning of the net-- of the federal exchange; good news, the website was fixed. More than 8 million people signed up for insurance through the exchanges created through the affordable care act, which is more than a million more than we're originally projected before the disastrous unveiling. Now, of those 8 million people that waited to the last month of enrollment--of those 8 million people, 3 million of them waited till the last month of enrollment. And so their premiums are not due until April 30th or, in some cases, later than April 30th.

Even so, my colleagues, in their quest for knowledge on the other side of the aisle, sent out a questionnaire to insurers that manipulated the payment deadline to skew the understanding of how new insurance coverage is performing. How does that happen? Because they cut off the responses April 15th, at least two weeks before many of the premiums of these 3 million people were even due for payment. What this does is it skews the amount of people who are enrolled. Then, of course, they issued a press release post-haste.

Now, for years my friends on the other side of the aisle have made a series of claims that really are unsubstantiated. First, they claimed that the bill--(inaudible)--panels. Then they claimed that the bill would eliminate private insurance within three years. Then they claimed that the law would destroy millions of jobs. When they-- when the website was broken, they insisted the law would never meet enrollment goals.

Now, Mr. Chairman, today we finally have a chance to see in a snapshot, what's happening with the Affordable Care Act. And the facts reveal that every single one of those--of those claims were wrong. As of today, as I said, more than 8 million people enrolled in private plans through federal and state marketplaces. Millions more have enrolled through Medicaid and in off-exchange plans. Gallup just released a new poll finding that in the last six months the percentage of adults without insurance has dropped about 20 percent. And what that means is there are more than 11 million Americans with insurance today then there were 6 months ago.

Premiums are below the levels predicted by the Congressional Budget Office. And the agency has, once again, reiterated that the Affordable Care Act has slowed inflation and saved billions of dollars and will even reduce deficits. So by any rational reasonable measure, we can call this law success. And that success will make a real difference in people's lives. That's what's important here.

Yesterday, researches from the Harvard School of Public Health released a comprehensive study on the impacts of health insurance coverage. They were looking at mortality rates before and after the passage of Romney Care, the landmark Massachusetts health insurance expansion that served as an--as a model for the Affordable Care Act. They found that the mortality rate in Massachusetts fell

by about 3 percent in the 4 years after passage of the state's health insurance law. And Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask unanimous consent to put a copy of that study into the record.

MURPHY: Not an objection.

DEGETTE: Thank you. So if we can achieve that same level of success, nationwide, with the Affordable Care Act and there's no reason why we shouldn't be able to do so. That could result in 17,000 fewer deaths per year. That, Mr. Chairman, in a nutshell is what the Affordable Care Act means for Americans. Now, what I wish we could do in this sub-committee, and I've said this both publically and privately many, many times, is sit down with the ACA, figure out what the flaws are and figure out how we can work in a bipartisan way to fix it.

And that's what I think we should do. Instead, what we get is this misleading analysis last week, which said that only 67 percent of enrollees had paid for the coverage they enrolled in on the exchanges. And my--my Chairman, Mr. Upton, said, "The administrations rec--recent declarations of success may be unfounded." But, again, I will say the report was misleading because almost half of the enrollees in the healthcare exchanges, 40 percent of them, did not even have to make their initial premium payment until April 31st. I'm glad we've got the insurers here today to clear up this record. I'm glad we have everybody here to--to see exactly what we're talking about here.

So my suggestion is, let's look at the successes, let's look where we need to make improvements and let's work together to do just that. Thank you.

MURPHY: (Inaudible)--recommend the Chairman of the full committee, Mr. Upton, for five minutes.

MR. UPTON: With a friendly pat on the back, I'll just say April 31st has yet to come. 30 days has September, April, June and November. Thank you Mr. Chairman. I thank the witnesses for being here today as well, for sure. At this sub-committee our investigations are about getting the facts. A quest for transparency, the self-proclaimed most transparent administration in history has repeatedly dodged our simple questions about the healthcare law and refused the semblance of transparency about how its signature legislation--legislative achievement is or is not working.

We wanted the basic data from administration on enrollment one week after the launch of Healthcare.gov and the administration has rejected our request for more information each and every time. Members of the press have asked. The administration suggested the only way to get the facts was directly asking the insurance providers themselves. So we took their advice and we did just that, but the administration cried foul again.

We began asking about Healthcare.gov months before October 1st of last year. Repeatedly we were told that things were on track and working the way it was supposed to. We learned that this was not the case and the administration officials did everything in their power, it seems, to hide the chaos behind the scenes. The American public does deserve better. They deserve better than an administration that promised them $2500 in savings on healthcare premiums, only to see the cost rise sharply for many. They deserve better than an administration that repeated promises officials new that would be impossible to keep, promises that Americans could keep their doctors and keep their healthcare plans, also.

Like it or not, millions of Americans have found themselves with the unwelcome reality of cancellations and lost access to their trusted doctor. And one democratic colleague from Massachusetts said just two weeks ago, "The worst is yet to come." Today we are going to hear firsthand from the insurance providers about how implementation is working from their perspective. While the administration has declared this conversation over, the fact is that serious questions remain unanswered. And it is our responsibility to continue seeking the facts.

How many people have completed the enrollment process? Are the risks presented by these polls sustainable? How much more will premiums rise this next year? Is the back end of the website to be on track to be working by the next enrollment period? Are there any other delays or changes ahead that will disrupt the ability of families and businesses to plan for their healthcare coverage and needs? Will more healthcare plans be canceled in the coming years?

So what's wrong with seeking that information? Nothing that I know of. We released basic data points on enrollment as of April 15th and we'll do so again on the data that we collect through May 20th. The facts are the facts. And while the administration and its allies, furiously, try to muddy reality; the public deserves transparency. And while the administration toasts to the laws success with its Hollywood allies declaring this conversation over. We will continue our pursuit for facts for the American people so that we can finally have a full, accurate picture of this healthcare law. And I give the balance of my time to Dr. Burges.

DR. BURGES: I thank the Chairman for yielding. I thank our witnesses for being here today. I know it's not always easy or pleasant to come before this sub-committee. I, like the Chairman, wish that the administration would have been a little bit more forth coming about information, which would've obviated your need to be here today, but I do appreciate the fact that you responded to our request and that you have provided the data.

The fact remains the administration has withheld facts or changed facts during the roll out of this law. And that the federal agencies responsible for the implementation currently excel only in opacity. So you are here today to provide that transparency that the American people were promised earlier in this administration and I thank you for being here.

I have particular concern over one aspect and I will delve into it a little bit more during the questioning today, but that is the issue on the grace period, the 90 day period of time that is granted to people who are receiving the tax credits, the advanced tax credits for the offset of the cost of their insurance. If they don't pay their premium, in spite of the tax credit, they are given a grace period of 90 days. My understanding is that the companies will be responsible for the first 30 days; beyond that it will be the doctor, the hospital, the provider who submits the bill who may be on the hook for that.

And I am very interested to know what you have in development to keep practices, to keep providers apprised of the fact that a--a--a patients claim may be in a pending status when that claim is submitted. I know, from running a Doctors' Office, you always call and verify benefits, but now we have a new realm that we've entered into. Not only would you identify that somebody has been enrolled, but that they've paid and that they're current on their payments so that the provider in question would not be at risk.

So we will get into a little bit more on that in the question and answer period. I thank the Chairman for the time and yield back.

MURPHY: Gentleman, times expired. Now recognize the ranking member of the full-committee, Mr. Waxman for five minutes.

MR. WAXMAN: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Last week the republican whip, Representative Kevin McCarthy wrote an op-ed opposing the Affordable Care Act. He wrote, "President Obama needs to learn a simple lesson. Saying something doesn't make it true." Well, psychologists call this projection, a defense mechanism that involves ascribing your own behavior to others. In one phrase Representative McCarthy summed up five years of Republican opposition to the Affordable Care Act.

Over and over, Republican leaders have fabricated criticism of the Affordable Care Act and none of them have been true. Republican leaders said that the ACA would create death panels. Well, there are none in the law. Republican leaders said that the law was unconstitutional. The Supreme Court held exactly the opposite. Republican leaders said that the ACA would increase the deficit. Well, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office found that the law will reduce deficits by over a trillion dollars.

Republican leaders said that the law would cause healthcare costs to sky rocket. In fact, in the 3 years after passage of the ACA, healthcare spending growth was at its lowest rate in 50 years. Republican leaders said that the law would cause massive job losses. In reality, there have been 48 consecutive months of job creation since the ACA was passed with more than 9.2 million jobs created. Republican leaders said there would be a huge loss of coverage under the law, but every

independent analysis shows that the number of Americans with health insurance is growing and the number of uninsured, dropping rapidly.

Republicans said enrollment would fall short of CBO estimates because few Americans would sign up. At 8 million and growing, enrollment has exceeded everyone's expectations. Mr. Chairman, I just summarized 5 years of relentless republican opposition to the Affordable Care Act. It's a sad, and I believe, reprehensible record. The Republican Party is trying to scare families from getting the health insurance they need.

We saw the same pattern just last week when this committee released another report claiming imminent failure. This time, the report said that 1/3 of enrollees had not paid for coverage. There was just one problem. The data was incomplete, out of date and manipulated. Due to the late surge in enrollment, premiums were not even due for over 3 million Americans. The testimony we're going to hear today from the Insurers contradicts the Republican findings.

That testimony says that 80-90 percent of enrollees have paid their premiums. Mr. Chairman, it was a mistake to release those inaccurate and misleading findings and it's not the first time this is happened. This morning I released a memo describing the Republican record of distortion, exaggeration and misdirection. It's a sad record and I'd like to make it part of this hearing record. The simple fact is, despite 5 years of ceaseless opposition, the Affordable Care Act is working.

Over 8 million Americans have signed up for private healthcare coverage on the state and federal exchanges. Millions more have signed up for Medicaid. Premiums are well below CBO expectations. No American ever has to fear being discriminated against or denied coverage based on a pre-existing condition. No amount of blatant falsehoods and cynical partisan can obscure the facts. The Affordable Care Act is an enormous step forward in the health of our nation. And I yield back the balance of my time and I appreciate this opportunity to set the record straight.

MURPHY: Thank you. Gentleman yields back. We'll now move forward here with our witnesses. Just one moment please, because we went quicker and that's good. I just wasn't quite ready. So I'd like to introduce the panel for today's hearing. We have Mr. Mark Pratt who's a Senior Vice President of State Affairs for America's Health Insurance Plans. Mr. Frank Coyne is the Vice President of Operations and Chief Transformation Officer at Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. Mr. Paul Wingle--am I saying that correctly--is the executive Director of Individual Businesses and Public Exchange Operations and Strategy for Aetna. Mr. Brian Evanko is the President of Individual Segment for Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company. Mr. Darren--Mr. J. Darren Rodgers is the Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer at the Healthcare Services Corporations. And Mr. Dennis Mathis is the President of Central Region and Exchange Strategy at Wellpoint, Inc.

I will now swear in the witnesses. You are aware that this committee is holding an investigative hearing and when doing say we have the practice of taking testimony under oath. Do any of you have any objections to testifying under oath? All the witnesses have indicated no. The Chair then advises you that under the rules of the house and the rules of the committee you are entitled to be advised by council. Do you desire to be advised by council during your testimony today? You do--are you saying--Mr. Wingle's saying you'd like to be advised by council? Well, if you're sitting by him that's fine.

Anybody else? You have council behind you. You certainly are welcome, at some point, to ask clarification from them, that's fine. In any case, would you all please rise and raise your right hand and I'll swear you in. Do you swear the testimony you are about to give is of truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth? Thank you. You may be seated. All the witnesses have taken that oath and you are now under oath and subject to the penalties set forth in title 18, section 1001 of the United States Code. We'll have you now each give a 5 minute opening statement, please. Stick to the 5 minutes. You'll see a red light go on when you're at the end of your time. Mr. Pratt, you may begin.

MR. PRATT: Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member DeGette and members of the sub-committee, I am Mark Pratt, Senior Vice President of State Affairs in America's Health Insurance Plans. I lead AHIPs Legislative and Regulatory activities in the states including implementation of the Affordable Care Act and our work with the National Association of Insurance Commissioners. We appreciate this

opportunity to testify on enrollment on the new health insurance exchanges and implementation of the ACA.

Our written testimony focuses on two broad areas. One, our members experience in the ACAs initial open enrollment period for 2014 and two, our members priorities for improving access to high quality affordable health coverage in 2015 and beyond. Since the enactment of the ACA, our members have been working to implement the laws, many requirements with a strong focus on delivering high-value coverage options for consumers.

Helping them obtain the secure affordable coverage they need has been our central goal throughout the implementation process. While working on operational issues related to ACA implementation and providing recommendations to policy makers; our members have focused on several major goals. Among them, minimizing disruptions for consumers, businesses and stake holders; ensuring the workability of the exchanges and allowing state flexibility; maximizing choice and competition and addressing specific ACA provisions to make health coverage more affordable.

On numerous issues, our members have provided technical systems and expertise to assist federal agencies in resolving the operational challenges that surrounded the launch of the new exchanges and healthcare.gov website. They've devoted significant resources to performing manual processes and workarounds that were necessitated by the problems following the October 1 launch.

Despite the challenges our members encountered, we are proud that they ultimately were successful in offering a broad range of high- value coverage options to consumers who were enrolled in exchanges in 2014. HHS has reported that approximately 8 million individuals signed up for exchange plans during the initial open enrollment period for 2014. While uncertainty remains with respect to how many people have paid their first months premium, health insurers have been doing everything possible to encourage exchange enrollees to pay their premiums.

In the coming weeks we anticipate that there will be greater clarity in the question of how many exchange enrollees have paid their premiums. The number of individual plans have publicly announced the preliminary data and we anticipate that more announcements will be forthcoming. However, it may be a period of time before system-wide numbers and premium payments are available. Our members will continue their ongoing outreach to encourage exchange enrollees to pay their premiums.

Looking forward, we continue to believe that affordability must be the central priority as we focus on further expanding access to high quality affordable health coverage--health insurance coverage in 2015 and beyond. One critically important step that congress can take to make coverage more affordable is to delay the ACA health insurance tax and eventually repeal it. We are deeply concerned that this tax is undermining efforts to control cost and provide affordable coverage options.

We strongly support bipartisan legislation to fully repeal the tax introduced by Representatives Boustany and Matheson and cosponsored by 230 house members. We also support, as a short-term solution, separate bipartisan legislation that proposes a two year delay in the tax. On another front and in closing, we have worked closely with our members to provide comments to federal agencies on dozens of proposed rules and other regulatory documents. We consistently have emphasized the importance of creating a regulatory environment that promotes a wide range of affordable coverage options. Thank you again for this opportunity to testify. I look forward to your questions.

MURPHY: Thank you Mr. Pratt--(inaudible)--now we recognize Mr. Coyne for his 5 minutes. Thank you.

MR. COYNE: Good morning Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member DeGette and members of the sub-committee. Thank you for the invitation to testify here today. I am Frank Coyne, Vice President in the Office of the President for the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, which represents the 37 independent community bases Blue Cross and Blue Shield Companies that collectively provide health coverage for 100 million Americans.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield Companies offer health care coverage in every zip code in the coverage and have long been committed to offering consumers across the country a wide variety of insurance options. My remarks today focus on the Blues participation in the multi-state plan program administered by the Office of Personnel Management and enrollment in Blue Cross and Blue Shield MSP plans. The Affordable Care Act authorizes OPM to contract with at least two entities; at least one of which must be a not for profit to offer products on the state and federal market places.

Under this multi-state plan program, OPM certifies health plans in conjunction with states for placement on the exchanges. For 2014, OPM certified Blue Cross and Blue Shield Companies to offer multi- state plan products in 30 states and the District of Columbia. Collectively, Blue Cross and Blue Shield Companies offer more than 150 multi-state plan products.

OPM has developed a standard contract for OPM issuers that meet its requirements. The association is party to the contract with OPM and our Blue licensee plans have agreements with us to fulfill many aspects of that contract such as customer enrollment, benefits and claims administration and customer service, among other activities. In addition, the contract contains a requirement to report enrollment information to OPM.

In order to fulfill this requirement, we ask Blue plans to report information on their multi-state plan enrollments to us and we convey enrollment information to OPM. As of April 1st, 2014 a total of 283,783 individuals an MSP plan. I appreciate the opportunity to discuss Blue participation in enrollment in the MSP plan and I look forward to your questions.

MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Coyne. Now, Mr. Wingle you're recognized for 5 minutes. Does your--move it close--move it as close as you can get it.

MR. WINGLE: Oh sure. Thank you. Good morning Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member DeGette and distinguished members of the sub-committee. My name is Paul Wingle and I am Executive Director of Individual Business and Public Exchange Operations and Strategy at Aetna. Thank you for inviting us to today's hearing. I have a brief opening statement and will then be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Aetna is currently participating in the individual market on the exchanges in 17 states. Over the course of approximately the last two months, Aetna has worked with the sub-committee to provide requested data and information related to enrollment in plans offered through federally facilitated market places. As of the third week of April, Aetna had over 600,000 members who had enrolled and roughly 500,000 members who had paid. For those who had reached their payment due date, the payment rate, though dynamic, has been in the low to mid 80 percent range.

As outlined in our prior submissions to the sub-committee, these are dynamic figures and do not reflect final enrollment numbers as some enrollees have not yet reached their payment due dates. An example would be a member with the June 1 policy effective date who has not yet paid, but whose initial payment is not yet due.

We're happy to continue to work with the subcommittee to provide updated information and data and note that as a subcommittee is recognized, this might include material, nonpublic, confidential and proprietary information. Thank you again for the opportunity to be here today, and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Wingle. Yield back.

And now Mr. Evanko. You're recognized for five minutes.

EVANKO: Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member DeGette, members of the subcommittee. Good morning. And thank you for the opportunity to testify at this hearing on PPACA enrollment in the insurance industry.

I'm Brian Evanko, and I currently serve as president of the U.S. Individual Segment at Cigna Corporation. I oversee the operation tasks with developing, promoting and maintaining the Cigna products that are offered in the individual health market.

Including those products that are offered on the exchanges set up pursuant to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act or ACA. Cigna's a global health services company dedicated to helping people improve their health, well-being and sense of security. Through its subsidiaries, Cigna offers an integrated suite of health services, such as medical, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy and vision care benefits, along with other related products, including group disability, life and accident coverage.

We employ more than 26,000 people and have sales capability in 30 countries and jurisdictions. We manage more than 80 million customer relationships throughout the world. Despite our large footprint, 80 percent of Cigna's overall healthcare business consists of administrative services. This means that we help employers to administer their policies.

We also administer claims processes, which are not risk-based like traditional insurance. Many of the employers that we assist are self-insuring, and the claim payments come out of the employers' own funds.

Cigna's traditional insurance business is concentrated in a large group market. We have a very limited presence in the individual market, including on the ACA exchanges. The individual market currently constitutes approximately three percent of Cigna's total revenue. We currently offer health insurance products on the exchanges in five states, four of which, Arizona, Florida, Tennessee and Texas, are federally facilitated marketplaces. The only state run exchange in which Cigna's participating is in Colorado.

We have entered the exchanges on a focused basis in 2014 to gather deeper learning about consumer behaviors in the individual market, to understand the operational implications of how the exchanges function, and as a potential longer term source of growth for Cigna.

For 2014, we did not expect the exchanges to have a significant financial impact on our company. The health insurance marketplace is evolving rapidly, and Cigna, like other health insurance companies, is constantly challenged to maintain affordability, accessibility and consumer choice in its product offerings. Cigna has worked collaboratively with our clients and customers, healthcare professionals, state and federal regulators, as well as other stakeholders to maintain our heritage of providing high quality health insurance products and services while adapting to the ACA and other statutory and regulatory changes.

We believe that healthcare is a shared responsibility of the individual, the private sector, the medical community and the government. Accordingly, we look forward to how we can all work together to improve the health and wellness of, and the quality of care for, all Americans. I welcome any questions you may have.

MURPHY: Mr. Evanko, yield back.

And it'll go to Mr. Rodgers to be recognized up to five minutes.

RODGERS: Good morning, Chairman Murphy. Good morning, Chairman Murphy, and members of the subcommittee. I'm Darren Rodgers.

(CROSSTALK)

RODGERS: Good morning again, everyone. I'm Darren Rodgers. I'm Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer at Healthcare Service Corporation or HCSC. HCSC is a mutual legal reserve company, which does business as Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. HCSC is the largest customer-owned, nonprofit health insurance company in the nation.

We're headquartered in Chicago, Illinois, with a workforce of nearly 20,000 employees, serving nearly 14 million members throughout our five state Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans. For over 80 years, HCSC has been committed to expanding access to cost-effective healthcare to as many people as possible in every part of each of our five states. Whether through employer sponsored insurance, government programs or individual products, HCSC is committed to its purpose and to offering our customers a wide range of cost-effective and sustainable product choices to meet the needs of -- to meet their health and wellness needs.

As we transition to a new healthcare marketplace, HCSC remains committed to its individual and small employer markets in continuing to offer accessible products, particularly to those individuals who do not have access to employer-sponsored coverage. We're proud of what our brands stand for, security and peace of mind, in our commitment to the communities in which we operate, as well as our large and geographically diverse network of healthcare providers in our operating states. This allows us to offer a variety of affordable product choices in every county of every state in which we operate.

To support our individual and small employer market, HCSC participated in the health insurance exchanges. We offered a similar portfolio of products both on and off exchange, with a variety of deductibles, copays, coverages and other options, with the goal of meeting our members' diverse healthcare needs.

At the current time, enrollment and payment information can only be presented as of each day when the numbers are counted. As such, there are natural lags between the effective date of coverage and the date on which the members' coverage payment may be due. For instance, applicants with policies with an effective date of May 1, still have time remaining in their payment deadline.

In addition, adjustments and reconciliations to this data are ongoing. The data HCSC is providing represents our good faith estimate based on our records to date. With these caveats, HCSC received between October 1, 2013 and April 15, 2014, approximately 830,000 applications across our five states, comprised of approximately 600,000 on exchange and 230,000 off exchange applications. We estimate that these 830,000 applications represent coverage for just over 1.2 million applicants.

In the written copy of my opening statement we provided a snapshot of our current first month payment rates. As you can see, January through April look fairly consistent and range from 83 to 93 percent. The payment rates for May are currently less, because payments are still coming in and being posted.

HCSC is, and always has been, committed to improving access to quality of care for all Americans. I thank you on behalf of HCSC for the opportunity to be a part of this important discussion.

MURPHY: Ladies and gentlemen, now Mr. Mathis here recognized for five minutes.

MATHIS: Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member DeGette, and members of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today on behalf of WellPoint. I am Dennis Mathis, president of the Central Region and Exchange Strategy. I'm responsible for creating WellPoint's exchange strategy and overseeing its launch. Prior to my current role, I was president of Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Missouri.

WellPoint is one of the nation's leading health benefit companies. We believe that our health connects us all. So we focus on being a valued health partner and delivering quality products and services that give members access to the care they need. With nearly 67 million people served by our affiliated companies, including nearly 37 million enrolled in our family health plans, we can make a real difference to meet the needs of our diverse constituents.

We are an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. We serve members as the Blue Cross licensee for California, and as the Blue Cross and Blue Shield licensee for Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Missouri, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Virginia and Wisconsin.

In most of these service areas, our plans do business as Anthem Blue Cross, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Georgia, and Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield or Empire Blue Cross. We also serve customers in other states through our Amerigroup and CareMore subsidiaries.

WellPoint is currently operating in the federally facilitated exchange, which includes Georgia, Indiana, Maine, Missouri, New Hampshire, Ohio, Virginia and Wisconsin. We also participate in several state-based exchanges, including California, Colorado, Connecticut, Kentucky, New York and Nevada.

While there is no doubt that implementation of the exchanges presents a complex and daunting undertaking, we believe we've been able to apply our knowledge and experience to make the system work better for our members. We are seeing strong membership growth, and large percentages of our newly enrolled customers are successfully paying their premiums by the due date.

Our most important priority through all of the complexity of ACA implementation is to ensure that our members receive the best possible care. Working closely and collaboratively with the physician community, our innovative programs, from new payment models to telehealth solutions, to sophisticated data analytics that arm physicians with better information, we are creating value for our members, for physicians and for the healthcare system. We are proud of the work we are doing to transform healthcare.

WellPoint was pleased to provide the committee last month with enrollment data from October 1, 2013, through April 20 -- April 15, 2014, for states where we participate in the federally facilitated exchange.

As we stated to the committee at the time of submission, this data is not final, and only represents a snapshot in time. The data included enrollees whose policies have effective dates of April 1, May 1, and June 1, which means that premiums for such policies would not be due until April 10, May 10, and June 10, respectively.

Also, the reported enrollment and premium payment data is subject to adjustments. For examples, enrollees may elect to drop their coverage, elect to change the effective date of their coverage after submission of their application, or continue to enroll through special enrollment periods.

In response to the committee's request, we submitted the total number of applications received for enrollment in the federally facilitated exchange during the period October 1, 2013, through April 15, 2014. The percentage of applications that have paid a premium will differ depending on whether the percentages calculated based on the total number of applications and premium payments received during this entire period, roughly 70 percent, or as calculated based on the total number of applications and premium payments received for policies whose premium deadline has passed. Ranging up to 90 percent, depending on the state.

WellPoint feels privileged to be able to serve our growing community of members. We take great pride in transforming healthcare with trusted, caring, creative and innovative solutions. I thank the committee for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of WellPoint, and look forward to your questions.

MURPHY: Thank you. Well, just for record, all the witnesses did not go over time, and we'll make sure we fill in the gaps here, which was -- not been provided to us. And see if we can get some information.

Do any of you, particularly from the insurance companies, do any of you have -- I'm recognizing myself for five minutes, by the way, have any data among those people who're subscribed, is if the cost their paying for their overall health insurance plan is more, less or the same as they were paying in a previous year? Mr. Wingle, does your, do you keep, that data?

WINGLE: I don't have that data available.

MURPHY: Mr. Evanko? Do you know if you might have some?

EVANKO: I don't have specific figures to share. I can try to provide some context.

MURPHY: Would you submit that for the record? Mr. Rodgers, Mr. Mathis, do your plans keep that record of what people paid in the previous year versus what they're paying now?

RODGERS: No, I haven't looked.

MURPHY: Thank you. And of those who have signed up for insurance, do any of your companies ask for, have any data, if people were among those who had lost their insurance? That is, their insurance was canceled because it changed in the Affordable Care Act. Any of you from insurance companies? Any of you have that data?

WINGLE: No. EVANKO: We currently do not have that information available.

MURPHY: OK. And all right. Thank you. So we don't know if the people who are signing up for these health insurance plans are people who are renewing insurance, had lost insurance, or never had insurance; am I correct? Mr. Wingle, Mr. Evanko, Mr. Rodgers, Mathis? OK.

EVANKO: That's correct.

MATHIS: No.

MURPHY: I know Secretary Sebelius said that she did not think we had that data either.

Mr. Wingle, your Chief Executive, Mark Bertolini, said that premium rates in 2015 will range from very low single digits to some that will be over double digits. Can consumers expect this for their 2015 premiums?

WINGLE: It's important to recognize, first of all, that we're at the start of the rate filing and approval process, so we're very early in the process of establishing those rates and submitting them to state regulators for approval and review. Our rates, it's also important to understand, reflect a number of key factors, most importantly the benefits covered by the plans we're filing, the population covered by those plans, and the underlying healthcare costs in the geographies where those plans are offered. There will be some variability across geography and depending on those circumstances.

MURPHY: Some might face double-digit increases. We don't know yet, you're saying?

WINGLE: I can't say for certain whether some will pay double digits, single digits, or no increase at all. It's too early to say.

MURPHY: If there's no increase in insurance, we should all celebrate, because I'm not sure that has existed in my lifetime.

(OFF-MIKE)

MURPHY: What's that?

(OFF-MIKE)

MURPHY: Will there -- will there be decreases?

WINGLE: It's hard to say. It'll vary by geography and ratings.

MURPHY: All right. Mr. Mathis, you announced your quarterly earnings and notice that the ramp-up in the fee of government is charging insurers under the healthcare law would impact marketplace premiums next year. What can consumers expect?

MATHIS: So similar to my colleague's comment, we are in the process of developing our rates now for the 138 rating regions in which we do business across the 14 states. So I don't have exact numbers yet, Chairman, in terms of what our rate increases are going to be. Certainly inputs into that are the experience that we're developing through the population that we're serving, the expected medical trend that's going to occur, and then the fees and taxes that occur through the ACA and through state and other federal constructs. That all goes into the right construct process.

MURPHY: I think I'm going down the same hall with each of you, so let me cut to the chase. The bottom line here is you do get, for risk corridors, you do get some money back from the federal government to balance out some of your costs; am I correct? With each plan? Mr. Evanko, is that true?

EVANKO: Risk corridors, as you know, sir, are part of the three R's. We, at Cigna Corporation, are not expecting in material, receivable or payable, as it relates to risk corridors.

MURPHY: I'm -- my point is that as we're looking at this data, and we'll continue to monitor, and we recognize some of this is too preliminary, based upon who has signed up and what their healthcare costs are. For example, if we don't reach, if you don't reach the 40 percent number that the president had hoped, of people between 18 and 35, and mostly those who signed up have been older and sicker, then that's going to have an impact upon your plan cost. Am I correct, Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Could -- could you restate that question?

MURPHY: That if people who have signed up are not the young, healthy invincibles, but are, indeed, the older folks who have preexisting conditions and other healthcare costs, that you're gonna have to face some sort of increase in premiums; am I correct?

RODGERS: Well, as two of my colleagues have said, the rates that we file for 2015 haven't been finalized yet, but those will reflect...

(CROSSTALK)

MURPHY: Understand. I'm anticipating.

(CROSSTALK)

RODGERS: ... cost...

(CROSSTALK)

MURPHY: You've been in the business for a while. And the federal government does provide some funds for -- for you to help balance these out; am I correct? There's, federal money, comes to help as the risk corridors and you have other people there who increase cost (inaudible); am I correct?

RODGERS: The three R's program does exist to provide...

MURPHY: Right.

RODGERS: ... some guardrails. We have not...

MURPHY: But over time, that amount of money from the federal government will decline; am I correct?

RODGERS: Some of those programs are traditional, transitional, and one's permanent.

MURPHY: I understand. But we're going to, we'll get back to this. Thank you.

I yield, recognize, Miss DeGette for five minutes.

DEGETTE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Last week, the majority republicans on this committee put out a report stating that only 67 percent of the people who signed up for insurance through the state and federal marketplaces has paid their first month's premiums and then had a big press blitz about that, saying that Obamacare had once again failed. So I -- I kind of want to walk some of you through that allegation and see how true it is.

I want to start with you, Mr. Mathis. I believe that the press reports I've seen, the reports from the administration, show that -- that through the end of March, which was the deadline, about 8.1 people enrolled through either the federal or state exchanges. Is that correct, to your knowledge?

MATHIS: Did you mean 8.1 million?

DEGETTE: Yes.

MATHIS: Yes.

DEGETTE: And -- and...

MATHIS: I -- I have the same source of data that -- that you do on that point.

DEGETTE: That's fine. Now, in your -- in your testimony, you said that the data used in that republican analysis, quote, "included enrollees whose policies have effective dates of April 1, May 1, and June 1." Is that correct?

MATHIS: Yes.

DEGETTE: And that's about three million out of eight million people, about 40 percent; is that correct?

MATHIS: Again, since we didn't enroll all eight million people, I can't attest to that question or not.

DEGETTE: But -- okay. Well, I will say what I've seen is it's about three million out of eight million. Now, so the three million people who enrolled, or let me just say, the people who enrolled in March, they had coverage, in general, that began no -- no earlier than May 1; is that right? MATHIS: If you enrolled in March, you would have potentially an effective date, depending on what day of the month you enrolled in. Could be April 1. Could've been May 1.

DEGETTE: May 1. And so those people's premiums were not due until, at the earliest, the end of April; is that correct? If you enrolled March 31, your premiums were due at the end of April, or later, right?

MATHIS: To help facilitate members enrolling, what we have done at WellPoint is actually extended the payment period 10 days beyond last day of...

(CROSSTALK)

DEGETTE: So it could -- it could be...

MATHIS: ... month.

DEGETTE: ... April 30 or it could even be later, correct?

MATHIS: So an April 1...

DEGETTE: "Yes," or "No," will work.

MATHIS: An April 1 effective...

DEGETTE: Right.

MATHIS: ... could actually have until May 10 to pay their premiums.

DEGETTE: OK. Now, Mr. Mathis, let me ask you. Your testimony said for WellPoint ACA policies whose deadline for paying premiums has passed, about 90 percent had paid their premiums; is that correct?

MATHIS: So our data in our...

DEGETTE: You can say "Yes," or "No." That's what your testimony said.

MATHIS: Yes. So it...

DEGETTE: OK. Now, that's more than 67 percent; is that correct?

MATHIS: Last time I looked, yeah.

DEGETTE: OK.

MATHIS: It's been greater than 67.

DEGETTE: Now, Mr. Wingle, let me -- let me take you off the hot seat, Mr. Mathis.

Mr. Wingle, I want to ask you. Aetna has shown, of the -- of the five to six hundred enrollees who have paid, about 85 percent up until March paid their premiums; is that correct?

WINGLE: Our range is in the low to mid-80s month to month.

DEGETTE: OK. And that's also more than 67 percent, isn't it?

WINGLE: Empirically, yes.

DEGETTE: Yes. And Mr. Rodgers, let me ask you for your company. The ACA payment policies whose premium payment deadlines have passed, about 83 to 85 percent of them have paid their premiums; is that correct?

RODGERS: Except for the most recent month.

DEGETTE: The ones whose payment deadlines have passed.

RODGERS: Yes, that's correct.

DEGETTE: Yes. And that's also more than 67 percent, isn't it?

RODGERS: That is more than 67 percent.

DEGETTE: Yeah. So -- so what I wanted to -- to ask about -- what I wanted to ask about is do any of you expect to see substantially lower payment percentages than you saw historically? Before the latest enrollment? Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: So I -- I will give a little context to my answer.

DEGETTE: OK. I -- I need a "Yes," or "No." I don't have much time. I'm sorry.

MATHIS: Well...

(CROSSTALK)

DEGETTE: Do you expect to see it go down to 67 percent for April?

MATHIS: I don't think we have enough information to know exactly ...

DEGETTE: OK.

MATHIS: ... where it's going to be.

DEGETTE: OK. Well, Mr. Rodgers, let me ask you this question then. Mr. Upton said that he thinks suddenly maybe they won't pay for their enrollment in March. So I wanted to kind of go through, because you've got a nice chart in your testimony, and it shows the -- the payments month by month that people made when they enrolled. So for 1-1-2014, on the exchange, 85 percent of the people paid; is that correct?

RODGERS: That's correct.

DEGETTE: For 2-1-2014, 86 percent paid, correct?

RODGERS: That's correct.

DEGETTE: For 3-1-2014, 88 percent paid; is that correct?

RODGERS: Yes.

DEGETTE: And for 4-1-2014, 83 percent paid; is that correct?

RODGERS: That is correct.

DEGETTE: And you're still waiting for everybody else to pay the -- because their deadline has not passed yet; is that correct?

RODGERS: That's correct.

DEGETTE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

MURPHY: And can I just follow up with a clarifying question. When she asked about historical data, were you referring to the last couple months or a comparison with previous years under different plans?

BLACKBURN: Well, we didn't have an exchange.

MURPHY: No, no. I -- I just...

DEGETTE: Chairman, we only just got the exchange.

MURPHY: No. I -- I wasn't sure if you meant under historical, you mean previous years of plans, versus just the exchange.

BLACKBURN: No. (Inaudible).

DEGETTE: Chairman, what I mean is since -- since the ACA...

MURPHY: OK.

DEGETTE: ... was implemented starting on October ...

MURPHY: Thank you. I just wanted clarification on that.

Now recognizing Miss Blackburn for five minutes.

BLACKBURN: Thank you all so much for being with us. I want to stay with this issue on the premiums, because we get asked about this a lot.

So Mr. Wingle? Aetna. Your CEO said the premium increases will vary over 17 states and encompass 100 -- 132 rating areas, correct?

WINGLE: That is correct.

BLACKBURN: OK. Can you identify where premiums will decrease in 2015? What identification can you place on that? WINGLE: At this point in the filing season, we can't offer any guidance on or speculate on where they're going to fall. We're still gathering the information pile.

BLACKBURN: None?

WINGLE: I -- I can't say none.

BLACKBURN: OK.

WINGLE: I can't say any.

BLACKBURN: Mr. Mathis? Can you tell me any, identify any states, where you are offering products in the exchanges where consumers can expect a premium decrease?

MATHIS: At this juncture we do not have the information.

BLACKBURN: You don't have the information?

MATHIS: No. The filing -- the filing rates are -- are due starting in late May into June, and so we have not computed yet with any certainty what the actual rates are going to look like in our 138 rating regions.

BLACKBURN: OK. Lot of uncertainty floating around out there. OK. Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: I -- I would echo my colleagues' comments. We're in the process of making decisions. Some decisions on certain assumptions been made, but most assumptions are still to be determined, so ...

BLACKBURN: So you don't know if your consumers are going to see any decreases. You know, they were promised decreases through the Affordable Care Act. So OK.

Mr. Rodgers? To you.

RODGERS: As the company's marketing officer, I can tell you I'm not involved in rate setting, but I'm aware of some of the deadlines we're facing, which are generally toward the end of June...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: OK. Well, let me ask you all this then. Have any of you conducted any internal analysis of what your organization's premiums are going to look like in 2015? Do any of you have any internal analysis? Raise your hand for me.

So you all have conducted no -- we've got some of our nation's biggest insurers and you have done no internal analysis on what the trend line is for these premiums? None? Oh ...

EVANKO: Miss Blackburn...

BLACKBURN: ... Mr. Evanko. Have at it. EVANKO: I -- I'd like to just clarify our comments here a little bit, at least my comments, as it relates to this issue. So the decisions related to this are very complicated, and they impact each individual a little bit differently, because of where someone's located, maybe what their APTC eligibility is, et cetera. So there's a long list of reasons there.

BLACKBURN: Right. We -- we understand that. You're talking about a 2300 page law that became about over 20,000 pages of rules and regulations, and we know this changes daily. We appreciate the predicament that you are in. We also appreciate the predicament that our constituents find themselves in. And it is baffling that we can have some of our nation's largest ensures, and you all don't have any internal analysis as to what these rates are -- I thought that reading your reports you all did analysis and trend lines for the near-term, the mid-term and the long-term and you looked at what the expectations were so that your stakeholders would all be aware of what was happening within that market.

You know, has anybody done any kind of analysis?

MATHIS: Can I (inaudible)?

BLACKBURN: Yes, please. Have at it, Mr. Mathis. Your mike, please.

MATHIS: So analysis is typically ongoing in our organization. Rate development typically takes three to six months to occur, once you have credible information. And so just for context purposes, we, as has been stated earlier in this meeting ...

BLACKBURN: OK. Let me ask...

MATHIS: Let me please finish.

BLACKBURN: OK. Go ahead.

MATHIS: We are just now understanding what membership we have attracted.

BLACKBURN: OK.

MATHIS: And so the work is ongoing.

BLACKBURN: OK.

MATHIS: But it has not been finalized. And that...

BLACKBURN: OK. Let me ask you this.

MATHIS: ... that's the important point.

BLACKBURN: What has been prepared for your CEO?

MATHIS: At...

BLACKBURN: Any of you.

MATHIS: At this juncture, we do not have a compiled package to sit down and say, "Here's what we believe a rate is going to be in..."

BLACKBURN: OK.

MATHIS: "... any of our 130...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: When do you expect to have that?

MATHIS: Typically it will be towards the end of this month. As rates need to be filed in our state starting end of May through the June-July time period.

BLACKBURN: OK. Would you submit that to us for the record, each of you? Do you agree? To submit this for the record so that we will have this?

(UNKNOWN): OK. I -- in representative, I want to concur with my colleague, we are constantly analyzing our exchange experience. This is a new population. We don't have a long claims record or history we have from the -- we had in the previous market. So the more data we get, the better, and more confident we feel as we propose rates. It's an ongoing analysis. It's a constant.

BLACKBURN: OK. We appreciate that, and we would like to have that analysis and the information you have as you get it and ask that you please stay in touch with us and do those orderly insertions for the record.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

MURPHY: Gentleman (sic) yields back. And now recognized, Mr. Dingell for five minutes.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, I thank you for your courtesy, and I thank you for the hearing.

I'm pleased the committee's examining the first open enrollment period under the Affordable Care Act. I would like to examine the staff report where it claims only 67 percent of Obamacare enrollees have paid their first month's premium. We're going to find out whether that's so and what -- what it means.

The bottom line, I think, is the ACA is working. After a turbulent start, we got the website up and running, and HHS now reports that eight million people have selected plans through the exchanges.

Furthermore, some 4.8 million people are enrolled in Medicaid and gyp (ph). And that number would be much higher if all 50 states chose to expand Medicaid. CBO estimates that another five million people purchased ACA compliant plans outside the marketplaces. Finally, Gallup just found that the percentage of Americans who do not have health insurance fell to 13.4 percent, down from some 18 percent one year ago. So let's examine and see what goes on.

This question to Mr. Mathis. And "Yes," or "No," if you please. When WellPoint turned over enrollment figures to the majority, you did this under the caveat that the data was not final and only represented a snapshot in time; is that correct?

MATHIS: Yes, it is.

DINGELL: Yes?

MATHIS: Yes.

DINGELL: Now, this question, again, to you, Mr. Mathis. And that is because the committee only requested data through April 15, 2014; is that correct?

MATHIS: Yes, it is.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Mathis, is it correct that the people who signed up after May 15 may not have to pay their premium until later in April, May or even June? Yes or no?

MATHIS: Is there anybody after April 15 would have longer time?

DINGELL: That's -- who signed up after March 15?

MATHIS: Yes.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Mathis, is it correct that nearly 90 percent of WellPoint's customers whose premium deadline has passed have already paid their first month's premium? Yes or no?

MATHIS: Yes, it is.

DINGELL: Now, in your experience, have you found that people are more likely to make their premium payment right before the deadline?

MATHIS: That is typically human nature, sir.

DINGELL: And we -- we know that from the behavior of Americans with regard to income tax and things like that.

Now, this question is for Mr. Wingle of Aetna. Is it correct that according to your best estimate, roughly 80 percent of Aetna beneficiaries who've reached their payment due date have paid their first month's premium; yes or no?

WINGLE: Month to month it ranges from the low to mid-80s.

DINGELL: Say it again?

WINGLE: It ranges from the low to mid-80s month by month.

DINGELL: Thank you.

Now, this question for you, Mr. Coyne of Blue Cross Blue Shield. Is it correct that according to your best estimate, 80 to 85 percent of the individuals buying Blue Cross Blue Shield plans through the marketplace have paid their first months' premiums? Yes or no?

COYNE: Yes, that is correct.

DINGELL: I'm not hearing you, sir.

COYNE: Yes, that is correct. Based on...

DINGELL: That's correct.

COYNE: ... a report we...

(CROSSTALK)

DINGELL: Now, gentlemen, it doesn't take, I think, a genius, or an atomic physicist, to figure out the numbers we just heard from the -- and actual insurance companies greatly differ from the staff report. I hope everyone will take these companies at their word, instead of falling for smoke and mirrors from my friends on the other side of the aisle. I can understand why my friends on the other side of the aisle are not in attendance, because they would get a very unpleasant taste of fact, which they might not like.

My old daddy taught me, he used to say to me, "Son, figures don't lie, but liars can figure." And I've always thought that it would be a good thing when this committee does its business, that we know what we're doing, that we deal in hard facts, so that when the legislation that we work on, the laws that we are dealing with, the oversight in which we engage, actually lead us to truth and correct response, so that public policies may be mounted on fact rather than fiction, and on staff reports that mislead all. I would suggest that the staff reports should be reviewed with the utmost of care, and deposited then very carefully in the nearest large wastebasket.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MURPHY: Gentleman yields back. Now recognize the Vice Chair of the committee, Mr. Burgess, or Dr. Burgess, for five minutes.

BURGESS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for the recognition.

Remind the chairman emeritus that we are friends. Let me ask you a question. April 17, the day the president came out with Mission Accomplished speech at the White House in the press briefing, there was a briefing of executives of your companies; is that correct? Anyone is free to answer.

MATHIS: I believe -- I believe that was correct, sir.

WINGLE: Yes.

BURGESS: Mm-hm. And was your company represented?

EVANKO: I'm not sure which particular meeting you're describing, but I -- I know there have been some.

BURGESS: Well, let me give you the particular meeting. It was on April the 17th, at 1:35 p.m. The president and vice president meet with insurance executives in the Roosevelt Room. Did that meeting take place?

MATHIS: WellPoint was present at that meeting, sir.

BURGESS: WellPoint was present. Was Cigna present?

EVANKO: Our CEO was not present at that meeting.

BURGESS: Was not. OK.

EVANKO: I'm advised that our CEO was not present at that meeting.

BURGESS: And was Blue Cross?

WINGLE: That's Aetna, for me.

BURGESS: Was Blue Cross represented at the meeting?

COYNE: I -- I don't have that information right now.

BURGESS: Well, for -- for those that were...

RODGERS: And just for the record, I'm advised that (inaudible) president was present at the meeting.

PRATT: Yeah. And I -- I don't -- I can't remember the exact date of those meetings, but I can tell you that when we're called to the White House, generally we would attempt to be there.

BURGESS: Was April 17. And I would think you'd remember. It's a pretty big deal. I mean, I haven't had a meeting with the president and vice president.

BLACKBURN: Will the gentlemen yield? Perhaps...

BURGESS: No, I will not.

BLACKBURN: ... they could answer were they there?

BURGESS: No, I will not. My time is -- my time is limited. What I would like from those that answered affirmatively, Mr. Mathis and Mr. Pratt, can you provide us information as to what was covered in that meeting? Who made the presentation, how long it was, and was there, in fact, time for there to be question and answer? Was it simply a presentation to you from the president and vice president?

MATHIS: Mr. Congressman, I was not personally present at that meeting. Our CEO was, and I do not know the facts of the meeting.

BURGESS: Would -- would you make an attempt to answer for me those questions? Was, in fact, was this an interactive process, or was this a proclamation? Was it a monologue or was it a dialogue?

And Mr. Pratt, if you would provide us that information as well.

And here's the deal. I mean, why am I making -- why am I making a big deal of this? You all are here today because the White House won't respond to us. And I would think, if it was possible for the White House to provide a briefing to your executives on April 17, that same person could be made available to this committee and be prepared to answer our questions.

I -- I don't see what is so difficult about that. If the news is as great as everyone has said it is this morning, I -- I -- I think that they would welcome the opportunity to come to our committee and give us the information that we're asking for.

Look. One of the questions that I raised in the opening statement, and I do want your answers on this because it is important, this 90-day grace period and the coverage that can't be canceled during that 90-day grace period because of nonpayment. Is there any way for any of your individual companies to keep up with that information on a rolling basis and keep your providers informed as to the status of a person's payment or nonpayment of their premium?

Start with you, Mr. Coyne, and let's just work down the table.

COYNE: We're working with blue plans to inform providers of the enrollees' status, as you indicated.

BURGESS: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: Yes. We do have a unique identifier for our exchange membership on the I.D. card, and we do provide updates on the members' payment status in our physician information centers. So when the physician offices call or the provider calls, they understand what the payment status is of the member.

BURGESS: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: Our doctors in our hospitals that are servicing our customers have the ability to call or check online the status of the individual's payment, grace period situation.

BURGESS: Mr. Rodgers, would that even pertain to you?

RODGERS: Yes. Similarly, we have electronic means as well as telephone service as well, providers of various types of verified coverage.

BURGESS: And Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: Yes. We provide the same service.

BURGESS: And what I would ask of each of you is will you make available to the committee the type of information and how it is transferred to your providers, your doctors and hospitals, when they call for that information? And then, Mr. Chairman, further, I'd like to ask unanimous consent. The secretary was here in December, the Secretary of Health and Human Services. After that hearing, I submitted a letter to the secretary with several questions that I wanted answered. They have not

been answered to date. I am going to ask those same questions of our insurance representatives today. I'm going to ask those in writing, and I would appreciate your response to those questions that the secretary was unwilling to answer.

BLACKBURN: Reserving the right to object.

I would just point out that the secretary was here in front of this committee testifying three times last year, and we -- if there's questions she has not answered, we certainly will be happy to work with the majority and get those questions answered.

MURPHY: Well, we -- members do have the right to...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: ... reservations.

MURPHY: ... submit questions for...

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: And I will be submitting those questions in writing for our panel.

MURPHY: OK.

BURGESS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MURPHY: Mr. Green, you're now recognized for five minutes.

GREEN: Thank you, Chairman Murphy, and Ranking Member DeGette, for having this hearing today in our witnesses for the testimony.

Our district in Texas is a very urban district in Houston and has one of the highest rates of uninsured people who don't receive insurance through their employer in the country. One of the other talking points that my republican colleagues have seized upon last year, especially when the healthcare.gov was encountering problems early in the enrollment period was the idea that fewer people would have health insurance following the implementation of the Affordable Care Act than did beforehand.

Now I know that all our representatives here today see that the information and how many people that were enrolled and their total number of customers proprietary and I understand that. But you all also, I would hope, familiar with the general insurance landscape and how it's changed under the Affordable Care Act. Earlier this week, a Gallup poll released a survey examining the total number of Americans that have insurance. Mr. Pratt, are you familiar with that survey?

PRATT: Generally, yes. GREEN: The Gallup poll conducted interviews with 14,000 American adults. Gallup found that the number of adults without insurance had dropped to its lowest level since the beginning of 2008. A drop of this magnitude correlates to more than 11 million people gaining coverage. Are you familiar enough with the poll to -- to say that that sounds like a reasonable amount?

PRATT: Congressman, I think that's what they reported. I'm not in position to say whether that's a reasonable amount or not.

GREEN: OK. OK.

Anyone else on the panel want to talk about that Gallup poll? Because, you know, again, these are -- there are what we're seeing. And since the enrollment period end. Rand and Urban Institute released similar reports in March and April. Are any of you familiar with these reports?

PRATT: I'm not...

MATHIS: Very generally.

PRATT: ... I'm not familiar with the reports.

GREEN: OK. Well, in early April, Rand Corporation released results of their poll, which found overall number of Americans with insurance had grown to 9.3 million as of mid-March. Even before the late enrollment date surge. The Urban Institute also released a report in the past month suggesting that millions more people have coverage than before the ACA was implemented.

My question of any of our witnesses, would you agree that the findings of these, whether it be Rand, Gallup or the Urban Institute, are consistent with millions of Americans signing up for health insurance? Did y'all experience that with your companies? During the signup that they selected your company as part of the, if you were having to be part of the exchange, both national or the state exchanges?

MATHIS: Congressman, we do not have, at WellPoint, we do not have enough information at this point to know how many uninsured are actually among the enrollees. Because that data's -- we just don't have access to that data at this point.

GREEN: OK. Well, generally, the ACA has led to a huge increase in coverage. Even without the polls, we've seen some of the numbers. And is that, can you verify that, with your companies? Whether it be WellPoint, Blue Cross? Have you seen that increase in the number of people who've signed up with your companies since the deadline?

RODGERS: Speaking for Healthcare Service Corporation, I've provided in my written testimony as well as in my opening comments, the number of people that we signed up on and off exchange during the open enrollment period. I can't tell you today how many of those came from the ranks of the uninsured, or from our competitors or either from a prior policy with one of our five Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans, but we're certainly happy to have the numbers up.

GREEN: OK. Well, and we understand the -- there were people who were using the -- the websites and the national exchange to shop. And I had some companies who said, "I'm a small business. I -- I encourage--" In fact, I have a (inaudible) in my area, he said, "We have actually helped our employees sign up individually," because, you know, you have 10 employees, they -- they weren't required, but they actually used it, so -- and I know that's an analogy, but I've heard that from a lot of my employers.

Now, I know my republican colleagues with mid-data from these polls, that anything that comes through the administration of the overall signup. In March, Speaker Boehner said that there were less people today with health insurance than there were before this law went into effect.

I think not even basing it on a poll, would you all agree that there are more people in -- have health insurance now, let's say, since May 1? Than we had before the ACA?

RODGERS: I -- I can't speak to numbers on that enrollment.

GREEN: OK.

I don't know how my colleagues continue to make unfounded claims in the face of the clear evidence that Affordable Care Act's providing millions of Americas with, Americans with healthcare coverage. It makes me wonder what -- what possible convince them that millions of Americans have gained coverage under the law. I suspect that ultimately once the information becomes so indisputable it'll -- maybe will change the subject and rather, and concede that clearly more people who have health insurance as a result the ACA.

And having serving many years in Congress and even before that, in the state legislature in Texas, no law of Congress ever passes is perfect. That's not how our forefathers created the system. So we do need to go back like our ranking member said, and see what we can do to fix the ACA. And I appreciate y'all's efforts to help us do that once we get to that point. And I'll yield back my time.

MURPHY: Gentleman yields back. Now recognize Mr. Griffith of Virginia for five minutes.

GRIFFITH: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you all for being here. Miss Blackburn asked you earlier for a show of hands. I'm going to do the same. If your company anticipates a reduction for the average family that you insure of $2500 or more, would you raise your hand? If your company anticipates an -- a reduction in premium of $2,000 per average family, for your subscribers, raise your hand. Same for $1500. All right. I appreciate that.

When will your companies submit their rates to the administration for 2015? Do you all have a date that you're going to do that by? Please start... PRATT: Believe the...

GRIFFITH: Yes.

PRATT: ... rates are due toward the end of June. I believe it's June 27. I think the -- some of the states are a little bit ahead of that.

GRIFFITH: All right. And do you know when those will become public?

PRATT: Depending on the market, sir, that will vary. Depending on the states.

GRIFFITH: All right. And when you submit those to the administration, will you commit today to submitting those rates to us as well?

RODGERS: I'm not involved in the rate submission process, but to the extent that's possible, I'll need to talk to with our company representatives about that.

GRIFFITH: Well, certainly can't see how it'd be illegal to share information with United States Congress but...

RODGERS: Didn't say illegal.

GRIFFITH: ... if possible, you will do it, Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: I need to confirm with our actuaries who are involved in the rate filing process, because I'm not.

PRATT: We're -- we're happy to work with this committee as -- as long as the rates remain proprietary until they do become public and -- and all of our competitors see it.

GRIFFITH: All right. That's certainly fair. Any others? Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: I'd have to take that under advisement about how we share rates.

GRIFFITH: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: I'd just say the rates are very competitively sensitive, for obvious reasons, so we want to make sure that it's a a level playing field at the time the rates are disclosed.

GRIFFITH: Have either you or anyone in your organizations, and again, it's for all of you all, engaged in discussions with the administration already about the 2015 rates?

(UNKNOWN): Not that I'm aware of.

(UNKNOWN): No. Not to my knowledge. GRIFFITH: No -- everyone is silent. Does that mean there have been none? Has anybody had any discussions with the administration about rates for 2015?

(UNKNOWN): None that I'm aware of.

GRIFFITH: OK.

(UNKNOWN): No, no.

GRIFFITH: All right. Appreciate that. Thank you very much.

Mr. Pratt, the ACA includes a tax credit for small businesses to purchase health insurance coverage for employees. The law also levies a tax on health insurance purchase by small businesses. On the one hand, we give employers a tax credit to make health insurance more affordable, and then we turn around with the other hand and we tax those policies. Does that not seem as an inherent conflict in policy to you?

PRATT: Congressman, we've expressed significant concerns with the new tax on small businesses and individuals that total some hundred billion dollars that will largely be passed on to them in the form of higher premiums.

GRIFFITH: And -- and what we're trying to do, of course, is to see if we can't keep premiums down and -- and the ACA, Obamacare, has failed to meet its promise of a $2500 reduction for the average family. That's pretty straightforward, isn't it?

PRATT: Congressman, we -- we do believe that the health insurance tax runs counter to the goal of providing more affordable coverage.

GRIFFITH: And as a part of this, we're actually taxing government itself. We've got federal programs, including Medicare Advantage, Medicaid, managed care. Federal government is in fact taxing itself with the tax that you spoke of earlier through its subsidization of Medicare and in part Medicaid, and then state governments are also having to pay the tax. Do you have any idea how much that tax is on the American people? You said a hundred billion in increase, but how much for the federal and state governments?

PRATT: Congressman, I don't have that information handy, but we did commission a study by Oliver Wyman that does break out that information in more detail, including on a state-by-state basis. And we'd be happy to make that available.

GRIFFITH: All right. I appreciate that, if you would. Also, in your testimony, you write that insurers have many duplicate enrollments because of the problems with Healthcare.gov, and I can tell you that we had that in both -- I've heard it from constituents and in our family. Apparently we didn't push the right button the first time around. Say "we." My wife did it all. Don't want to take on any assumptions that it was us doing it. It was my wife working over the computer for hours and hours. But actually submitted several different applications. Ended up with one.

How widespread is that problem for citizens out there, and is that part of the confusion between whether or not people have paid their premiums or not?

PRATT: Congressman, the challenge you referred to, I think, was presented as a result of the -- the problems with the website and the technology and anecdotally we have heard from our members about a number of duplicate enrollments. Don't have an order of magnitude on that other than to know that it has been a -- a problem, and an issue.

GRIFFITH: All right. I appreciate that. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

MURPHY: Gentleman yields back. Now recognize Miss Schakowsky for five minutes.

SCHAKOWSKY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This morning, the democratic committee staff released a memorandum on the amazing number of distortions and false claims that republicans have made about the Affordable Care Act. It's a deplorable record. Virtually every major prediction or claim made by the republicans about the ACA since 2009, turned out to be wrong.

Today we have the benefit of hearing from some of the companies that are actually working on the Affordable Care Act in the real world. These companies were not the biggest supporters of the law. They still oppose many provisions. But they do not live in the Republican echo chamber. They live in the real world, and I hope they can provide some clarity on a few questions.

The first question I have for all of you is whether the ACA is a government takeover of healthcare. Republicans have made that claim I don't know how many times. By one count the phrase appeared on Speaker Boehner's website 90 different places. It's mentioned on the RNC, Republican National Committee website, 200 times. Days before Affordable Care Act's passage in 2010, then-House Minority Leader John Boehner's office wrote that, quote, "Democrats have opted for a government takeover of healthcare."

So Mr. Wingle, the ACA is now in effect. Has the government nationalized Aetna, or is it still a for-profit corporation?

WINGLE: We are a publicly traded, for-profit corporation.

SCHAKOWSKY: And Mr. Evanko, what about you? Has Cigna been taken over by the federal government?

EVANKO: No. We're a for-profit organization.

SCHAKOWSKY: Mr. Rodgers, Mr. Mathias (sic), have your companies been nationalized, or are they still nonprofits?

RODGERS: We're a not-for-profit mutual legal reserve company.

MATHIS: We're actually a for-profit organization. SCHAKOWSKY: Oh, you're for-profit. Sorry.

Mr. Pratt, you work for the trade group that represents the private insurance industry. Is there still a private insurance industry, or has the industry been destroyed or taken over by the government as republicans predicted?

PRATT: There is still a private industry, and we represent many of those companies.

SCHAKOWSKY: Thank you. Republicans also questioned whether the private health insurance -- whether private health insurance would even exist in 2014. In 2010, Senator Coburn said, quote, "There will be no insurance industry left in three years." And that, quote, "private health insurance will be dead in three years."

I should note that nearly four years have passed since that statement was made. Mr. Pratt, is the private industry, health industry, dead?

PRATT: Representative, no.

SCHAKOWSKY: Does anybody else on the panel believe the private industry has disappeared? Private insurance industry? Thank you.

Republicans have also claimed that Americans will no longer be able to see their doctors because of the ACA. Mr. Wingle, do your, does your company healthcare plan, do the plans cover physician care?

WINGLE: They do.

SCHAKOWSKY: And Mr. Evanko, what about you? Does Cigna have doctors in its healthcare plans?

EVANKO: Yes, we do.

SCHAKOWSKY: Mr. Rodgers, what about HCSC? Do you include doctors in your networks?

RODGERS: Certainly.

SCHAKOWSKY: And Mr. Mathias (sic), what about WellPoint?

MATHIS: Yes. We cover physician services.

SCHAKOWSKY: Thank you. Thank you very much.

Republicans have claimed that nobody would sign up for coverage. They've claimed that huge numbers have not paid for coverage. Eight million people have signed up for coverage on the exchanges. Millions more have coverage outside the exchanges, and each of the insurance companies here today have testified that people have signed up in droves and upwards of 80 or 90 percent have paid their premiums.

Mr. Chairman, I don't know if there will ever come a day when republicans will admit their criticisms of the ACA have been unfounded. I think we may have reached a turning point last week when you released your misleading report on the Affordable Care Act enrollment. I think the American public finally realized that republicans have absolutely no credibility on this issue. You cannot be this wrong this many times and still expect to be taken seriously.

When commentator Ezra Klein even gave the republican behavior a name, Obamacare Derangement Syndrome. He defined it as, and I quote, "the acute inability to see Obamacare as anything but a catastrophic failure that the American people will soon reject. For those suffering from ODS, all bad Obamacare news is good news, and all good Obamacare news is sin. In this world, delays of minor provisions in the law prove that the entire structure is collapsing, while surges of millions of people enrolling in insurance don't prove anything at all."

Mr. Chairman, perhaps we can ask our panel of insurers if their policies cover Obamacare Derangement Syndrome. But really, that's rhetorical, and I yield back. Thank you.

MURPHY: But it would be important to know if that's a preexisting condition, and I think it's not covered (inaudible).

SCHAKOWSKY: It would be covered now. Good news, Mr. Chairman.

(LAUGHTER)

MURPHY: Depends what the death panel says, I think, (inaudible).

Mr. Olson's now recognized for five minutes.

OLSON: I thank the Chair. And welcome to our witnesses. I wish you weren't here. But you are here. You're here because the administration would not give us the information we need to educate our constituents about Obamacare. And the rollout of Healthcare.gov.

I want to talk about, all of you, question about the back end. And the money supposed to be getting from the exchange of the information. In your experiences, is it working? Mr. Pratt, the back end working? You getting what you need? From Healthcare.gov?

PRATT: Representative, throughout the open enrollment period, we worked very closely to develop work-arounds, manual processes and other things that were necessary to make the system work better. It's my understanding that while the back-end problems have improved, some remain.

OLSON: Workarounds. You guys stepped up to plate to work around the disaster of the healthcare exchange rollout. Is that what you're trying to say? I mean, you guys took upon yourself, instead of depending on (inaudible). They gathered information. You're dependent upon them. And it's sort of trickling out and just coming slowly, slowly, slowly.

Not what you need? Is that what you're saying? You guys stepped around to make that happen?
PRATT: Representative, I think what I would say is that we kept the interests of our members squarely in mind in terms of minimizing disruption for them, and our members did what was necessary to make sure that it was as smooth as it possibly could be.

OLSON: Mr. Coyne?

COYNE: I would agree with Mr. Pratt. There are still back-end issued to be worked through, but that we are working with CMS on those. CMS has called a meeting of health insurers in the federal marketplace on May 20, to consider some of those back-end issues and try and find solutions to them.

OLSON: I hope you keep up abroad what they, that meeting, puts out, puts forth. Give us that information. Because we're not getting it from the Obama administration. Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: We've worked closely to share our concerns about technical needs and help work with the industry, our trade, through our trade association, with colleagues, to recommend and -- recommend prioritization on fixes for back-end issues, whether they're data cleanup issues or other issues related to the back end of the exchange.

OLSON: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: There are certainly more manual processes than we anticipated prior to the exchanges launching. I'd say there have been improvements in some areas. The one back-end issue that we're move focused on is the APTC payments coming from CMS to our -- our -- us as a carrier. That's a manual process today. We have been getting the payments we've been requesting though, as it relates to APTC.

OLSON: Manual process. Twenty-first Century manual process. Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: We're continuing to work with the enrollment process to make sure that any of the members that have selected one of our five Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans get the information they need from us and ultimately the care they need.

OLSON: Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: Yes. We're -- we've seen significant improvement, but we still have a number of opportunities for improvement as we move through the remainder of this year.

OLSON: And one final question for all the panelists. Is the website fixed? Mr. Pratt? If it's not fixed, when will it be fixed?

PRATT: Representative, I don't work in the operations area. I think if the back-end issues are considered part of the website, I would suggest...

OLSON: They are.

PRATT: ... that there are -- there are still issues outstanding that we're working on.

OLSON: Not fixed. Mr. Coyne?

COYNE: There are still issues on the back end...

(CROSSTALK)

OLSON: Another one not fixed. Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: There's still work to be done.

OLSON: Not fixed. Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: I can't comment on the end-to-end process. I can only comment on the component when CMS sends us enrollment transactions. And there's still work to do before that's 100 percent.

OLSON: Not fixed. Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Yes. We're still working with the files that we get, and I think there could be some improvement.

OLSON: Still not fixed. Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: Yes. To echo my colleagues' statements, we still have opportunities for improvement.

OLSON: Six for six. All not fixed. Mr. Chairman, I yield back. That's my time.

CHAIRMAN: Now recognize Mr. Tonko for five minutes.

TONKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So much of the debate we have with our Republican colleagues about the Affordable Care Act comes down to one simple question. Is it a good thing for Americans to have access to quality health insurance?

You would think this is a simple question. Every Republican member of the committee has health insurance. I bet that every pundit who makes a living attacking the ACA has health insurance. They all make certain their children have health insurance. I bet they wouldn't dream of going without it for an extended period of time.

Two big reasons these people make sure they have coverage is that it can help them stay healthy, and it can prevent catastrophic medical bills that can lead to financial ruin. But this week we got clear evidence from Massachusetts that health insurance actually saves lives. Researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health looked at mortality rates in Massachusetts and in surrounding states.

My question, Mr. Pratt, is that in 2006, Massachusetts passed major health reform legislation. Is that not correct?

PRATT: Yes, that's correct.

TONKO: And did that coverage expansion bear some significant similarities to the Affordable Care Act, including an individual mandate, expanded Medicaid coverage, and insurance exchanges?

PRATT: Generally, I would say that's fair to say.

TONKO: Thank you. The Harvard researchers found that following healthcare reform in Massachusetts, mortality rates dropped significantly compared to surrounding states. The death rate from treatable illnesses, like cancer and heart disease, declined even faster. These findings are truly remarkable, nearly a 5 percent drop in mortality from preventable illnesses. They found that for every 830 individuals who gained coverage, one life was saved.

Extrapolating that onto the national scene, if the trend holds, it means that ACA will save tens of thousands of lives. I'm not going to ask the witnesses to comment on the specifics of that study. But these witnesses know the value that health insurance provides.

Mr. MATHIS, do you have any doubt that your health insurance plans cover lifesaving treatments?

MATHIS: No, they do, sir.

TONKO: Mr. Evanko, what about you? Do you help members access lifesaving treatments?

EVANKO: Absolutely.

TONKO: Thank you. And, Mr. RODGERS, Mr. Wingle, what about your plans?

RODGERS: At the healthcare company, we are proud of providing consumers with high-quality plans, competitively priced. We're very proud of that.

WINGLE: Yes, sir. I agree.

TONKO: Thank you for your affirmative answers. Thank you. I think Republicans are really outside of the mainstream when they try to argue that Americans aren't better off if they have health insurance coverage. Their tireless efforts to discourage people from getting covered are truly shameful. Even more shameful is the refusal of Republican governors and some legislatures to expand the Medicaid program. Doing that would provide millions of Americans with healthcare coverage. And the Harvard study indicates that doing so would save thousands of lives. So we thank you for your affirmative answers.

(UNKNOWN): (Inaudible) back now, recognize Mr. Gardner for five minutes.

GARDNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the witnesses for being here today, and your time. Last year, the president apologized for his broken promise -- if you like your plan, you can keep your plan -- after millions of Americans received plan cancellations. I'd like each insurer to reply in turn, how many plans did you cancel or discontinue last year because of Obamacare?

Mr. Coyne?

COYNE: We don't have that information at the association. Individual health plans have that information.

GARDNER: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: We can provide that information to the committee.

GARDNER: Could you submit that for the record and by state what the total, for all of you?

Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: Sure. It's...

GARDNER: Do you have the number off the top of your head right now?

EVANKO: I can give you approximations...

(CROSSTALK)

GARDNER: Sure. That'd be great.

EVANKO: We had approximately 2,000 customers -- individual customers in South Carolina and Connecticut.

GARDNER: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: Again, we want to get you the -- the firm data.

GARDNER: Okay. Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: I don't have that data with me. I think we provided it to other congressional committees, so we certainly can...

GARDNER: But that's not a number that you keep on the top of your head?

RODGERS: Not at all.

GARDNER: Okay. Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: I don't have the number of products off the top of my head, but we'd be happy to provide that...

GARDNER: If you could submit for the record, by state and with the total, I would appreciate it. Then -- hey, does your organization know how many planned cancellations there were nationwide last year or -- or for your members?

MATHIS: Congressman, we would not have that information.

GARDNER: You're -- you don't ask that of your members? They don't provide that to you?

MATHIS: To my knowledge, we do not, no.

GARDNER: And, Mr. Coyne, does your organization know how many member plans were cancelled? You don't?

COYNE: We haven't asked for that information either.

GARDNER: In order to avoid these cancellations, some insurers offered early renewal plans, so they could continue into 2014. If each of the insurers could reply in turn, how many plans did you offer early renewals, too, last year that would have been otherwise cancelled?

Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: We -- we offered early renewals to all of our customers in all 14 states. That was allowable. So California did not allow us to offer early renewal. But in the majority of every other market, we offered it to every customer.

GARDNER: Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: We offered early renewals in four of our five states, the Montana Plan became part of our larger...

GARDNER: And how many -- how many were the -- were those offers? How many offers were there?

RODGERS: I don't have the number with me, but they're significant numbers, yes. And...

GARDNER: Did you provide -- all of you provide those for the record and by state, breaking it down, please?

Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: Yes. We offered early renewals to about 235,000 customers in all states, except for Connecticut and South Carolina, as I testified earlier.

GARDNER: Okay.

And, Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: We offered early renewals as consistent with state laws and regulations.

GARDNER: Okay. Last year, president apologized -- President Obama apologized for these cancelled plans and offered a one-year delay of enforcing the Obamacare requirements that led to the cancellations. This delay has since been extended.

I'd like each insurer to answer, how many plans do you currently offer that do not meet the law's requirements but you are able to continue offering because of this delay?

Mr. Mathis? MATHIS: I would have to get you that number, sir. I don't know it off the top of my head.

GARDNER: Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Yeah. I don't know the number.

GARDNER: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: I don't know the exact figure either.

GARDNER: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: I don't have the hard numbers on the pre-ACA plans.

GARDNER: To AHIP, do you know how many plans your member organizations currently offer under this delay?

PRATT: Could you please repeat that question (inaudible)?

GARDNER: The question is the one-year delay of enforcing Obamacare requirements that led to the cancellation, this delay has been extended. How many plans do you currently offer that do not meet the law's requirements but you're able to continue offering because of this delay?

(CROSSTALK)

PRATT: We don't have that information.

GARDNER: ...number.

Mr. Coyne?

COYNE: The only information we have has been informally reported to us. And it contains all non-ACA compliant plans across the Blue system, and that number is 3.2 million.

GARDNER: Mr. Mathis, what happens when those plans -- when the time runs out, when the delay expires?

MATHIS: So it -- depending on how the state handles it, with the extension, in theory, a customer could sign up for two more years.

GARDNER: What happens after that time expires, cancelled?

MATHIS: Then they would be new to an ACA product.

GARDNER: So that plan would be cancelled?

MATHIS: Yes, sir.

GARDNER: Mr. Rodgers, would that plan be cancelled at the end of the time period?

RODGERS: Mr. Matheson's (sic) characterization was correct. I believe...

GARDNER: So, yes, that's a cancellation after the time expires.

Mr. Evanko, would those plans be cancelled after the time expired?

EVANKO: Based on the current guidance, yes.

GARDNER: Mr. Wingle, would those plans be cancelled after the time expires?

WINGLE: Where -- where feasible, we would offer the member an ACA-compliant alternative.

GARDNER: Could you submit the total numbers for all those plans that would be cancelled when the time expires? Break it down by state, please. Thank you.

And one of the excuses that we've heard from the -- the supporters of the healthcare bill is that the law didn't do this, didn't cause the cancellations, that you were the ones who planned the cancellations and planned all of the cancellations. Were the massive cancellation notices sent last year the ones the president apologized for? Were these because of Obamacare or because of you?

Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: The law required us to send out those cancellations.

GARDNER: So Obamacare required the cancellations.

Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: The law required us to, in certain situations...

(CROSSTALK)

GARDNER: So Obamacare caused and required the cancellation.

Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: We had such a small fraction of our book of business that was not offered early renewals, but that was...

GARDNER: So -- but Obamacare required the 2,000 cancellations that you said?

EVANKO: In the two states where we did not offer early renewals.

GARDNER: Mr. Wingle, did Obamacare cause the cancellations?

WINGLE: Plans that weren't compliant with the benefit requirements of the law were cancelled.

GARDNER: So that's a yes?

WINGLE: That is a yes.

GARDNER: In attempting to pass this law, the president said repeatedly, "If you like your plan, you can keep it." Did that turn out to be true for all of your customers?

Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: No. That was not true for 100 percent of our customers.

GARDNER: Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Not for 100 percent.

GARDNER: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: For over 99 percent of our customers, that was the case.

GARDNER: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: Not in all cases, no.

(CROSSTALK)

GARDNER: ...your time, and I yield back.

(UNKNOWN): Thank you. Now, recognize Miss Castor for five minutes.

CASTOR: Well, thank you very much. And good morning. And thank you, Mr. Chairman, for calling this hearing to discuss the strong enrollment numbers of the Affordable Care Act.

When the enrollment numbers were released last week, coming from the state of Florida, we were floored. About 1 million Floridians signed up under the Affordable Care Act. This far exceeded our expectations. We thought 600,000, 700,000, but to get to about a million signed up, that doesn't include the about 300,000 children that signed up under children's health insurance, or our disabled neighbors, or children under Medicaid.

And then I learned from our Florida Blue executives Friday, Florida Blue's the market leader in Florida that -- that million- dollar figure does not include others that signed up for -- with private health insurance companies. So that's -- add on another probably couple hundred thousand. It's really remarkable, and it has far exceeded our expectations.

Now, I really -- you know, I just think about all of my neighbors all across the state that are breathing easier because now they have financial security in their lives that they did not have before. And I want to thank all of our navigators, the insurance brokers, many of the insurance companies that were out providing information, all of our community outreach partners. You have made a fundamental difference in the lives of -- of millions of Floridians. And it's -- it's going to be very meaningful for them and their families. It's also good news for neighbors that have insurance already. Most people across America already have insurance. And if you have insurance, what you want most of all is that you want other people to have insurance because the -- the cost of these high premium increases and rates -- rate increases over time were largely caused by this huge uninsured population. And those costs, when they show up at the hospital for healthcare, they have to be paid somewhere. So that's what we're hoping then.

And we've heard time and time again of some -- the scare tactics here. And we will -- we'll see what happens with premium increases. But do we want to go back to the double-digit consistent premium increases of the past? I don't think so. So this is a way that hopefully, over time, we will be able to stabilize the marketplace.

And I think my -- my colleague Congressman Tonko was right. I think my Republican friends now are in danger of sounding like they are opposed to people taking personal responsibility and having health insurance. People need to have health insurance to maintain their quality of life, to -- to make sure they don't go bankrupt. And I would hope that my Republican friends could now turn the page and we could get to work on many of the complicated issues with health policy in America.

Now, one of the -- my Republican colleagues, if they were to tax on healthcare reform, is that it will cause people to lose their doctors. Now, you have to say, okay, even in Florida, where you have over a million people now that now have health insurance, they're going to be able to see a doctor, 8 million nationwide. But this is especially bizarre coming from Republicans because they have long opposed any policy proposals to broaden networks. They have fought efforts to increase reimbursement for primary care providers who serve Medicare and Medicaid patients.

What has been lost in this debate is the fact that the ACA sets important new network adequacy standards that guarantee access to key essential community providers. It ensures that no consumer will ever see a huge out-of-network bill if they're taken to an emergency room. And it gives consumers strong appeal rights. It's a huge step forward in patient access.

Mr. Pratt, can you give us some context here? Providers and insurance regularly negotiate rates and determine who will -- inside of a network. Isn't that correct?

PRATT: Representative, yes, that's correct.

CASTOR: And if insurers had to include every provider in their network, wouldn't that eliminate their bargaining power and substantially increase premiums?

PRATT: Congresswoman, I think that is generally correct. I wouldn't characterize the amount of the increase. But it is a very important aspect of keeping premiums affordable.

CASTOR: Okay. Can these high-value networks improve care coordination and move us towards a system where we pay for quality rather than quantity in our healthcare system?

PRATT: Absolutely. Our members are working very hard toward that end.

CASTOR: See, I think this network adequacy is a -- in the marketplace is an important issue. We need to make sure that consumers have access to providers in their area and that they have enough choices to get the care they need when they need it. Republicans should not attack the ACA for letting the private market work.

And remember personal responsibility is fundamental. It's a fundamental tenet of the Affordable Care Act. And it's often times the customers' responsibility to review all of the choices they have, whether it's Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum and the networks contained therein and make their own choice. So the law sets key new standards and provides important protections but insurers and providers will continue to negotiate to ensure sufficient access at fair prices.

Thank you very much. I yield back.

(UNKNOWN): (Inaudible) yields back. Chair recognizes gentleman from Ohio. Mr. Johnson, five minutes for your questions, please.

JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Wow. So much to -- to talk about, so little time to -- to talk about it all. Gentlemen, thank you for joining us today. You know, one of the reasons this committee is requested -- has requested this information from you is because the administration has refused repeatedly to provide any data on who is actually paying for the Affordable Care Act.

In fact, one White House spokesman told reporters to ask your industry for this information. Do you -- so here's the question for you. Do you currently provide any information to the administration on

who has paid for their plan? If yes, what information do you provide and -- and how is it provided and how often? It -- do -- do you provide any information to the administration?

WINGLE: The only information we provide around -- around payment is related to the invoicing we do with the government to get the premium tax credit.

JOHNSON: And how is it provided and how often?

WINGLE: It's the process we described earlier. It's a -- it's a workaround process because the financial management module is not fully constructed on the FFM (inaudible)...

(CROSSTALK)

JOHNSON: Who do you send it to, Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: Send it to CMS.

JOHNSON: Okay. Well, for -- it's -- it's a little confusing. So the administration will pay your industry a subsidy for potential customers who never even effectuate their enrollment. So if you're not providing the details to the administration on who's paying for the Affordable Care Act, how are they paying you? How are they -- what -- what are they basing their payments to you on?

WINGLE: I'd only make one clarification. We do not submit information for payment from the government for member who are not effectuated, who haven't made their own portion of the binder payment. We do not do that.

JOHNSON: What -- let me -- let me dig a little deeper then. So how do you get paid? How do you get paid? And what is that based on? What information do you provide the government, the administration, that gets you paid?

WINGLE: The -- the process essentially works because we have the enrollment file information. We understand the premium for the plan selected by the consumer on that enrollment file.

JOHNSON: So you're paid based on enrollment, not on actual payment?

WINGLE: Yeah. We understand the member's responsibility on that enrollment, and the difference between the premium rate and the member responsibility tells us what the government is -- and we roll that figure up monthly.

JOHNSON: So if you only submit for effectuated -- it -- I can't even pronounce that word. Doesn't the administration know the pay rate? Don't they know how much these people are -- are -- are paying?

MATHIS: Yes, sir. They -- they've determined the subsidy eligibility as part of the enrollment process. And so a file would come to us. We'd bill for the member responsibility. Upon collection of that member responsibility, then we would -- typically, if the system were working as designed, we would send a file to the government, to the exchange, saying, "Here are the members that have effectuated enrollment, and here's ultimately the payment that is back due to us."

JOHNSON: So do you believe the administration is currently able to report the payment rate or who is fully enrolled? Do you think they have that information, based on what you give them?

MATHIS: So, to date, the payments that are coming back and forth are estimated. So there's not been a direct reconciliation between our company and the exchange on a member by member basis. That's one of the works in progress that we discussed on the backend discussion we had earlier in the day, sir.

JOHNSON: Considering then that the administration is able to report who selects a plan on healthcare.gov, would it be possible for them to gather information on who has actually paid for a plan? Let's start down with Mr. Pratt.

PRATT: Representative, it's my understanding that that capability is not present yet... JOHNSON: Mr. Coyne?

PRATT: ...whether it may be in the future.

JOHNSON: Okay.

COYNE: Yeah. It's -- it's my understanding as well that that capability isn't ready yet.

JOHNSON: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: I don't know what the administration can infer from the data they have. But I know the financial management module itself is not available.

JOHNSON: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: One bit of color I'll add to my colleagues is the submission for APTC is only for those that are APTC eligible. So there's also people that do not qualify for that. That should be in that calculation.

JOHNSON: Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Yes. I think my -- my colleagues are correct in the -- in their statements. And we're still working on the reconciliation process for payment.

JOHNSON: Okay.

Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: I would concur with what was (inaudible).

JOHNSON: Final question. Does the administration know who's paid for their plan?

Mr. Pratt?

PRATT: Congressman, I don't know the answer to that question.

JOHNSON: Mr. Coyne?

COYNE: I don't know either.

WINGLE: I don't know what the administration knows about the enrollment, in terms of who's paid.

EVANKO: I don't know either.

RODGERS: No, sir.

MATHIS: No, sir.

JOHNSON: It's interesting that they sent us to ask you folks. Okay. Mr. Chairman, I yield back. (UNKNOWN): Gentleman yields back his time. Chair recognizes gentleman from Kentucky. Mr. Yarmuth, you have five minutes for your questions, please.

YARMUTH: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And I'm really glad we had this hearing. That's something I usually don't say very often. But this has been a very illuminating hearing because I think what it's done very clearly is to show what our colleagues on the other side's strategy is, which is to try and hold a hearing in which they can grab a headline that will, in some way, scare the American people about what's -- about the Affordable Care Act rather than providing true information about what's going on.

And, you know, it's -- it's clear from the desperation. Once their initial strategy of trying to deal with this alleged failure to pay premiums -- now they've moved on to try and scare people about what premiums might increase by later, either next year or in the future. So, you know -- I -- and I'm glad you all stressed how important is was that you not give up your competitive position because, obviously, you're all competing in markets.

And, you know, I could turn that strategy around and do the same thing and ask you speculative questions like, will the premium increases that we are likely to see approach the 38 percent that we saw -- we were seeing in 2010 before the Affordable Care Act was passed? And -- and I'll ask you to speculate on that. But I won't do that. And I -- I could ask you about what the rate of cancellations of policies were prior to the -- the Affordable Care Act.

And I could also ask you -- and I think this would be a fair question. I wouldn't expect you to answer. How many of your insurance companies, because of the success of the Affordable Care Act enrollment so far and the -- the beneficial mix of younger people has prompted you to explore doing business in other states, as has been reported in the media? I think that would be a question that I would love to have the answer to.

I know, for instance, in Kentucky, the -- the co-op -- the non- profit Kentucky co-op, which is competing in the exchange, is now getting ready to do business in West Virginia because they don't have a co-op, and they see an opportunity there. And I think the main co- op is planning to do business in (inaudible) Massachusetts co-op in Maine because they see an opportunity there.

So I think all these things are indications that the Affordable Care Act, far from being the train wreck which many have suggested it would become, is actually getting a lot deal of traction as it -- it speeds down the -- the tracks. And just to put it in perspective, in Kentucky, we have -- we have insured, in the period of six months, roughly half of the previously uninsured population of the state. We -- 411,000 people now have coverage in Kentucky under the ACA. Three- quarters of those -- in answer to one of the questions that was asked earlier, three-quarters of those we know previously had no insurance. And 52 percent of all that 411,000 people are under 35.

So we know things are in -- working in Kentucky, and, as Ms. Castor mentioned, things are surprisingly successful in Florida despite an administration there which has done everything it could to sabotage the -- the Affordable Care Act. So, you know, I -- one that we can speculate about and argue about as a level of success, whether it's success or a train wreck, you know, the markets certainly have had something to say about how they view the Affordable Care Act in terms of your businesses.

I look at those share prices of the companies represented here, and one based in my own state -- Humana's based in my district. When the Affordable Care Act was enacted, their stock price was 44. Now it's 110. Aetna's was 33. Now it's 72. United Healthcare was 27. Now it's 75. And Cigna's was 34, and now it's 83, roughly. So the market has made a judgment, I think, about the fact that, at least in terms of your business, the Affordable Care Act has offered a significant financial benefit.

So I think this -- again, this is -- one of the things that's fascinating about this hearing is we know what the Republicans have tried to do, and that's to scare the American people and to use every little indication of a problem that -- to reflect a -- some kind of a doomsday scenario that we are looking at. And, fortunately, the facts on the ground, whether it's the marketplace, whether it's the experience in Kentucky or Florida or California, where literally millions of people -- by one estimate, 20.8 million people -- got coverage under the ACA, or bought coverage because of the ACA in the private markets outside the exchanges, we are doing exactly what we intended it to do.

We know there have been glitches. We know there have been problems. Any undertaking of this magnitude would experience those. But, again, I thank you for your participation, and I thank you for this hearing. And I yield back.

(UNKNOWN): Gentleman from New Mexico is recognized for five minutes, Mr. **Lujan,** for your questions, please.

LUJAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Mathis, your company CEO said last week that the surge in enrollment in March included a higher percentage of young people than in earlier months. Isn't that correct?

MATHIS: That is correct, sir.

LUJAN: And, Mr. Evanko, your CEO said something similar last week as well. Isn't that correct?

EVANKO: That's correct.

LUJAN: And as a general matter, all else being equal, a higher percentage of young people in the risk pool will help lower premiums. Isn't that correct?

Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: That's a complicated question. It's an important one. But it's a complicated question.

LUJAN: I think that all that we've heard and from all the actuaries is that the answer is yes. We need more young people in. It lowers premiums.

Mr. Pratt, insurance company premiums are market sensitive information that companies are not eager to let their competitors know until the last minute. Isn't that correct?

PRATT: Representative, it is competitively sensitive information. I don't know that I could speak to their particular perspective on that question.

LUJAN: Well, it seems like they'd want to keep it to themselves as long as they're able to so that competitors aren't able to get their hands on it and adjust accordingly. Is that correct? Is that fair?

PRATT: It's fair to say it's competitively sensitive information.

LUJAN: And is it correct that many insurance commissioners around the country have the authority to review rates and that the final rates consumers pay are sometimes lower than the rates that are actually filed?

PRATT: Yes, Representative. Typically speaking, rates are filed with the states, and the states review those rates.

LUJAN: Very good. I -- I used to sit on a regulatory body that the superintendent of insurance was under our jurisdiction, so I appreciate the answer to that because I know what we saw when I was there as well, sir. So I'd certainly agree with that. Is it also true that the ACA contains a series of policies, re-insurance, risk adjustment, and risk corridors to help mitigate potential premium increases?

PRATT: Congressman, one goal of the three Rs program -- the so- called three Rs program is to stabilize premiums in the early years of implementation.

LUJAN: And a final question to the panelists. Before the ACA, wasn't it common for insurance premiums to increase significant year to year, often by double digits? Anyone? Is there anyone that

would disagree that premiums increased by more than 50 percent between 2003 and 2010? Hearing none, I guess the answer to that is there's agreement.

The 8 million figure only includes people who have signed up for insurance directly through the federal and state marketplaces that my colleagues are trying to dismiss. But people can also sign up for private ACA-compliant plans outside of the marketplaces. We don't have a lot of conversation about that.

Mr. Pratt, are individuals able to enroll in some of the plans that AHIP represents outside of the federal and state marketplaces? PRATT: That's correct.

LUJAN: The CBO estimates that 5 million people will purchase ACA-compliant plans outside of the marketplace this year. These individuals will obtain the same protections and be a part of the same risk pools in each state as those who enrolled via the marketplaces.

Mr. Rodgers, how many of HSCS's (sic) enrollments have outside been -- have been outside of the marketplace?

RODGERS: As I said in my opening testimony, it was provided in written form to the committee. I believe we had about 230,000 off- exchange applications during the open enrollment period ending April 15.

LUJAN: And about how many applicants have you received overall?

RODGERS: We've received overall about 830,000 applications across our five states.

LUJAN: So that sounds like it's representing about 1.2 million covered lives. So about 28 percent of your enrollees signed up outside of the marketplaces. That's a significant number. And I understand that payment date is not complete. But in the earlier months of this year, what percentage of individuals enrolling in plans outside of the marketplace have paid?

RODGERS: In my written comments to the committee, I shared with you the on-exchange and off-exchange payment rates because there is some difference. Typically, the payment completion rates are a little bit higher off-exchange versus -- versus on-exchange, and you should have that data.

LUJAN: So what -- from what I was able to get from your testimony was that between January and April, 90 to 93 percent, and in May, 63 percent today. And we can verify that in the -- and there's -- that sound accurate, though?

RODGERS: That's correct. That's in my written comments.

LUJAN: Can any of our other witnesses provide us with information on how many off-exchange enrollments they have had to date?

If not, if you -- Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: We have approximately 40,000 off-exchange ACA enrollments. That's about one-third of our total ACA-compliant book.

LUJAN: And what I'd like to do is ask our witnesses if they'd be willing to provide the committee with detailed information on their off-exchange enrollments. Would that be okay with everyone?

RODGERS: Yes.

LUJAN: Very good. I appreciate that. And, you know, later on today, we're going to be having some other hearings in other areas. Despite the demonization and demagoguing of the Affordable Care Act, over 8 million enrollees. Can you imagine what it would have been if Democrats and Republicans

would have worked together to fix issues that needed fixing but were able to get more people covered? Who knows where that number would have been.

But later on today, we're going to be having a hearing on taking away someone's Fifth Amendment rights. We have my colleagues that are still refusing to release 39 interview transcripts on an IRS hearing. There is going to be other hearings -- another request on a hearing with Benghazi, even though there's been seven other hearings, 50 repeal attempts on the Affordable Care Act -- think there's a lot of important pressing business that we as the Congress need to get our hands around.

And I'm certainly hopeful that -- in the history and tradition of this committee, with all that I've learned from our senior members, there once upon a time was an effort for us to work together and get along. I certainly hope that those days return. Every time I'm home, that's what we here.

So of all the witnesses that are here today, thank you so much. Chairman, again, for you being here as well and the hearing being brought together today, an important conversation. I hope that we're able to bring more facts into the debate. Thank you very much.

(UNKNOWN): Now his time has expired. The Chair recognizes the ranking members to get -- or follow up.

DEGETTE: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to follow up on Mr. **Lujan's** questioning with the off-exchange enrollments because, as we've learned, there have been a number of off-exchange enrollments as -- in addition to the enrollments in the ACA in the -- both in the federal exchange, in the state exchanges.

So I would ask unanimous consent. The committee has made a request of the -- of 160 plans, including plans from this panel here, that they provide information about enrollment figures and premium payments for -- for those plans that are under the Affordable Care Act, the exchanges.

I would ask also if we would ask those same plans for that same information on the off-exchange enrollment, similar to the -- to the data that we got from Blue Cross Blue Shield. Be helpful to know how many off-exchange enrollments we've had from these 160 plans and -- and what the premium payments have been. So I'd ask unanimous consent, that we also ask for that information.

MURPHY: The gentlelady yields back right now. Myself for follow-up. And I would just say, on the off enrollment, I'm one of those members. I actually had both Blue Cross Blue Shield in healthcare.gov on hold. Well, they had me on hold on December 23 and December 24. And it was kind of a race to see who would have a live person answer the phone first. I think, if I recall correctly, Blue Cross won out that day. So I was probably an off-exchange enrollment. So you may count me as that. Just like to ask each of you in follow-up, many of the products you are offering are only affordable because the government subsidizes part of the premium cost. Do you know what percentage of the plans with paid premiums and effectuated enrollment received some form of subsidy from a taxpayer?

Mr. Coyne, I'll start with you, and then we just go down the line.

COYNE: We don't have that information at this point.

MURPHY: Would you provide it for the record?

COYNE: Yes, we'd be happy to when we get it.

MURPHY: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: Our experience probably comports with generally available published information on that. It's -- it's a majority of our membership.

MURPHY: And, again, can I ask you to submit that for the record?

Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: For on-exchange customers, 80 to 85 percent are eligible for APTC.

MURPHY: Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Yes. I believe we submitted that information, if I understood your question, in the two submissions for April. And with the May 20th submission, we'll provide something similar.

(UNKNOWN): As did we.

MURPHY: Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: Yes. As you know, that number is a moving target. But it is around 79 percent for us.

MURPHY: And would you do your best to -- to give us an accurate representation for the -- for the record. What about a situation where an individual enrolls but then cancels their plan? Are you only paid the subsidy monthly? Or would you be responsible for turning a portion of the subsidy throughout the year?

Mr. Coyne, we'll start with you.

COYNE: No. We don't have that information.

MURPHY: And will you submit that for the record?

COYNE: Yes.

MURPHY: Please try to find that for us. Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: Could you repeat the question, please, Mr. Chairman?

MURPHY: A situation where an individual enrolls but then cancels their plan, are you only paid the subsidy monthly? Or would you be responsible for returning the portion throughout the year?

WINGLE: Returning the portion of premium paid or...

MURPHY: The -- the Advanced Premium Tax Credit.

WINGLE: Oh, the subsidy. The subsidy, you know, under the three-month grace period rules, we retain until cancellation.

MURPHY: So you would not be required to return that?

WINGLE: No, not until members cancel.

MURPHY: If the member just simply doesn't pay -- they make their first payment, made their second payment, and then they stop. At the end of that three-month grace period, do you have to return the money for those months where they didn't -- the patient didn't pay?

WINGLE: In compliance with the three-month grace period rules, we retain any premium tax credit received during the period to cover -- help us cover or to -- any claims experience we had during the time the member (inaudible).

MURPHY: So you retain the Advanced Premium Tax...

(CROSSTALK)

WINGLE: According with the design of the rules, yes.

MURPHY: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: Well, at -- at the end of the 90-day grace period, if the individual has not paid any more premiums, then we owe that money back to CMS, and we credit that in the next month's reconciliation process.

MURPHY: Interesting.

Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Yeah. I'm not familiar with that particular aspect of the grace period payments in terms of -- of the return or not. But in my -- I believe that we're only entitled to the money that's -- for the -- the time the policy's in effect.

MURPHY: And Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: That's my understanding as well, sir.

MURPHY: Mr. Coyne, do you know -- do you know how much your company has been paid in Advanced Premium Tax Credits?

COYNE: Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association does not actually sponsor any of the products that are on the exchanges. Our member plans do. So we wouldn't be paid premiums or APTC.

MURPHY: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: We received four payments so far for the months of January through April. And it's in the range of 30 to $40 million.

MURPHY: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: We obviously have that data. We can supply the committee with that data.

MURPHY: And that should be -- free to submit that for the record.

Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: We received some payments. I don't know the value of the payments to date.

MURPHY: And will you find that information and submit it for the record, please?

RODGERS: Certainly.

MURPHY: And Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: Yes. I don't have that number ready today, but we'd be happy to get it for you.

MURPHY: The metal plans, you're all familiar with them? Keep hearing about a Copper Plan that's going to be offered. Are any of you familiar with that? Are you -- be offering Copper Plans?

Mr. Coyne?

COYNE: I'm not familiar with that at this point.

MURPHY: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: Under the current rules for essential health benefits and the rules for qualified health plans, we're not currently authorized to offer anything at the so-called Copper level. Our plan benefits start at Bronze, unless somebody qualifies for catastrophic care. And that's of the lowest actuarial value we're allowed to offer presently.

MURPHY: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: In the event that Copper Plans were introduced as something that's allowed, we would certainly consider it. Cigna believes in choice as one of our core principles for our customers.

MURPHY: Thank you.

Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Currently, we're not approved to offer the Copper Plans. That's certainly something that we believe that members need more cost-effective programs. So if those are offered, I expect that we would...

(CROSSTALK)

MURPHY: Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: My comments will be similar to my colleagues, sir.

MURPHY: Let me just ask each of you, what is your payment rate for products in the large group market?

Starting with you, Mr. Coyne, what are your payments for products in large group market?

COYNE: Individual group plans have that information rather than the association.

MURPHY: See.

Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: I carry no responsibility for large group. I'd have to get back to you on that.

MURPHY: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: I'm not familiar with the large group payment rates either. I'm sorry.

MURPHY: Your company, though, is -- I mean, you're -- you're in the large group market.

EVANKO: We are, sir, yes.

MURPHY: Will you get that information for us? Thank you.

Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Yeah. I don't have that information with me.

MURPHY: But you will provide it for the committee?

RODGERS: Certainly.

MURPHY: And Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: I'm not sure I understand the question. Could you clarify it for me, please?

MURPHY: Well, the question was, what are your payment rates for products in the large group market?

MATHIS: So is that what our average premium is or...

MURPHY: Your -- how many people pay.

MATHIS: I'm sorry, sir. I'm still not following the question.

MURPHY: Well, what we've generally been talking about today is how many people -- what percentage of people have -- have paid. So can -- following along with that theme...

(CROSSTALK)

MATHIS: I'm sorry. I was a little slow on the uptake there. Typically, we would experience somewhere around a 98 to 97 percent premium payment in -- in the group -- in the large group market.

MURPHY: Very well. Thank you all for your attendance today. Ask (inaudible) consent that members' written opening statements be introduced into the record. Without objection, the documents will be entered into the record. In conclusion, I'd like to thank all the witnesses and the members that participated in today's hearing. I'd like to thank everyone who stuck with us to the end, although that would be the witnesses. I remind members they have 10 business days to submit questions for the record. And I ask the witnesses to all agree to respond promptly to the questions. The committee now stands in adjournment.

END

LOAD-DATE: May 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 66535

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

JOURNAL-CODE: PTTW

Copyright 2014 ProQuest Information and Learning
All Rights Reserved
Copyright 2014 Roll Call, Inc.

Copyright 2014 CQ Transcriptions, LLC
All Rights Reserved
CQ Transcriptions

All materials herein are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of CQ Transcriptions. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.

REP. TIM MURPHY HOLDS A HEARING ON PPACA ENROLLMENT AND THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY

May 7, 2014 Wednesday

EVENT DATE: **May 7, 2014**

TYPE: COMMITTEE HEARING

LOCATION: WASHINGTON, D.C.

COMMITTEE: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

SPEAKER: REP. TIM MURPHY, CHAIRMAN

WITNESSES:
REP. TIM MURPHY, R-PA. CHAIRMAN
REP. DIANA DEGETTE, D-COLO. RANKING MEMBER
BRIAN EVANKO, PRESIDENT, INDIVIDUAL SEGMENT, CIGNA
J. DARREN RODGERS, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER, HEALTH CARE SERVICE CORPORATION
PAUL WINGLE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, INDIVIDUAL BUSINESS AND PUBLIC EXCHANGE OPERATIONS AND STRATEGY, AETNA
REP. MARSHA BLACKBURN, R-TENN.
REP. JOHN D. DINGELL, D-MICH. EX OFFICIO
WITNESSES: FRANK COYNE, VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS, CHIEF TRANSFORMATION OFFICER, BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD ASSOCIATION
REP. MICHAEL C. BURGESS, R-TEXAS
MARK PRATT, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF STATE AFFAIRS, AMERICAS HEALTH INSURANCE PLANS
REP. GENE GREEN, D-TEXAS
REP. MORGAN GRIFFITH, R-VA.
REP. JAN SCHAKOWSKY, D-ILL.
REP. PETE OLSON, R-TEXAS
REP. TIM MURPHY, R-PA. CHAIRMAN
REP. PAUL TONKO, D-N.Y.
REP. CORY GARDNER, R-COLO.
REP. KATHY CASTOR, D-FLA.
REP. BILL JOHNSON, R-OHIO
REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M.

TEXT:

MURPHY: Good morning. I now convene this hearing to examine the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and enrollment of the state in federal exchanges here in the oversight and investigation committee--for the committee on energy and commerce. This sub- committee has a long history of trying to get straight answers from the administration on the status of the Affordable Care Act.

Two weeks before the launch of Healthcare.gov; the administration official responsible for the implementation of the ACA Exchanges told this committee that the website would be ready; consumers would be able to go online, shop for select plan and then enroll in coverage. When the federal exchange opened on October 1, consumers instead found a crashing website. The administration excuse for why the website didn't work: volume.

Through this committee's investigation we learned that the administration spent over half a billion dollars on a website that they had been warned for several months, would not be ready and would not work. The fact that the administration officials did not disclose when questioned by this committee during oversight hearings through 2013. Just after the failed launch we asked the administration on October 8th to provide enrollment data for the first week of healthcare.gov;

debacle. The administration ignored us. Why? It wasn't because the data didn't exist; it was because the news wasn't good.

When Secretary Sebelius testified before the full energy and commerce committee on October 30th of last year; was asked about enrollment, she stated that she could not provide any data because the administration did not "have any reliable data around enrollment." The very next day, it was reported that there were only six successful enrollments on October 1st. We tried again during a hearing in January before the sub-committee when we asked the head of the office running the exchanges if the administration collected any data on who has paid their health coverage.

This administration official told us that they did not collect this information, "but we will be" as soon as it was finished building the website. While the administration refused to provide straightforward answers to our questions on enrollment, it continues to tout enrollment figures that included individuals who had merely selected a plan online.

When pressed by reporters for information on the number of enrollee's who had paid their premiums, a White House spokesman said that questions about payment "can best be directed to those private insurance companies that are collecting those payments." After months of an administration that refused to be transparent about enrollment, that's what we did. We did exactly what the administration suggested we do. On March 13th we sent a request to each insurance company in the Federal Marketplace and asked them to submit basic information: who selected a plan and who paid for it.

The data submitted by the Insurer's paints an uneven picture about the status of enrollment and payment through April 15th. As of that date, just 2/3 of enrollee's through the federally facilitated marketplace paid their first month premium. Some states are doing better than others. My home state of Pennsylvania, for example, has an 81 percent payment rate. Texas, on the other hand, is much lower at 42 percent. We recognize that many individuals still have time to pay their first month's premium, which is why we have asked the Insurers to update this information on May 20th.

As with any criticism or questions of the Affordable Care Act, the administration predictably protested and attempted to misrepresent the purpose of our inquiry. Let's be clear about why we had to engage in this exercise in the first place. The administration would not be transparent about enrollment and provide the underlying data. For the witnesses today, we ask you to be patient with our questions about enrollment and implementation. After months of promises about the status of Healthcare.gov from HHS officials, we have learned to be skeptical about blanket statements that everything is well.

One purpose of today's hearing is to examine enrollment because it is a key factor in measuring whether these exchanges are viable. We have a number of other questions for the witnesses today about the status of implementation. The ACA is more than a payment rate. We need to know if Americans can expect the premium reductions they were promised. We need to know if they can keep the plan they like. We need to know if they can keep their doctor. We cannot understand the status of the law and its implementation without hearing from you, the Insurance Companies, whose plans make up these exchanges.

Under the Presidents' Healthcare Law, these companies will receive Taxpayer dollars in the form of premium subsidy's and cost- sharing. We expect the witnesses today to provide the committee with facts and information about the first year of coverage under the Affordable Care Act. Thank you for--witnesses being here today and now I'd like to recognize the Ranking Member Ms. DeGette for five minutes.

DEGETTE: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I just want to take a few minutes since the Chairman has walked through the greatest hits of the problems they've had with the ACA, of where we stand now and where we stand after the first en--after the first enrollment period has just closed. So as we continue to get information about how the exchanges and the Affordable Care Act and the enrollment are performing, let's review what we already know.

The first thing is, despite the disastrous beginning of the net-- of the federal exchange; good news, the website was fixed. More than 8 million people signed up for insurance through the exchanges created through the affordable care act, which is more than a million more than we're originally projected before the disastrous unveiling. Now, of those 8 million people that waited to the last month of enrollment--of those 8 million people, 3 million of them waited till the last month of enrollment. And so their premiums are not due until April 30th or, in some cases, later than April 30th.

Even so, my colleagues, in their quest for knowledge on the other side of the aisle, sent out a questionnaire to insurers that manipulated the payment deadline to skew the understanding of how new insurance coverage is performing. How does that happen? Because they cut off the responses April 15th, at least two weeks before many of the premiums of these 3 million people were even due for payment. What this does is it skews the amount of people who are enrolled. Then, of course, they issued a press release post-haste.

Now, for years my friends on the other side of the aisle have made a series of claims that really are unsubstantiated. First, they claimed that the bill--(inaudible)--panels. Then they claimed that the bill would eliminate private insurance within three years. Then they claimed that the law would destroy millions of jobs. When they-- when the website was broken, they insisted the law would never meet enrollment goals.

Now, Mr. Chairman, today we finally have a chance to see in a snapshot, what's happening with the Affordable Care Act. And the facts reveal that every single one of those--of those claims were wrong. As of today, as I said, more than 8 million people enrolled in private plans through federal and state marketplaces. Millions more have enrolled through Medicaid and in off-exchange plans. Gallup just released a new poll finding that in the last six months the percentage of adults without insurance has dropped about 20 percent. And what that means is there are more than 11 million Americans with insurance today then there were 6 months ago.

Premiums are below the levels predicted by the Congressional Budget Office. And the agency has, once again, reiterated that the Affordable Care Act has slowed inflation and saved billions of dollars and will even reduce deficits. So by any rational reasonable measure, we can call this law success. And that success will make a real difference in people's lives. That's what's important here.

Yesterday, researches from the Harvard School of Public Health released a comprehensive study on the impacts of health insurance coverage. They were looking at mortality rates before and after the passage of Romney Care, the landmark Massachusetts health insurance expansion that served as an--as a model for the Affordable Care Act. They found that the mortality rate in Massachusetts fell by about 3 percent in the 4 years after passage of the state's health insurance law. And Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask unanimous consent to put a copy of that study into the record.

MURPHY: Not an objection.

DEGETTE: Thank you. So if we can achieve that same level of success, nationwide, with the Affordable Care Act and there's no reason why we shouldn't be able to do so. That could result in 17,000 fewer deaths per year. That, Mr. Chairman, in a nutshell is what the Affordable Care Act means for Americans. Now, what I wish we could do in this sub-committee, and I've said this both publically and privately many, many times, is sit down with the ACA, figure out what the flaws are and figure out how we can work in a bipartisan way to fix it.

And that's what I think we should do. Instead, what we get is this misleading analysis last week, which said that only 67 percent of enrollees had paid for the coverage they enrolled in on the exchanges. And my--my Chairman, Mr. Upton, said, "The administrations rec--recent declarations of success may be unfounded." But, again, I will say the report was misleading because almost half of the enrollees in the healthcare exchanges, 40 percent of them, did not even have to make their initial premium payment until April 31st. I'm glad we've got the insurers here today to clear up this record. I'm glad we have everybody here to--to see exactly what we're talking about here.

So my suggestion is, let's look at the successes, let's look where we need to make improvements and let's work together to do just that. Thank you.

MURPHY: (Inaudible)--recommend the Chairman of the full committee, Mr. Upton, for five minutes.

MR. UPTON: With a friendly pat on the back, I'll just say April 31st has yet to come. 30 days has September, April, June and November. Thank you Mr. Chairman. I thank the witnesses for being here today as well, for sure. At this sub-committee our investigations are about getting the facts. A quest for transparency, the self-proclaimed most transparent administration in history has repeatedly dodged our simple questions about the healthcare law and refused the semblance of transparency about how its signature legislation--legislative achievement is or is not working.

We wanted the basic data from administration on enrollment one week after the launch of Healthcare.gov and the administration has rejected our request for more information each and every time. Members of the press have asked. The administration suggested the only way to get the facts was directly asking the insurance providers themselves. So we took their advice and we did just that, but the administration cried foul again.

We began asking about Healthcare.gov months before October 1st of last year. Repeatedly we were told that things were on track and working the way it was supposed to. We learned that this was not the case and the administration officials did everything in their power, it seems, to hide the chaos behind the scenes. The American public does deserve better. They deserve better than an administration that promised them $2500 in savings on healthcare premiums, only to see the cost rise sharply for many. They deserve better than an administration that repeated promises officials new that would be impossible to keep, promises that Americans could keep their doctors and keep their healthcare plans, also.

Like it or not, millions of Americans have found themselves with the unwelcome reality of cancellations and lost access to their trusted doctor. And one democratic colleague from Massachusetts said just two weeks ago, "The worst is yet to come." Today we are going to hear firsthand from the insurance providers about how implementation is working from their perspective. While the administration has declared this conversation over, the fact is that serious questions remain unanswered. And it is our responsibility to continue seeking the facts.

How many people have completed the enrollment process? Are the risks presented by these polls sustainable? How much more will premiums rise this next year? Is the back end of the website to be on track to be working by the next enrollment period? Are there any other delays or changes ahead that will disrupt the ability of families and businesses to plan for their healthcare coverage and needs? Will more healthcare plans be canceled in the coming years?

So what's wrong with seeking that information? Nothing that I know of. We released basic data points on enrollment as of April 15th and we'll do so again on the data that we collect through May 20th. The facts are the facts. And while the administration and its allies, furiously, try to muddy reality; the public deserves transparency. And while the administration toasts to the laws success with its Hollywood allies declaring this conversation over. We will continue our pursuit for facts for the American people so that we can finally have a full, accurate picture of this healthcare law. And I give the balance of my time to Dr. Burges.

DR. BURGES: I thank the Chairman for yielding. I thank our witnesses for being here today. I know it's not always easy or pleasant to come before this sub-committee. I, like the Chairman, wish that the administration would have been a little bit more forth coming about information, which would've obviated your need to be here today, but I do appreciate the fact that you responded to our request and that you have provided the data.

The fact remains the administration has withheld facts or changed facts during the roll out of this law. And that the federal agencies responsible for the implementation currently excel only in opacity. So you are here today to provide that transparency that the American people were promised earlier in this administration and I thank you for being here.

I have particular concern over one aspect and I will delve into it a little bit more during the questioning today, but that is the issue on the grace period, the 90 day period of time that is granted to people who are receiving the tax credits, the advanced tax credits for the offset of the cost of their insurance. If they don't pay their premium, in spite of the tax credit, they are given a grace period of 90 days. My understanding is that the companies will be responsible for the first 30 days; beyond that it will be the doctor, the hospital, the provider who submits the bill who may be on the hook for that.

And I am very interested to know what you have in development to keep practices, to keep providers apprised of the fact that a--a--a patients claim may be in a pending status when that claim is submitted. I know, from running a Doctors' Office, you always call and verify benefits, but now we have a new realm that we've entered into. Not only would you identify that somebody has been enrolled, but that they've paid and that they're current on their payments so that the provider in question would not be at risk.

So we will get into a little bit more on that in the question and answer period. I thank the Chairman for the time and yield back.

MURPHY: Gentleman, times expired. Now recognize the ranking member of the full-committee, Mr. Waxman for five minutes.

MR. WAXMAN: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Last week the republican whip, Representative Kevin McCarthy wrote an op-ed opposing the Affordable Care Act. He wrote, "President Obama needs to learn a simple lesson. Saying something doesn't make it true." Well, psychologists call this projection, a defense mechanism that involves ascribing your own behavior to others. In one phrase Representative McCarthy summed up five years of Republican opposition to the Affordable Care Act.

Over and over, Republican leaders have fabricated criticism of the Affordable Care Act and none of them have been true. Republican leaders said that the ACA would create death panels. Well, there are none in the law. Republican leaders said that the law was unconstitutional. The Supreme Court held exactly the opposite. Republican leaders said that the ACA would increase the deficit. Well, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office found that the law will reduce deficits by over a trillion dollars.

Republican leaders said that the law would cause healthcare costs to sky rocket. In fact, in the 3 years after passage of the ACA, healthcare spending growth was at its lowest rate in 50 years. Republican leaders said that the law would cause massive job losses. In reality, there have been 48 consecutive months of job creation since the ACA was passed with more than 9.2 million jobs created. Republican leaders said there would be a huge loss of coverage under the law, but every independent analysis shows that the number of Americans with health insurance is growing and the number of uninsured, dropping rapidly.

Republicans said enrollment would fall short of CBO estimates because few Americans would sign up. At 8 million and growing, enrollment has exceeded everyone's expectations. Mr. Chairman, I just summarized 5 years of relentless republican opposition to the Affordable Care Act. It's a sad, and I believe, reprehensible record. The Republican Party is trying to scare families from getting the health insurance they need.

We saw the same pattern just last week when this committee released another report claiming imminent failure. This time, the report said that 1/3 of enrollees had not paid for coverage. There was just one problem. The data was incomplete, out of date and manipulated. Due to the late surge in enrollment, premiums were not even due for over 3 million Americans. The testimony we're going to hear today from the Insurers contradicts the Republican findings.

That testimony says that 80-90 percent of enrollees have paid their premiums. Mr. Chairman, it was a mistake to release those inaccurate and misleading findings and it's not the first time this is happened. This morning I released a memo describing the Republican record of distortion, exaggeration and misdirection. It's a sad record and I'd like to make it part of this hearing record. The simple fact is, despite 5 years of ceaseless opposition, the Affordable Care Act is working.

Over 8 million Americans have signed up for private healthcare coverage on the state and federal exchanges. Millions more have signed up for Medicaid. Premiums are well below CBO expectations. No American ever has to fear being discriminated against or denied coverage based on a pre-existing condition. No amount of blatant falsehoods and cynical partisan can obscure the facts. The Affordable Care Act is an enormous step forward in the health of our nation. And I yield back the balance of my time and I appreciate this opportunity to set the record straight.

MURPHY: Thank you. Gentleman yields back. We'll now move forward here with our witnesses. Just one moment please, because we went quicker and that's good. I just wasn't quite ready. So I'd like to introduce the panel for today's hearing. We have Mr. Mark Pratt who's a Senior Vice President of State Affairs for America's Health Insurance Plans. Mr. Frank Coyne is the Vice President of Operations and Chief Transformation Officer at Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. Mr. Paul Wingle--am I saying that correctly--is the executive Director of Individual Businesses and Public Exchange Operations and Strategy for Aetna. Mr. Brian Evanko is the President of Individual Segment for Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company. Mr. Darren--Mr. J. Darren Rodgers is the Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer at the Healthcare Services Corporations. And Mr. Dennis Mathis is the President of Central Region and Exchange Strategy at Wellpoint, Inc.

I will now swear in the witnesses. You are aware that this committee is holding an investigative hearing and when doing say we have the practice of taking testimony under oath. Do any of you have any objections to testifying under oath? All the witnesses have indicated no. The Chair then advises you that under the rules of the house and the rules of the committee you are entitled to be advised by council. Do you desire to be advised by council during your testimony today? You do--are you saying--Mr. Wingle's saying you'd like to be advised by council? Well, if you're sitting by him that's fine.

Anybody else? You have council behind you. You certainly are welcome, at some point, to ask clarification from them, that's fine. In any case, would you all please rise and raise your right hand and I'll swear you in. Do you swear the testimony you are about to give is of truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth? Thank you. You may be seated. All the witnesses have taken that oath and you are now under oath and subject to the penalties set forth in title 18, section 1001 of the United States Code. We'll have you now each give a 5 minute opening statement, please. Stick to the 5 minutes. You'll see a red light go on when you're at the end of your time. Mr. Pratt, you may begin.

MR. PRATT: Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member DeGette and members of the sub-committee, I am Mark Pratt, Senior Vice President of State Affairs in America's Health Insurance Plans. I lead AHIPs Legislative and Regulatory activities in the states including implementation of the Affordable Care Act and our work with the National Association of Insurance Commissioners. We appreciate this opportunity to testify on enrollment on the new health insurance exchanges and implementation of the ACA.

Our written testimony focuses on two broad areas. One, our members experience in the ACAs initial open enrollment period for 2014 and two, our members priorities for improving access to high quality affordable health coverage in 2015 and beyond. Since the enactment of the ACA, our members have been working to implement the laws, many requirements with a strong focus on delivering high-value coverage options for consumers.

Helping them obtain the secure affordable coverage they need has been our central goal throughout the implementation process. While working on operational issues related to ACA implementation and providing recommendations to policy makers; our members have focused on several major goals. Among them, minimizing disruptions for consumers, businesses and stake holders; ensuring the workability of the exchanges and allowing state flexibility; maximizing choice and competition and addressing specific ACA provisions to make health coverage more affordable.

On numerous issues, our members have provided technical systems and expertise to assist federal agencies in resolving the operational challenges that surrounded the launch of the new exchanges and healthcare.gov website. They've devoted significant resources to performing manual processes and workarounds that were necessitated by the problems following the October 1 launch.

Despite the challenges our members encountered, we are proud that they ultimately were successful in offering a broad range of high- value coverage options to consumers who were enrolled in exchanges in 2014. HHS has reported that approximately 8 million individuals signed up for exchange plans during the initial open enrollment period for 2014. While uncertainty remains with respect to how many people have paid their first months premium, health insurers have been doing everything possible to encourage exchange enrollees to pay their premiums.

In the coming weeks we anticipate that there will be greater clarity in the question of how many exchange enrollees have paid their premiums. The number of individual plans have publicly announced the preliminary data and we anticipate that more announcements will be forthcoming. However, it may be a period of time before system-wide numbers and premium payments are available. Our members will continue their ongoing outreach to encourage exchange enrollees to pay their premiums.

Looking forward, we continue to believe that affordability must be the central priority as we focus on further expanding access to high quality affordable health coverage--health insurance coverage in 2015 and beyond. One critically important step that congress can take to make coverage more affordable is to delay the ACA health insurance tax and eventually repeal it. We are deeply concerned that this tax is undermining efforts to control cost and provide affordable coverage options.

We strongly support bipartisan legislation to fully repeal the tax introduced by Representatives Boustany and Matheson and cosponsored by 230 house members. We also support, as a short-term solution, separate bipartisan legislation that proposes a two year delay in the tax. On another front and in closing, we have worked closely with our members to provide comments to federal agencies on dozens of proposed rules and other regulatory documents. We consistently have emphasized the importance of creating a regulatory environment that promotes a wide range of affordable coverage options. Thank you again for this opportunity to testify. I look forward to your questions.

MURPHY: Thank you Mr. Pratt--(inaudible)--now we recognize Mr. Coyne for his 5 minutes. Thank you.

MR. COYNE: Good morning Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member DeGette and members of the sub-committee. Thank you for the invitation to testify here today. I am Frank Coyne, Vice President in the Office of the President for the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, which represents the 37 independent community bases Blue Cross and Blue Shield Companies that collectively provide health coverage for 100 million Americans.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield Companies offer health care coverage in every zip code in the coverage and have long been committed to offering consumers across the country a wide variety of insurance options. My remarks today focus on the Blues participation in the multi-state plan program administered by the Office of Personnel Management and enrollment in Blue Cross and Blue Shield MSP plans. The Affordable Care Act authorizes OPM to contract with at least two entities; at least one of which must be a not for profit to offer products on the state and federal market places.

Under this multi-state plan program, OPM certifies health plans in conjunction with states for placement on the exchanges. For 2014, OPM certified Blue Cross and Blue Shield Companies to offer multi- state plan products in 30 states and the District of Columbia. Collectively, Blue Cross and Blue Shield Companies offer more than 150 multi-state plan products.

OPM has developed a standard contract for OPM issuers that meet its requirements. The association is party to the contract with OPM and our Blue licensee plans have agreements with us to fulfill many aspects of that contract such as customer enrollment, benefits and claims administration and customer service, among other activities. In addition, the contract contains a requirement to report enrollment information to OPM.

In order to fulfill this requirement, we ask Blue plans to report information on their multi-state plan enrollments to us and we convey enrollment information to OPM. As of April 1st, 2014 a total of

283,783 individuals an MSP plan. I appreciate the opportunity to discuss Blue participation in enrollment in the MSP plan and I look forward to your questions.

MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Coyne. Now, Mr. Wingle you're recognized for 5 minutes. Does your--move it close--move it as close as you can get it.

MR. WINGLE: Oh sure. Thank you. Good morning Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member DeGette and distinguished members of the sub-committee. My name is Paul Wingle and I am Executive Director of Individual Business and Public Exchange Operations and Strategy at Aetna. Thank you for inviting us to today's hearing. I have a brief opening statement and will then be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Aetna is currently participating in the individual market on the exchanges in 17 states. Over the course of approximately the last two months, Aetna has worked with the sub-committee to provide requested data and information related to enrollment in plans offered through federally facilitated market places. As of the third week of April, Aetna had over 600,000 members who had enrolled and roughly 500,000 members who had paid. For those who had reached their payment due date, the payment rate, though dynamic, has been in the low to mid 80 percent range.

As outlined in our prior submissions to the sub-committee, these are dynamic figures and do not reflect final enrollment numbers as some enrollees have not yet reached their payment due dates. An example would be a member with the June 1 policy effective date who has not yet paid, but whose initial payment is not yet due.

We're happy to continue to work with the subcommittee to provide updated information and data and note that as a subcommittee is recognized, this might include material, nonpublic, confidential and proprietary information. Thank you again for the opportunity to be here today, and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Wingle. Yield back.

And now Mr. Evanko. You're recognized for five minutes.

EVANKO: Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member DeGette, members of the subcommittee. Good morning. And thank you for the opportunity to testify at this hearing on PPACA enrollment in the insurance industry.

I'm Brian Evanko, and I currently serve as president of the U.S. Individual Segment at Cigna Corporation. I oversee the operation tasks with developing, promoting and maintaining the Cigna products that are offered in the individual health market.

Including those products that are offered on the exchanges set up pursuant to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act or ACA. Cigna's a global health services company dedicated to helping people improve their health, well-being and sense of security. Through its subsidiaries, Cigna offers an integrated suite of health services, such as medical, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy and vision care benefits, along with other related products, including group disability, life and accident coverage.

We employ more than 26,000 people and have sales capability in 30 countries and jurisdictions. We manage more than 80 million customer relationships throughout the world. Despite our large footprint, 80 percent of Cigna's overall healthcare business consists of administrative services. This means that we help employers to administer their policies.

We also administer claims processes, which are not risk-based like traditional insurance. Many of the employers that we assist are self-insuring, and the claim payments come out of the employers' own funds.

Cigna's traditional insurance business is concentrated in a large group market. We have a very limited presence in the individual market, including on the ACA exchanges. The individual market currently constitutes approximately three percent of Cigna's total revenue. We currently offer health insurance products on the exchanges in five states, four of which, Arizona, Florida, Tennessee and Texas, are federally facilitated marketplaces. The only state run exchange in which Cigna's participating is in Colorado.

We have entered the exchanges on a focused basis in 2014 to gather deeper learning about consumer behaviors in the individual market, to understand the operational implications of how the exchanges function, and as a potential longer term source of growth for Cigna.

For 2014, we did not expect the exchanges to have a significant financial impact on our company. The health insurance marketplace is evolving rapidly, and Cigna, like other health insurance companies, is constantly challenged to maintain affordability, accessibility and consumer choice in its product offerings. Cigna has worked collaboratively with our clients and customers, healthcare professionals, state and federal regulators, as well as other stakeholders to maintain our heritage of providing high quality health insurance products and services while adapting to the ACA and other statutory and regulatory changes.

We believe that healthcare is a shared responsibility of the individual, the private sector, the medical community and the government. Accordingly, we look forward to how we can all work together to improve the health and wellness of, and the quality of care for, all Americans. I welcome any questions you may have.

MURPHY: Mr. Evanko, yield back.

And it'll go to Mr. Rodgers to be recognized up to five minutes.

RODGERS: Good morning, Chairman Murphy. Good morning, Chairman Murphy, and members of the subcommittee. I'm Darren Rodgers.

(CROSSTALK)

RODGERS: Good morning again, everyone. I'm Darren Rodgers. I'm Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer at Healthcare Service Corporation or HCSC. HCSC is a mutual legal reserve company, which does business as Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. HCSC is the largest customer-owned, nonprofit health insurance company in the nation.

We're headquartered in Chicago, Illinois, with a workforce of nearly 20,000 employees, serving nearly 14 million members throughout our five state Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans. For over 80 years, HCSC has been committed to expanding access to cost-effective healthcare to as many people as possible in every part of each of our five states.

Whether through employer sponsored insurance, government programs or individual products, HCSC is committed to its purpose and to offering our customers a wide range of cost-effective and sustainable product choices to meet the needs of -- to meet their health and wellness needs.

As we transition to a new healthcare marketplace, HCSC remains committed to its individual and small employer markets in continuing to offer accessible products, particularly to those individuals who do not have access to employer-sponsored coverage. We're proud of what our brands stand for, security and peace of mind, in our commitment to the communities in which we operate, as well as our large and geographically diverse network of healthcare providers in our operating states. This allows us to offer a variety of affordable product choices in every county of every state in which we operate.

To support our individual and small employer market, HCSC participated in the health insurance exchanges. We offered a similar portfolio of products both on and off exchange, with a variety of

deductibles, copays, coverages and other options, with the goal of meeting our members' diverse healthcare needs.

At the current time, enrollment and payment information can only be presented as of each day when the numbers are counted. As such, there are natural lags between the effective date of coverage and the date on which the members' coverage payment may be due. For instance, applicants with policies with an effective date of May 1, still have time remaining in their payment deadline.

In addition, adjustments and reconciliations to this data are ongoing. The data HCSC is providing represents our good faith estimate based on our records to date. With these caveats, HCSC received between October 1, 2013 and April 15, 2014, approximately 830,000 applications across our five states, comprised of approximately 600,000 on exchange and 230,000 off exchange applications. We estimate that these 830,000 applications represent coverage for just over 1.2 million applicants.

In the written copy of my opening statement we provided a snapshot of our current first month payment rates. As you can see, January through April look fairly consistent and range from 83 to 93 percent. The payment rates for May are currently less, because payments are still coming in and being posted.

HCSC is, and always has been, committed to improving access to quality of care for all Americans. I thank you on behalf of HCSC for the opportunity to be a part of this important discussion.

MURPHY: Ladies and gentlemen, now Mr. Mathis here recognized for five minutes.

MATHIS: Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member DeGette, and members of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today on behalf of WellPoint.

I am Dennis Mathis, president of the Central Region and Exchange Strategy. I'm responsible for creating WellPoint's exchange strategy and overseeing its launch. Prior to my current role, I was president of Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Missouri.

WellPoint is one of the nation's leading health benefit companies. We believe that our health connects us all. So we focus on being a valued health partner and delivering quality products and services that give members access to the care they need. With nearly 67 million people served by our affiliated companies, including nearly 37 million enrolled in our family health plans, we can make a real difference to meet the needs of our diverse constituents.

We are an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. We serve members as the Blue Cross licensee for California, and as the Blue Cross and Blue Shield licensee for Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Missouri, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Virginia and Wisconsin.

In most of these service areas, our plans do business as Anthem Blue Cross, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Georgia, and Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield or Empire Blue Cross. We also serve customers in other states through our Amerigroup and CareMore subsidiaries.

WellPoint is currently operating in the federally facilitated exchange, which includes Georgia, Indiana, Maine, Missouri, New Hampshire, Ohio, Virginia and Wisconsin. We also participate in several state-based exchanges, including California, Colorado, Connecticut, Kentucky, New York and Nevada.

While there is no doubt that implementation of the exchanges presents a complex and daunting undertaking, we believe we've been able to apply our knowledge and experience to make the system work better for our members. We are seeing strong membership growth, and large percentages of our newly enrolled customers are successfully paying their premiums by the due date.

Our most important priority through all of the complexity of ACA implementation is to ensure that our members receive the best possible care. Working closely and collaboratively with the physician

community, our innovative programs, from new payment models to telehealth solutions, to sophisticated data analytics that arm physicians with better information, we are creating value for our members, for physicians and for the healthcare system. We are proud of the work we are doing to transform healthcare.

WellPoint was pleased to provide the committee last month with enrollment data from October 1, 2013, through April 20 -- April 15, 2014, for states where we participate in the federally facilitated exchange.

As we stated to the committee at the time of submission, this data is not final, and only represents a snapshot in time. The data included enrollees whose policies have effective dates of April 1, May 1, and June 1, which means that premiums for such policies would not be due until April 10, May 10, and June 10, respectively.

Also, the reported enrollment and premium payment data is subject to adjustments. For examples, enrollees may elect to drop their coverage, elect to change the effective date of their coverage after submission of their application, or continue to enroll through special enrollment periods.

In response to the committee's request, we submitted the total number of applications received for enrollment in the federally facilitated exchange during the period October 1, 2013, through April 15, 2014. The percentage of applications that have paid a premium will differ depending on whether the percentages calculated based on the total number of applications and premium payments received during this entire period, roughly 70 percent, or as calculated based on the total number of applications and premium payments received for policies whose premium deadline has passed. Ranging up to 90 percent, depending on the state.

WellPoint feels privileged to be able to serve our growing community of members. We take great pride in transforming healthcare with trusted, caring, creative and innovative solutions. I thank the committee for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of WellPoint, and look forward to your questions.

MURPHY: Thank you. Well, just for record, all the witnesses did not go over time, and we'll make sure we fill in the gaps here, which was -- not been provided to us. And see if we can get some information.

Do any of you, particularly from the insurance companies, do any of you have -- I'm recognizing myself for five minutes, by the way, have any data among those people who're subscribed, is if the cost their paying for their overall health insurance plan is more, less or the same as they were paying in a previous year? Mr. Wingle, does your, do you keep, that data?

WINGLE: I don't have that data available.

MURPHY: Mr. Evanko? Do you know if you might have some?

EVANKO: I don't have specific figures to share. I can try to provide some context.

MURPHY: Would you submit that for the record? Mr. Rodgers, Mr. Mathis, do your plans keep that record of what people paid in the previous year versus what they're paying now?

RODGERS: No, I haven't looked.

MURPHY: Thank you. And of those who have signed up for insurance, do any of your companies ask for, have any data, if people were among those who had lost their insurance? That is, their insurance was canceled because it changed in the Affordable Care Act. Any of you from insurance companies? Any of you have that data?

WINGLE: No.

EVANKO: We currently do not have that information available.

MURPHY: OK. And all right. Thank you. So we don't know if the people who are signing up for these health insurance plans are people who are renewing insurance, had lost insurance, or never had insurance; am I correct? Mr. Wingle, Mr. Evanko, Mr. Rodgers, Mathis? OK.

EVANKO: That's correct.

MATHIS: No.

MURPHY: I know Secretary Sebelius said that she did not think we had that data either.

Mr. Wingle, your Chief Executive, Mark Bertolini, said that premium rates in 2015 will range from very low single digits to some that will be over double digits. Can consumers expect this for their 2015 premiums?

WINGLE: It's important to recognize, first of all, that we're at the start of the rate filing and approval process, so we're very early in the process of establishing those rates and submitting them to state regulators for approval and review. Our rates, it's also important to understand, reflect a number of key factors, most importantly the benefits covered by the plans we're filing, the population covered by those plans, and the underlying healthcare costs in the geographies where those plans are offered. There will be some variability across geography and depending on those circumstances.

MURPHY: Some might face double-digit increases. We don't know yet, you're saying?

WINGLE: I can't say for certain whether some will pay double digits, single digits, or no increase at all. It's too early to say.

MURPHY: If there's no increase in insurance, we should all celebrate, because I'm not sure that has existed in my lifetime.

(OFF-MIKE)

MURPHY: What's that?

(OFF-MIKE)

MURPHY: Will there -- will there be decreases?

WINGLE: It's hard to say. It'll vary by geography and ratings.

MURPHY: All right. Mr. Mathis, you announced your quarterly earnings and notice that the ramp-up in the fee of government is charging insurers under the healthcare law would impact marketplace premiums next year. What can consumers expect?

MATHIS: So similar to my colleague's comment, we are in the process of developing our rates now for the 138 rating regions in which we do business across the 14 states. So I don't have exact numbers yet, Chairman, in terms of what our rate increases are going to be. Certainly inputs into that are the experience that we're developing through the population that we're serving, the expected medical trend that's going to occur, and then the fees and taxes that occur through the ACA and through state and other federal constructs. That all goes into the right construct process.

MURPHY: I think I'm going down the same hall with each of you, so let me cut to the chase. The bottom line here is you do get, for risk corridors, you do get some money back from the federal government to balance out some of your costs; am I correct? With each plan? Mr. Evanko, is that true?

EVANKO: Risk corridors, as you know, sir, are part of the three R's. We, at Cigna Corporation, are not expecting in material, receivable or payable, as it relates to risk corridors.

MURPHY: I'm -- my point is that as we're looking at this data, and we'll continue to monitor, and we recognize some of this is too preliminary, based upon who has signed up and what their healthcare costs are. For example, if we don't reach, if you don't reach the 40 percent number that the president had hoped, of people between 18 and 35, and mostly those who signed up have been older and sicker, then that's going to have an impact upon your plan cost. Am I correct, Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Could -- could you restate that question?

MURPHY: That if people who have signed up are not the young, healthy invincibles, but are, indeed, the older folks who have preexisting conditions and other healthcare costs, that you're gonna have to face some sort of increase in premiums; am I correct?

RODGERS: Well, as two of my colleagues have said, the rates that we file for 2015 haven't been finalized yet, but those will reflect...

(CROSSTALK)

MURPHY: Understand. I'm anticipating.

(CROSSTALK)

RODGERS: ... cost...

(CROSSTALK)

MURPHY: You've been in the business for a while. And the federal government does provide some funds for -- for you to help balance these out; am I correct? There's, federal money, comes to help as the risk corridors and you have other people there who increase cost (inaudible); am I correct?

RODGERS: The three R's program does exist to provide...

MURPHY: Right.

RODGERS: ... some guardrails. We have not...

MURPHY: But over time, that amount of money from the federal government will decline; am I correct?

RODGERS: Some of those programs are traditional, transitional, and one's permanent.

MURPHY: I understand. But we're going to, we'll get back to this. Thank you.

I yield, recognize, Miss DeGette for five minutes.

DEGETTE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Last week, the majority republicans on this committee put out a report stating that only 67 percent of the people who signed up for insurance through the state and federal marketplaces has paid their first month's premiums and then had a big press blitz about that, saying that Obamacare had once again failed. So I -- I kind of want to walk some of you through that allegation and see how true it is.

I want to start with you, Mr. Mathis. I believe that the press reports I've seen, the reports from the administration, show that -- that through the end of March, which was the deadline, about 8.1 people enrolled through either the federal or state exchanges. Is that correct, to your knowledge?

MATHIS: Did you mean 8.1 million?

DEGETTE: Yes.

MATHIS: Yes.

DEGETTE: And -- and...

MATHIS: I -- I have the same source of data that -- that you do on that point.

DEGETTE: That's fine. Now, in your -- in your testimony, you said that the data used in that republican analysis, quote, "included enrollees whose policies have effective dates of April 1, May 1, and June 1." Is that correct?

MATHIS: Yes.

DEGETTE: And that's about three million out of eight million people, about 40 percent; is that correct?

MATHIS: Again, since we didn't enroll all eight million people, I can't attest to that question or not.

DEGETTE: But -- okay. Well, I will say what I've seen is it's about three million out of eight million. Now, so the three million people who enrolled, or let me just say, the people who enrolled in March, they had coverage, in general, that began no -- no earlier than May 1; is that right?

MATHIS: If you enrolled in March, you would have potentially an effective date, depending on what day of the month you enrolled in. Could be April 1. Could've been May 1.

DEGETTE: May 1. And so those people's premiums were not due until, at the earliest, the end of April; is that correct? If you enrolled March 31, your premiums were due at the end of April, or later, right?

MATHIS: To help facilitate members enrolling, what we have done at WellPoint is actually extended the payment period 10 days beyond last day of...

(CROSSTALK)

DEGETTE: So it could -- it could be...

MATHIS: ... month.

DEGETTE: ... April 30 or it could even be later, correct?

MATHIS: So an April 1...

DEGETTE: "Yes," or "No," will work.

MATHIS: An April 1 effective...

DEGETTE: Right.

MATHIS: ... could actually have until May 10 to pay their premiums.

DEGETTE: OK. Now, Mr. Mathis, let me ask you. Your testimony said for WellPoint ACA policies whose deadline for paying premiums has passed, about 90 percent had paid their premiums; is that correct?

MATHIS: So our data in our...

DEGETTE: You can say "Yes," or "No." That's what your testimony said.

MATHIS: Yes. So it...

DEGETTE: OK. Now, that's more than 67 percent; is that correct?

MATHIS: Last time I looked, yeah.

DEGETTE: OK.

MATHIS: It's been greater than 67.

DEGETTE: Now, Mr. Wingle, let me -- let me take you off the hot seat, Mr. Mathis.

Mr. Wingle, I want to ask you. Aetna has shown, of the -- of the five to six hundred enrollees who have paid, about 85 percent up until March paid their premiums; is that correct?

WINGLE: Our range is in the low to mid-80s month to month.

DEGETTE: OK. And that's also more than 67 percent, isn't it?

WINGLE: Empirically, yes.

DEGETTE: Yes. And Mr. Rodgers, let me ask you for your company. The ACA payment policies whose premium payment deadlines have passed, about 83 to 85 percent of them have paid their premiums; is that correct?

RODGERS: Except for the most recent month.

DEGETTE: The ones whose payment deadlines have passed.

RODGERS: Yes, that's correct.

DEGETTE: Yes. And that's also more than 67 percent, isn't it?

RODGERS: That is more than 67 percent.

DEGETTE: Yeah. So -- so what I wanted to -- to ask about -- what I wanted to ask about is do any of you expect to see substantially lower payment percentages than you saw historically? Before the latest enrollment? Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: So I -- I will give a little context to my answer.

DEGETTE: OK. I -- I need a "Yes," or "No." I don't have much time. I'm sorry.

MATHIS: Well...

(CROSSTALK)

DEGETTE: Do you expect to see it go down to 67 percent for April?

MATHIS: I don't think we have enough information to know exactly ...

DEGETTE: OK.

MATHIS: ... where it's going to be.

DEGETTE: OK. Well, Mr. Rodgers, let me ask you this question then. Mr. Upton said that he thinks suddenly maybe they won't pay for their enrollment in March. So I wanted to kind of go through, because you've got a nice chart in your testimony, and it shows the -- the payments month by month

that people made when they enrolled. So for 1-1-2014, on the exchange, 85 percent of the people paid; is that correct?

RODGERS: That's correct.

DEGETTE: For 2-1-2014, 86 percent paid, correct?

RODGERS: That's correct.

DEGETTE: For 3-1-2014, 88 percent paid; is that correct?

RODGERS: Yes.

DEGETTE: And for 4-1-2014, 83 percent paid; is that correct?

RODGERS: That is correct.

DEGETTE: And you're still waiting for everybody else to pay the -- because their deadline has not passed yet; is that correct?

RODGERS: That's correct.

DEGETTE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

MURPHY: And can I just follow up with a clarifying question. When she asked about historical data, were you referring to the last couple months or a comparison with previous years under different plans?

BLACKBURN: Well, we didn't have an exchange.

MURPHY: No, no. I -- I just...

DEGETTE: Chairman, we only just got the exchange.

MURPHY: No. I -- I wasn't sure if you meant under historical, you mean previous years of plans, versus just the exchange.

BLACKBURN: No. (Inaudible).

DEGETTE: Chairman, what I mean is since -- since the ACA...

MURPHY: OK.

DEGETTE: ... was implemented starting on October ...

MURPHY: Thank you. I just wanted clarification on that.

Now recognizing Miss Blackburn for five minutes.

BLACKBURN: Thank you all so much for being with us. I want to stay with this issue on the premiums, because we get asked about this a lot.

So Mr. Wingle? Aetna. Your CEO said the premium increases will vary over 17 states and encompass 100 -- 132 rating areas, correct?

WINGLE: That is correct.

BLACKBURN: OK. Can you identify where premiums will decrease in 2015? What identification can you place on that?

WINGLE: At this point in the filing season, we can't offer any guidance on or speculate on where they're going to fall. We're still gathering the information pile.

BLACKBURN: None?

WINGLE: I -- I can't say none.

BLACKBURN: OK.

WINGLE: I can't say any.

BLACKBURN: Mr. Mathis? Can you tell me any, identify any states, where you are offering products in the exchanges where consumers can expect a premium decrease?

MATHIS: At this juncture we do not have the information.

BLACKBURN: You don't have the information?

MATHIS: No. The filing -- the filing rates are -- are due starting in late May into June, and so we have not computed yet with any certainty what the actual rates are going to look like in our 138 rating regions.

BLACKBURN: OK. Lot of uncertainty floating around out there. OK. Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: I -- I would echo my colleagues' comments. We're in the process of making decisions. Some decisions on certain assumptions been made, but most assumptions are still to be determined, so ...

BLACKBURN: So you don't know if your consumers are going to see any decreases. You know, they were promised decreases through the Affordable Care Act. So OK.

Mr. Rodgers? To you.

RODGERS: As the company's marketing officer, I can tell you I'm not involved in rate setting, but I'm aware of some of the deadlines we're facing, which are generally toward the end of June...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: OK. Well, let me ask you all this then. Have any of you conducted any internal analysis of what your organization's premiums are going to look like in 2015? Do any of you have any internal analysis? Raise your hand for me.

So you all have conducted no -- we've got some of our nation's biggest insurers and you have done no internal analysis on what the trend line is for these premiums? None? Oh ...

EVANKO: Miss Blackburn...

BLACKBURN: ... Mr. Evanko. Have at it.

EVANKO: I -- I'd like to just clarify our comments here a little bit, at least my comments, as it relates to this issue. So the decisions related to this are very complicated, and they impact each individual a little bit differently, because of where someone's located, maybe what their APTC eligibility is, et cetera. So there's a long list of reasons there.

BLACKBURN: Right. We -- we understand that. You're talking about a 2300 page law that became about over 20,000 pages of rules and regulations, and we know this changes daily. We appreciate the predicament that you are in. We also appreciate the predicament that our constituents find themselves in. And it is baffling that we can have some of our nation's largest ensures, and you all don't have any internal analysis as to what these rates are -- I thought that reading your reports you all did analysis and trend lines for the near-term, the mid-term and the long-term and you looked at what the expectations were so that your stakeholders would all be aware of what was happening within that market.

You know, has anybody done any kind of analysis?

MATHIS: Can I (inaudible)?

BLACKBURN: Yes, please. Have at it, Mr. Mathis. Your mike, please.

MATHIS: So analysis is typically ongoing in our organization. Rate development typically takes three to six months to occur, once you have credible information. And so just for context purposes, we, as has been stated earlier in this meeting ...

BLACKBURN: OK. Let me ask...

MATHIS: Let me please finish.

BLACKBURN: OK. Go ahead.

MATHIS: We are just now understanding what membership we have attracted.

BLACKBURN: OK.

MATHIS: And so the work is ongoing.

BLACKBURN: OK.

MATHIS: But it has not been finalized. And that...

BLACKBURN: OK. Let me ask you this.

MATHIS: ... that's the important point.

BLACKBURN: What has been prepared for your CEO?

MATHIS: At...

BLACKBURN: Any of you.

MATHIS: At this juncture, we do not have a compiled package to sit down and say, "Here's what we believe a rate is going to be in..."

BLACKBURN: OK.

MATHIS: "... any of our 130...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: When do you expect to have that?

MATHIS: Typically it will be towards the end of this month. As rates need to be filed in our state starting end of May through the June-July time period.

BLACKBURN: OK. Would you submit that to us for the record, each of you? Do you agree? To submit this for the record so that we will have this?

(UNKNOWN): OK. I -- in representative, I want to concur with my colleague, we are constantly analyzing our exchange experience. This is a new population. We don't have a long claims record or history we have from the -- we had in the previous market. So the more data we get, the better, and more confident we feel as we propose rates. It's an ongoing analysis. It's a constant.

BLACKBURN: OK. We appreciate that, and we would like to have that analysis and the information you have as you get it and ask that you please stay in touch with us and do those orderly insertions for the record.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

MURPHY: Gentleman (sic) yields back. And now recognized, Mr. Dingell for five minutes.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, I thank you for your courtesy, and I thank you for the hearing.

I'm pleased the committee's examining the first open enrollment period under the Affordable Care Act. I would like to examine the staff report where it claims only 67 percent of Obamacare enrollees have paid their first month's premium. We're going to find out whether that's so and what -- what it means.

The bottom line, I think, is the ACA is working. After a turbulent start, we got the website up and running, and HHS now reports that eight million people have selected plans through the exchanges.

Furthermore, some 4.8 million people are enrolled in Medicaid and gyp (ph). And that number would be much higher if all 50 states chose to expand Medicaid. CBO estimates that another five million people purchased ACA compliant plans outside the marketplaces. Finally, Gallup just found that the percentage of Americans who do not have health insurance fell to 13.4 percent, down from some 18 percent one year ago. So let's examine and see what goes on.

This question to Mr. Mathis. And "Yes," or "No," if you please. When WellPoint turned over enrollment figures to the majority, you did this under the caveat that the data was not final and only represented a snapshot in time; is that correct?

MATHIS: Yes, it is.

DINGELL: Yes?

MATHIS: Yes.

DINGELL: Now, this question, again, to you, Mr. Mathis. And that is because the committee only requested data through April 15, 2014; is that correct?

MATHIS: Yes, it is.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Mathis, is it correct that the people who signed up after May 15 may not have to pay their premium until later in April, May or even June? Yes or no?

MATHIS: Is there anybody after April 15 would have longer time?

DINGELL: That's -- who signed up after March 15?

MATHIS: Yes.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Mathis, is it correct that nearly 90 percent of WellPoint's customers whose premium deadline has passed have already paid their first month's premium? Yes or no?

MATHIS: Yes, it is.

DINGELL: Now, in your experience, have you found that people are more likely to make their premium payment right before the deadline?

MATHIS: That is typically human nature, sir.

DINGELL: And we -- we know that from the behavior of Americans with regard to income tax and things like that.

Now, this question is for Mr. Wingle of Aetna. Is it correct that according to your best estimate, roughly 80 percent of Aetna beneficiaries who've reached their payment due date have paid their first month's premium; yes or no?

WINGLE: Month to month it ranges from the low to mid-80s.

DINGELL: Say it again?

WINGLE: It ranges from the low to mid-80s month by month.

DINGELL: Thank you.

Now, this question for you, Mr. Coyne of Blue Cross Blue Shield. Is it correct that according to your best estimate, 80 to 85 percent of the individuals buying Blue Cross Blue Shield plans through the marketplace have paid their first months' premiums? Yes or no?

COYNE: Yes, that is correct.

DINGELL: I'm not hearing you, sir.

COYNE: Yes, that is correct. Based on...

DINGELL: That's correct.

COYNE: ... a report we...

(CROSSTALK)

DINGELL: Now, gentlemen, it doesn't take, I think, a genius, or an atomic physicist, to figure out the numbers we just heard from the -- and actual insurance companies greatly differ from the staff report. I hope everyone will take these companies at their word, instead of falling for smoke and mirrors from my friends on the other side of the aisle. I can understand why my friends on the other side of the aisle are not in attendance, because they would get a very unpleasant taste of fact, which they might not like.

My old daddy taught me, he used to say to me, "Son, figures don't lie, but liars can figure." And I've always thought that it would be a good thing when this committee does its business, that we know what we're doing, that we deal in hard facts, so that when the legislation that we work on, the laws that we are dealing with, the oversight in which we engage, actually lead us to truth and correct response, so that public policies may be mounted on fact rather than fiction, and on staff reports that mislead all. I would suggest that the staff reports should be reviewed with the utmost of care, and deposited then very carefully in the nearest large wastebasket.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MURPHY: Gentleman yields back. Now recognize the Vice Chair of the committee, Mr. Burgess, or Dr. Burgess, for five minutes.

BURGESS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for the recognition.

Remind the chairman emeritus that we are friends. Let me ask you a question. April 17, the day the president came out with Mission Accomplished speech at the White House in the press briefing, there was a briefing of executives of your companies; is that correct? Anyone is free to answer.

MATHIS: I believe -- I believe that was correct, sir.

WINGLE: Yes.

BURGESS: Mm-hm. And was your company represented?

EVANKO: I'm not sure which particular meeting you're describing, but I -- I know there have been some.

BURGESS: Well, let me give you the particular meeting. It was on April the 17th, at 1:35 p.m. The president and vice president meet with insurance executives in the Roosevelt Room. Did that meeting take place?

MATHIS: WellPoint was present at that meeting, sir.

BURGESS: WellPoint was present. Was Cigna present?

EVANKO: Our CEO was not present at that meeting.

BURGESS: Was not. OK.

EVANKO: I'm advised that our CEO was not present at that meeting.

BURGESS: And was Blue Cross?

WINGLE: That's Aetna, for me.

BURGESS: Was Blue Cross represented at the meeting?

COYNE: I -- I don't have that information right now.

BURGESS: Well, for -- for those that were...

RODGERS: And just for the record, I'm advised that (inaudible) president was present at the meeting.

PRATT: Yeah. And I -- I don't -- I can't remember the exact date of those meetings, but I can tell you that when we're called to the White House, generally we would attempt to be there.

BURGESS: Was April 17. And I would think you'd remember. It's a pretty big deal. I mean, I haven't had a meeting with the president and vice president.

BLACKBURN: Will the gentlemen yield? Perhaps...

BURGESS: No, I will not.

BLACKBURN: ... they could answer were they there?

BURGESS: No, I will not. My time is -- my time is limited. What I would like from those that answered affirmatively, Mr. Mathis and Mr. Pratt, can you provide us information as to what was covered in that meeting? Who made the presentation, how long it was, and was there, in fact, time for there to be question and answer? Was it simply a presentation to you from the president and vice president?

MATHIS: Mr. Congressman, I was not personally present at that meeting. Our CEO was, and I do not know the facts of the meeting.

BURGESS: Would -- would you make an attempt to answer for me those questions? Was, in fact, was this an interactive process, or was this a proclamation? Was it a monologue or was it a dialogue?

And Mr. Pratt, if you would provide us that information as well.

And here's the deal. I mean, why am I making -- why am I making a big deal of this? You all are here today because the White House won't respond to us. And I would think, if it was possible for the White House to provide a briefing to your executives on April 17, that same person could be made available to this committee and be prepared to answer our questions.

I -- I don't see what is so difficult about that. If the news is as great as everyone has said it is this morning, I -- I -- I think that they would welcome the opportunity to come to our committee and give us the information that we're asking for.

Look. One of the questions that I raised in the opening statement, and I do want your answers on this because it is important, this 90-day grace period and the coverage that can't be canceled during that 90-day grace period because of nonpayment. Is there any way for any of your individual companies to keep up with that information on a rolling basis and keep your providers informed as to the status of a person's payment or nonpayment of their premium?

Start with you, Mr. Coyne, and let's just work down the table.

COYNE: We're working with blue plans to inform providers of the enrollees' status, as you indicated.

BURGESS: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: Yes. We do have a unique identifier for our exchange membership on the I.D. card, and we do provide updates on the members' payment status in our physician information centers. So when the physician offices call or the provider calls, they understand what the payment status is of the member.

BURGESS: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: Our doctors in our hospitals that are servicing our customers have the ability to call or check online the status of the individual's payment, grace period situation.

BURGESS: Mr. Rodgers, would that even pertain to you?

RODGERS: Yes. Similarly, we have electronic means as well as telephone service as well, providers of various types of verified coverage.

BURGESS: And Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: Yes. We provide the same service.

BURGESS: And what I would ask of each of you is will you make available to the committee the type of information and how it is transferred to your providers, your doctors and hospitals, when they call for that information?

And then, Mr. Chairman, further, I'd like to ask unanimous consent. The secretary was here in December, the Secretary of Health and Human Services. After that hearing, I submitted a letter to the secretary with several questions that I wanted answered. They have not been answered to date. I am going to ask those same questions of our insurance representatives today. I'm going to ask those in writing, and I would appreciate your response to those questions that the secretary was unwilling to answer.

BLACKBURN: Reserving the right to object.

I would just point out that the secretary was here in front of this committee testifying three times last year, and we -- if there's questions she has not answered, we certainly will be happy to work with the majority and get those questions answered.

MURPHY: Well, we -- members do have the right to...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: ... reservations.

MURPHY: ... submit questions for...

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: And I will be submitting those questions in writing for our panel.

MURPHY: OK.

BURGESS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MURPHY: Mr. Green, you're now recognized for five minutes.

GREEN: Thank you, Chairman Murphy, and Ranking Member DeGette, for having this hearing today in our witnesses for the testimony.

Our district in Texas is a very urban district in Houston and has one of the highest rates of uninsured people who don't receive insurance through their employer in the country. One of the other talking points that my republican colleagues have seized upon last year, especially when the healthcare.gov was encountering problems early in the enrollment period was the idea that fewer people would have health insurance following the implementation of the Affordable Care Act than did beforehand.

Now I know that all our representatives here today see that the information and how many people that were enrolled and their total number of customers proprietary and I understand that. But you all also, I would hope, familiar with the general insurance landscape and how it's changed under the Affordable Care Act. Earlier this week, a Gallup poll released a survey examining the total number of Americans that have insurance. Mr. Pratt, are you familiar with that survey?

PRATT: Generally, yes.

GREEN: The Gallup poll conducted interviews with 14,000 American adults. Gallup found that the number of adults without insurance had dropped to its lowest level since the beginning of 2008. A drop of this magnitude correlates to more than 11 million people gaining coverage. Are you familiar enough with the poll to -- to say that that sounds like a reasonable amount?

PRATT: Congressman, I think that's what they reported. I'm not in position to say whether that's a reasonable amount or not.

GREEN: OK. OK.

Anyone else on the panel want to talk about that Gallup poll? Because, you know, again, these are -- there are what we're seeing. And since the enrollment period end. Rand and Urban Institute released similar reports in March and April. Are any of you familiar with these reports?

PRATT: I'm not...

MATHIS: Very generally.

PRATT: ... I'm not familiar with the reports.

GREEN: OK. Well, in early April, Rand Corporation released results of their poll, which found overall number of Americans with insurance had grown to 9.3 million as of mid-March. Even before the late enrollment date surge. The Urban Institute also released a report in the past month suggesting that millions more people have coverage than before the ACA was implemented.

My question of any of our witnesses, would you agree that the findings of these, whether it be Rand, Gallup or the Urban Institute, are consistent with millions of Americans signing up for health insurance? Did y'all experience that with your companies? During the signup that they selected your company as part of the, if you were having to be part of the exchange, both national or the state exchanges?

MATHIS: Congressman, we do not have, at WellPoint, we do not have enough information at this point to know how many uninsured are actually among the enrollees. Because that data's -- we just don't have access to that data at this point.

GREEN: OK. Well, generally, the ACA has led to a huge increase in coverage. Even without the polls, we've seen some of the numbers. And is that, can you verify that, with your companies? Whether it be WellPoint, Blue Cross? Have you seen that increase in the number of people who've signed up with your companies since the deadline?

RODGERS: Speaking for Healthcare Service Corporation, I've provided in my written testimony as well as in my opening comments, the number of people that we signed up on and off exchange during the open enrollment period. I can't tell you today how many of those came from the ranks of the uninsured, or from our competitors or either from a prior policy with one of our five Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans, but we're certainly happy to have the numbers up.

GREEN: OK. Well, and we understand the -- there were people who were using the -- the websites and the national exchange to shop. And I had some companies who said, "I'm a small business. I -- I encourage--" In fact, I have a (inaudible) in my area, he said, "We have actually helped our employees sign up individually," because, you know, you have 10 employees, they -- they weren't required, but they actually used it, so -- and I know that's an analogy, but I've heard that from a lot of my employers.

Now, I know my republican colleagues with mid-data from these polls, that anything that comes through the administration of the overall signup. In March, Speaker Boehner said that there were less people today with health insurance than there were before this law went into effect.

I think not even basing it on a poll, would you all agree that there are more people in -- have health insurance now, let's say, since May 1? Than we had before the ACA?

RODGERS: I -- I can't speak to numbers on that enrollment.

GREEN: OK.

I don't know how my colleagues continue to make unfounded claims in the face of the clear evidence that Affordable Care Act's providing millions of Americas with, Americans with healthcare coverage. It makes me wonder what -- what possible convince them that millions of Americans have gained coverage under the law. I suspect that ultimately once the information becomes so indisputable it'll -- maybe will change the subject and rather, and concede that clearly more people who have health insurance as a result the ACA.

And having serving many years in Congress and even before that, in the state legislature in Texas, no law of Congress ever passes is perfect. That's not how our forefathers created the system. So we do need to go back like our ranking member said, and see what we can do to fix the ACA. And I appreciate y'all's efforts to help us do that once we get to that point. And I'll yield back my time.

MURPHY: Gentleman yields back. Now recognize Mr. Griffith of Virginia for five minutes.

GRIFFITH: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you all for being here. Miss Blackburn asked you earlier for a show of hands. I'm going to do the same. If your company anticipates a reduction for the average family that you insure of $2500 or more, would you raise your hand? If your company anticipates an -- a reduction in premium of $2,000 per average family, for your subscribers, raise your hand. Same for $1500. All right. I appreciate that.

When will your companies submit their rates to the administration for 2015? Do you all have a date that you're going to do that by? Please start...

PRATT: Believe the...

GRIFFITH: Yes.

PRATT: ... rates are due toward the end of June. I believe it's June 27. I think the -- some of the states are a little bit ahead of that.

GRIFFITH: All right. And do you know when those will become public?

PRATT: Depending on the market, sir, that will vary. Depending on the states.

GRIFFITH: All right. And when you submit those to the administration, will you commit today to submitting those rates to us as well?

RODGERS: I'm not involved in the rate submission process, but to the extent that's possible, I'll need to talk to with our company representatives about that.

GRIFFITH: Well, certainly can't see how it'd be illegal to share information with United States Congress but...

RODGERS: Didn't say illegal.

GRIFFITH: ... if possible, you will do it, Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: I need to confirm with our actuaries who are involved in the rate filing process, because I'm not.

PRATT: We're -- we're happy to work with this committee as -- as long as the rates remain proprietary until they do become public and -- and all of our competitors see it.

GRIFFITH: All right. That's certainly fair. Any others? Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: I'd have to take that under advisement about how we share rates.

GRIFFITH: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: I'd just say the rates are very competitively sensitive, for obvious reasons, so we want to make sure that it's a a level playing field at the time the rates are disclosed.

GRIFFITH: Have either you or anyone in your organizations, and again, it's for all of you all, engaged in discussions with the administration already about the 2015 rates?

(UNKNOWN): Not that I'm aware of.

(UNKNOWN): No. Not to my knowledge.

GRIFFITH: No -- everyone is silent. Does that mean there have been none? Has anybody had any discussions with the administration about rates for 2015?

(UNKNOWN): None that I'm aware of.

GRIFFITH: OK.

(UNKNOWN): No, no.

GRIFFITH: All right. Appreciate that. Thank you very much.

Mr. Pratt, the ACA includes a tax credit for small businesses to purchase health insurance coverage for employees. The law also levies a tax on health insurance purchase by small businesses. On the one hand, we give employers a tax credit to make health insurance more affordable, and then we turn around with the other hand and we tax those policies. Does that not seem as an inherent conflict in policy to you?

PRATT: Congressman, we've expressed significant concerns with the new tax on small businesses and individuals that total some hundred billion dollars that will largely be passed on to them in the form of higher premiums.

GRIFFITH: And -- and what we're trying to do, of course, is to see if we can't keep premiums down and -- and the ACA, Obamacare, has failed to meet its promise of a $2500 reduction for the average family. That's pretty straightforward, isn't it?

PRATT: Congressman, we -- we do believe that the health insurance tax runs counter to the goal of providing more affordable coverage.

GRIFFITH: And as a part of this, we're actually taxing government itself. We've got federal programs, including Medicare Advantage, Medicaid, managed care. Federal government is in fact taxing itself with the tax that you spoke of earlier through its subsidization of Medicare and in part Medicaid, and then state governments are also having to pay the tax. Do you have any idea how much that tax is on the American people? You said a hundred billion in increase, but how much for the federal and state governments?

PRATT: Congressman, I don't have that information handy, but we did commission a study by Oliver Wyman that does break out that information in more detail, including on a state-by-state basis. And we'd be happy to make that available.

GRIFFITH: All right. I appreciate that, if you would. Also, in your testimony, you write that insurers have many duplicate enrollments because of the problems with Healthcare.gov, and I can tell you that we had that in both -- I've heard it from constituents and in our family. Apparently we didn't push the right button the first time around. Say "we." My wife did it all. Don't want to take on any assumptions that it was us doing it. It was my wife working over the computer for hours and hours. But actually submitted several different applications. Ended up with one.

How widespread is that problem for citizens out there, and is that part of the confusion between whether or not people have paid their premiums or not?

PRATT: Congressman, the challenge you referred to, I think, was presented as a result of the -- the problems with the website and the technology and anecdotally we have heard from our members about a number of duplicate enrollments. Don't have an order of magnitude on that other than to know that it has been a -- a problem, and an issue.

GRIFFITH: All right. I appreciate that. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

MURPHY: Gentleman yields back. Now recognize Miss Schakowsky for five minutes.

SCHAKOWSKY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This morning, the democratic committee staff released a memorandum on the amazing number of distortions and false claims that republicans have made about the Affordable Care Act. It's a deplorable record. Virtually every major prediction or claim made by the republicans about the ACA since 2009, turned out to be wrong.

Today we have the benefit of hearing from some of the companies that are actually working on the Affordable Care Act in the real world. These companies were not the biggest supporters of the law. They still oppose many provisions. But they do not live in the Republican echo chamber. They live in the real world, and I hope they can provide some clarity on a few questions.

The first question I have for all of you is whether the ACA is a government takeover of healthcare. Republicans have made that claim I don't know how many times. By one count the phrase appeared on Speaker Boehner's website 90 different places. It's mentioned on the RNC, Republican National Committee website, 200 times. Days before Affordable Care Act's passage in 2010, then-House Minority Leader John Boehner's office wrote that, quote, "Democrats have opted for a government takeover of healthcare."

So Mr. Wingle, the ACA is now in effect. Has the government nationalized Aetna, or is it still a for-profit corporation?

WINGLE: We are a publicly traded, for-profit corporation.

SCHAKOWSKY: And Mr. Evanko, what about you? Has Cigna been taken over by the federal government?

EVANKO: No. We're a for-profit organization.

SCHAKOWSKY: Mr. Rodgers, Mr. Mathias (sic), have your companies been nationalized, or are they still nonprofits?

RODGERS: We're a not-for-profit mutual legal reserve company.

MATHIS: We're actually a for-profit organization.

SCHAKOWSKY: Oh, you're for-profit. Sorry.

Mr. Pratt, you work for the trade group that represents the private insurance industry. Is there still a private insurance industry, or has the industry been destroyed or taken over by the government as republicans predicted?

PRATT: There is still a private industry, and we represent many of those companies.

SCHAKOWSKY: Thank you. Republicans also questioned whether the private health insurance -- whether private health insurance would even exist in 2014. In 2010, Senator Coburn said, quote, "There will be no insurance industry left in three years." And that, quote, "private health insurance will be dead in three years."

I should note that nearly four years have passed since that statement was made. Mr. Pratt, is the private industry, health industry, dead?

PRATT: Representative, no.

SCHAKOWSKY: Does anybody else on the panel believe the private industry has disappeared? Private insurance industry? Thank you.

Republicans have also claimed that Americans will no longer be able to see their doctors because of the ACA. Mr. Wingle, do your, does your company healthcare plan, do the plans cover physician care?

WINGLE: They do.

SCHAKOWSKY: And Mr. Evanko, what about you? Does Cigna have doctors in its healthcare plans?

EVANKO: Yes, we do.

SCHAKOWSKY: Mr. Rodgers, what about HCSC? Do you include doctors in your networks?

RODGERS: Certainly.

SCHAKOWSKY: And Mr. Mathias (sic), what about WellPoint?

MATHIS: Yes. We cover physician services.

SCHAKOWSKY: Thank you. Thank you very much.

Republicans have claimed that nobody would sign up for coverage. They've claimed that huge numbers have not paid for coverage. Eight million people have signed up for coverage on the exchanges. Millions more have coverage outside the exchanges, and each of the insurance companies here today have testified that people have signed up in droves and upwards of 80 or 90 percent have paid their premiums.

Mr. Chairman, I don't know if there will ever come a day when republicans will admit their criticisms of the ACA have been unfounded. I think we may have reached a turning point last week when you released your misleading report on the Affordable Care Act enrollment. I think the American public finally realized that republicans have absolutely no credibility on this issue. You cannot be this wrong this many times and still expect to be taken seriously.

When commentator Ezra Klein even gave the republican behavior a name, Obamacare Derangement Syndrome. He defined it as, and I quote, "the acute inability to see Obamacare as anything but a catastrophic failure that the American people will soon reject. For those suffering from ODS, all bad Obamacare news is good news, and all good Obamacare news is sin. In this world, delays of minor provisions in the law prove that the entire structure is collapsing, while surges of millions of people enrolling in insurance don't prove anything at all."

Mr. Chairman, perhaps we can ask our panel of insurers if their policies cover Obamacare Derangement Syndrome. But really, that's rhetorical, and I yield back. Thank you.

MURPHY: But it would be important to know if that's a preexisting condition, and I think it's not covered (inaudible).

SCHAKOWSKY: It would be covered now. Good news, Mr. Chairman.

(LAUGHTER)

MURPHY: Depends what the death panel says, I think, (inaudible).

Mr. Olson's now recognized for five minutes.

OLSON: I thank the Chair. And welcome to our witnesses. I wish you weren't here. But you are here. You're here because the administration would not give us the information we need to educate our constituents about Obamacare. And the rollout of Healthcare.gov.

I want to talk about, all of you, question about the back end. And the money supposed to be getting from the exchange of the information. In your experiences, is it working? Mr. Pratt, the back end working? You getting what you need? From Healthcare.gov?

PRATT: Representative, throughout the open enrollment period, we worked very closely to develop work-arounds, manual processes and other things that were necessary to make the system work better. It's my understanding that while the back-end problems have improved, some remain.

OLSON: Workarounds. You guys stepped up to plate to work around the disaster of the healthcare exchange rollout. Is that what you're trying to say? I mean, you guys took upon yourself, instead of depending on (inaudible). They gathered information. You're dependent upon them. And it's sort of trickling out and just coming slowly, slowly, slowly.

Not what you need? Is that what you're saying? You guys stepped around to make that happen?

PRATT: Representative, I think what I would say is that we kept the interests of our members squarely in mind in terms of minimizing disruption for them, and our members did what was necessary to make sure that it was as smooth as it possibly could be.

OLSON: Mr. Coyne?

COYNE: I would agree with Mr. Pratt. There are still back-end issued to be worked through, but that we are working with CMS on those. CMS has called a meeting of health insurers in the federal marketplace on May 20, to consider some of those back-end issues and try and find solutions to them.

OLSON: I hope you keep up abroad what they, that meeting, puts out, puts forth. Give us that information. Because we're not getting it from the Obama administration. Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: We've worked closely to share our concerns about technical needs and help work with the industry, our trade, through our trade association, with colleagues, to recommend and -- recommend prioritization on fixes for back-end issues, whether they're data cleanup issues or other issues related to the back end of the exchange.

OLSON: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: There are certainly more manual processes than we anticipated prior to the exchanges launching. I'd say there have been improvements in some areas. The one back-end issue that we're move focused on is the APTC payments coming from CMS to our -- our -- us as a carrier. That's a manual process today. We have been getting the payments we've been requesting though, as it relates to APTC.

OLSON: Manual process. Twenty-first Century manual process. Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: We're continuing to work with the enrollment process to make sure that any of the members that have selected one of our five Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans get the information they need from us and ultimately the care they need.

OLSON: Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: Yes. We're -- we've seen significant improvement, but we still have a number of opportunities for improvement as we move through the remainder of this year.

OLSON: And one final question for all the panelists. Is the website fixed? Mr. Pratt? If it's not fixed, when will it be fixed?

PRATT: Representative, I don't work in the operations area. I think if the back-end issues are considered part of the website, I would suggest...

OLSON: They are.

PRATT: ... that there are -- there are still issues outstanding that we're working on.

OLSON: Not fixed. Mr. Coyne?

COYNE: There are still issues on the back end...

(CROSSTALK)

OLSON: Another one not fixed. Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: There's still work to be done.

OLSON: Not fixed. Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: I can't comment on the end-to-end process. I can only comment on the component when CMS sends us enrollment transactions. And there's still work to do before that's 100 percent.

OLSON: Not fixed. Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Yes. We're still working with the files that we get, and I think there could be some improvement.

OLSON: Still not fixed. Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: Yes. To echo my colleagues' statements, we still have opportunities for improvement.

OLSON: Six for six. All not fixed. Mr. Chairman, I yield back. That's my time.

CHAIRMAN: Now recognize Mr. Tonko for five minutes.

TONKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So much of the debate we have with our Republican colleagues about the Affordable Care Act comes down to one simple question. Is it a good thing for Americans to have access to quality health insurance?

You would think this is a simple question. Every Republican member of the committee has health insurance. I bet that every pundit who makes a living attacking the ACA has health insurance. They all make certain their children have health insurance. I bet they wouldn't dream of going without it for an extended period of time.

Two big reasons these people make sure they have coverage is that it can help them stay healthy, and it can prevent catastrophic medical bills that can lead to financial ruin. But this week we got clear evidence from Massachusetts that health insurance actually saves lives. Researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health looked at mortality rates in Massachusetts and in surrounding states.

My question, Mr. Pratt, is that in 2006, Massachusetts passed major health reform legislation. Is that not correct?

PRATT: Yes, that's correct.

TONKO: And did that coverage expansion bear some significant similarities to the Affordable Care Act, including an individual mandate, expanded Medicaid coverage, and insurance exchanges?

PRATT: Generally, I would say that's fair to say.

TONKO: Thank you. The Harvard researchers found that following healthcare reform in Massachusetts, mortality rates dropped significantly compared to surrounding states. The death rate from treatable illnesses, like cancer and heart disease, declined even faster. These findings are truly remarkable, nearly a 5 percent drop in mortality from preventable illnesses. They found that for every 830 individuals who gained coverage, one life was saved.

Extrapolating that onto the national scene, if the trend holds, it means that ACA will save tens of thousands of lives. I'm not going to ask the witnesses to comment on the specifics of that study. But these witnesses know the value that health insurance provides.

Mr. MATHIS, do you have any doubt that your health insurance plans cover lifesaving treatments?

MATHIS: No, they do, sir.

TONKO: Mr. Evanko, what about you? Do you help members access lifesaving treatments?

EVANKO: Absolutely.

TONKO: Thank you. And, Mr. RODGERS, Mr. Wingle, what about your plans?

RODGERS: At the healthcare company, we are proud of providing consumers with high-quality plans, competitively priced. We're very proud of that.

WINGLE: Yes, sir. I agree.

TONKO: Thank you for your affirmative answers. Thank you. I think Republicans are really outside of the mainstream when they try to argue that Americans aren't better off if they have health insurance coverage. Their tireless efforts to discourage people from getting covered are truly shameful. Even more shameful is the refusal of Republican governors and some legislatures to expand the Medicaid program. Doing that would provide millions of Americans with healthcare coverage. And the Harvard study indicates that doing so would save thousands of lives. So we thank you for your affirmative answers.

(UNKNOWN): (Inaudible) back now, recognize Mr. Gardner for five minutes.

GARDNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the witnesses for being here today, and your time. Last year, the president apologized for his broken promise -- if you like your plan, you can keep your plan -- after millions of Americans received plan cancellations. I'd like each insurer to reply in turn, how many plans did you cancel or discontinue last year because of Obamacare?

Mr. Coyne?

COYNE: We don't have that information at the association. Individual health plans have that information.

GARDNER: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: We can provide that information to the committee.

GARDNER: Could you submit that for the record and by state what the total, for all of you?

Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: Sure. It's...

GARDNER: Do you have the number off the top of your head right now?

EVANKO: I can give you approximations...

(CROSSTALK)

GARDNER: Sure. That'd be great.

EVANKO: We had approximately 2,000 customers -- individual customers in South Carolina and Connecticut.

GARDNER: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: Again, we want to get you the -- the firm data.

GARDNER: Okay. Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: I don't have that data with me. I think we provided it to other congressional committees, so we certainly can...

GARDNER: But that's not a number that you keep on the top of your head?

RODGERS: Not at all.

GARDNER: Okay. Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: I don't have the number of products off the top of my head, but we'd be happy to provide that...

GARDNER: If you could submit for the record, by state and with the total, I would appreciate it. Then -- hey, does your organization know how many planned cancellations there were nationwide last year or -- or for your members?

MATHIS: Congressman, we would not have that information.

GARDNER: You're -- you don't ask that of your members? They don't provide that to you?

MATHIS: To my knowledge, we do not, no.

GARDNER: And, Mr. Coyne, does your organization know how many member plans were cancelled? You don't?

COYNE: We haven't asked for that information either.

GARDNER: In order to avoid these cancellations, some insurers offered early renewal plans, so they could continue into 2014. If each of the insurers could reply in turn, how many plans did you offer early renewals, too, last year that would have been otherwise cancelled?

Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: We -- we offered early renewals to all of our customers in all 14 states. That was allowable. So California did not allow us to offer early renewal. But in the majority of every other market, we offered it to every customer.

GARDNER: Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: We offered early renewals in four of our five states, the Montana Plan became part of our larger...

GARDNER: And how many -- how many were the -- were those offers? How many offers were there?

RODGERS: I don't have the number with me, but they're significant numbers, yes. And...

GARDNER: Did you provide -- all of you provide those for the record and by state, breaking it down, please?

Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: Yes. We offered early renewals to about 235,000 customers in all states, except for Connecticut and South Carolina, as I testified earlier.

GARDNER: Okay.

And, Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: We offered early renewals as consistent with state laws and regulations.

GARDNER: Okay. Last year, president apologized -- President Obama apologized for these cancelled plans and offered a one-year delay of enforcing the Obamacare requirements that led to the cancellations. This delay has since been extended.

I'd like each insurer to answer, how many plans do you currently offer that do not meet the law's requirements but you are able to continue offering because of this delay?

Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: I would have to get you that number, sir. I don't know it off the top of my head.

GARDNER: Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Yeah. I don't know the number.

GARDNER: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: I don't know the exact figure either.

GARDNER: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: I don't have the hard numbers on the pre-ACA plans.

GARDNER: To AHIP, do you know how many plans your member organizations currently offer under this delay?

PRATT: Could you please repeat that question (inaudible)?

GARDNER: The question is the one-year delay of enforcing Obamacare requirements that led to the cancellation, this delay has been extended. How many plans do you currently offer that do not meet the law's requirements but you're able to continue offering because of this delay?

(CROSSTALK)

PRATT: We don't have that information.

GARDNER: ...number.

Mr. Coyne?

COYNE: The only information we have has been informally reported to us. And it contains all non-ACA compliant plans across the Blue system, and that number is 3.2 million.

GARDNER: Mr. Mathis, what happens when those plans -- when the time runs out, when the delay expires?

MATHIS: So it -- depending on how the state handles it, with the extension, in theory, a customer could sign up for two more years.

GARDNER: What happens after that time expires, cancelled?

MATHIS: Then they would be new to an ACA product.

GARDNER: So that plan would be cancelled?

MATHIS: Yes, sir.

GARDNER: Mr. Rodgers, would that plan be cancelled at the end of the time period?

RODGERS: Mr. Matheson's (sic) characterization was correct. I believe...

GARDNER: So, yes, that's a cancellation after the time expires.

Mr. Evanko, would those plans be cancelled after the time expired?

EVANKO: Based on the current guidance, yes.

GARDNER: Mr. Wingle, would those plans be cancelled after the time expires?

WINGLE: Where -- where feasible, we would offer the member an ACA-compliant alternative.

GARDNER: Could you submit the total numbers for all those plans that would be cancelled when the time expires? Break it down by state, please. Thank you.

And one of the excuses that we've heard from the -- the supporters of the healthcare bill is that the law didn't do this, didn't cause the cancellations, that you were the ones who planned the cancellations and planned all of the cancellations. Were the massive cancellation notices sent last year the ones the president apologized for? Were these because of Obamacare or because of you?

Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: The law required us to send out those cancellations.

GARDNER: So Obamacare required the cancellations.

Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: The law required us to, in certain situations...

(CROSSTALK)

GARDNER: So Obamacare caused and required the cancellation.

Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: We had such a small fraction of our book of business that was not offered early renewals, but that was...

GARDNER: So -- but Obamacare required the 2,000 cancellations that you said?

EVANKO: In the two states where we did not offer early renewals.

GARDNER: Mr. Wingle, did Obamacare cause the cancellations?

WINGLE: Plans that weren't compliant with the benefit requirements of the law were cancelled.

GARDNER: So that's a yes?

WINGLE: That is a yes.

GARDNER: In attempting to pass this law, the president said repeatedly, "If you like your plan, you can keep it." Did that turn out to be true for all of your customers?

Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: No. That was not true for 100 percent of our customers.

GARDNER: Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Not for 100 percent.

GARDNER: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: For over 99 percent of our customers, that was the case.

GARDNER: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: Not in all cases, no.

(CROSSTALK)

GARDNER: ...your time, and I yield back.

(UNKNOWN): Thank you. Now, recognize Miss Castor for five minutes.

CASTOR: Well, thank you very much. And good morning. And thank you, Mr. Chairman, for calling this hearing to discuss the strong enrollment numbers of the Affordable Care Act.

When the enrollment numbers were released last week, coming from the state of Florida, we were floored. About 1 million Floridians signed up under the Affordable Care Act. This far exceeded our expectations. We thought 600,000, 700,000, but to get to about a million signed up, that doesn't include the about 300,000 children that signed up under children's health insurance, or our disabled neighbors, or children under Medicaid.

And then I learned from our Florida Blue executives Friday, Florida Blue's the market leader in Florida that -- that million- dollar figure does not include others that signed up for -- with private health insurance companies. So that's -- add on another probably couple hundred thousand. It's really remarkable, and it has far exceeded our expectations.

Now, I really -- you know, I just think about all of my neighbors all across the state that are breathing easier because now they have financial security in their lives that they did not have before. And I want to thank all of our navigators, the insurance brokers, many of the insurance companies that were out providing information, all of our community outreach partners. You have made a fundamental difference in the lives of -- of millions of Floridians. And it's -- it's going to be very meaningful for them and their families.

It's also good news for neighbors that have insurance already. Most people across America already have insurance. And if you have insurance, what you want most of all is that you want other people to have insurance because the -- the cost of these high premium increases and rates -- rate increases over time were largely caused by this huge uninsured population. And those costs, when they show up at the hospital for healthcare, they have to be paid somewhere. So that's what we're hoping then.

And we've heard time and time again of some -- the scare tactics here. And we will -- we'll see what happens with premium increases. But do we want to go back to the double-digit consistent premium increases of the past? I don't think so. So this is a way that hopefully, over time, we will be able to stabilize the marketplace.

And I think my -- my colleague Congressman Tonko was right. I think my Republican friends now are in danger of sounding like they are opposed to people taking personal responsibility and having health insurance. People need to have health insurance to maintain their quality of life, to -- to make sure they don't go bankrupt. And I would hope that my Republican friends could now turn the page and we could get to work on many of the complicated issues with health policy in America.

Now, one of the -- my Republican colleagues, if they were to tax on healthcare reform, is that it will cause people to lose their doctors. Now, you have to say, okay, even in Florida, where you have over a million people now that now have health insurance, they're going to be able to see a doctor, 8 million nationwide. But this is especially bizarre coming from Republicans because they have long opposed any policy proposals to broaden networks. They have fought efforts to increase reimbursement for primary care providers who serve Medicare and Medicaid patients.

What has been lost in this debate is the fact that the ACA sets important new network adequacy standards that guarantee access to key essential community providers. It ensures that no consumer will ever see a huge out-of-network bill if they're taken to an emergency room. And it gives consumers strong appeal rights. It's a huge step forward in patient access.

Mr. Pratt, can you give us some context here? Providers and insurance regularly negotiate rates and determine who will -- inside of a network. Isn't that correct?

PRATT: Representative, yes, that's correct.

CASTOR: And if insurers had to include every provider in their network, wouldn't that eliminate their bargaining power and substantially increase premiums?

PRATT: Congresswoman, I think that is generally correct. I wouldn't characterize the amount of the increase. But it is a very important aspect of keeping premiums affordable.

CASTOR: Okay. Can these high-value networks improve care coordination and move us towards a system where we pay for quality rather than quantity in our healthcare system?

PRATT: Absolutely. Our members are working very hard toward that end.

CASTOR: See, I think this network adequacy is a -- in the marketplace is an important issue. We need to make sure that consumers have access to providers in their area and that they have enough choices to get the care they need when they need it. Republicans should not attack the ACA for letting the private market work.

And remember personal responsibility is fundamental. It's a fundamental tenet of the Affordable Care Act. And it's often times the customers' responsibility to review all of the choices they have, whether it's Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum and the networks contained therein and make their own choice. So the law sets key new standards and provides important protections but insurers and providers will continue to negotiate to ensure sufficient access at fair prices.

Thank you very much. I yield back.

(UNKNOWN): (Inaudible) yields back. Chair recognizes gentleman from Ohio. Mr. Johnson, five minutes for your questions, please.

JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Wow. So much to -- to talk about, so little time to -- to talk about it all. Gentlemen, thank you for joining us today. You know, one of the reasons this committee

is requested -- has requested this information from you is because the administration has refused repeatedly to provide any data on who is actually paying for the Affordable Care Act.

In fact, one White House spokesman told reporters to ask your industry for this information. Do you -- so here's the question for you. Do you currently provide any information to the administration on who has paid for their plan? If yes, what information do you provide and -- and how is it provided and how often? It -- do -- do you provide any information to the administration?

WINGLE: The only information we provide around -- around payment is related to the invoicing we do with the government to get the premium tax credit.

JOHNSON: And how is it provided and how often?

WINGLE: It's the process we described earlier. It's a -- it's a workaround process because the financial management module is not fully constructed on the FFM (inaudible)...

(CROSSTALK)

JOHNSON: Who do you send it to, Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: Send it to CMS.

JOHNSON: Okay. Well, for -- it's -- it's a little confusing. So the administration will pay your industry a subsidy for potential customers who never even effectuate their enrollment. So if you're not providing the details to the administration on who's paying for the Affordable Care Act, how are they paying you? How are they -- what -- what are they basing their payments to you on?

WINGLE: I'd only make one clarification. We do not submit information for payment from the government for member who are not effectuated, who haven't made their own portion of the binder payment. We do not do that.

JOHNSON: What -- let me -- let me dig a little deeper then. So how do you get paid? How do you get paid? And what is that based on? What information do you provide the government, the administration, that gets you paid?

WINGLE: The -- the process essentially works because we have the enrollment file information. We understand the premium for the plan selected by the consumer on that enrollment file.

JOHNSON: So you're paid based on enrollment, not on actual payment?

WINGLE: Yeah. We understand the member's responsibility on that enrollment, and the difference between the premium rate and the member responsibility tells us what the government is -- and we roll that figure up monthly.

JOHNSON: So if you only submit for effectuated -- it -- I can't even pronounce that word. Doesn't the administration know the pay rate? Don't they know how much these people are -- are -- are paying?

MATHIS: Yes, sir. They -- they've determined the subsidy eligibility as part of the enrollment process. And so a file would come to us. We'd bill for the member responsibility. Upon collection of that member responsibility, then we would -- typically, if the system were working as designed, we would send a file to the government, to the exchange, saying, "Here are the members that have effectuated enrollment, and here's ultimately the payment that is back due to us."

JOHNSON: So do you believe the administration is currently able to report the payment rate or who is fully enrolled? Do you think they have that information, based on what you give them?

MATHIS: So, to date, the payments that are coming back and forth are estimated. So there's not been a direct reconciliation between our company and the exchange on a member by member basis.

That's one of the works in progress that we discussed on the backend discussion we had earlier in the day, sir.

JOHNSON: Considering then that the administration is able to report who selects a plan on healthcare.gov, would it be possible for them to gather information on who has actually paid for a plan? Let's start down with Mr. Pratt.

PRATT: Representative, it's my understanding that that capability is not present yet...

JOHNSON: Mr. Coyne?

PRATT: ...whether it may be in the future.

JOHNSON: Okay.

COYNE: Yeah. It's -- it's my understanding as well that that capability isn't ready yet.

JOHNSON: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: I don't know what the administration can infer from the data they have. But I know the financial management module itself is not available.

JOHNSON: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: One bit of color I'll add to my colleagues is the submission for APTC is only for those that are APTC eligible. So there's also people that do not qualify for that. That should be in that calculation.

JOHNSON: Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Yes. I think my -- my colleagues are correct in the -- in their statements. And we're still working on the reconciliation process for payment.

JOHNSON: Okay.

Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: I would concur with what was (inaudible).

JOHNSON: Final question. Does the administration know who's paid for their plan?

Mr. Pratt?

PRATT: Congressman, I don't know the answer to that question.

JOHNSON: Mr. Coyne?

COYNE: I don't know either.

WINGLE: I don't know what the administration knows about the enrollment, in terms of who's paid.

EVANKO: I don't know either.

RODGERS: No, sir.

MATHIS: No, sir.

JOHNSON: It's interesting that they sent us to ask you folks. Okay. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

(UNKNOWN): Gentleman yields back his time. Chair recognizes gentleman from Kentucky. Mr. Yarmuth, you have five minutes for your questions, please.

YARMUTH: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And I'm really glad we had this hearing. That's something I usually don't say very often. But this has been a very illuminating hearing because I think what it's done very clearly is to show what our colleagues on the other side's strategy is, which is to try and hold a hearing in which they can grab a headline that will, in some way, scare the American people about what's -- about the Affordable Care Act rather than providing true information about what's going on.

And, you know, it's -- it's clear from the desperation. Once their initial strategy of trying to deal with this alleged failure to pay premiums -- now they've moved on to try and scare people about what premiums might increase by later, either next year or in the future. So, you know -- I -- and I'm glad you all stressed how important is was that you not give up your competitive position because, obviously, you're all competing in markets.

And, you know, I could turn that strategy around and do the same thing and ask you speculative questions like, will the premium increases that we are likely to see approach the 38 percent that we saw -- we were seeing in 2010 before the Affordable Care Act was passed? And -- and I'll ask you to speculate on that. But I won't do that. And I -- I could ask you about what the rate of cancellations of policies were prior to the -- the Affordable Care Act.

And I could also ask you -- and I think this would be a fair question. I wouldn't expect you to answer. How many of your insurance companies, because of the success of the Affordable Care Act enrollment so far and the -- the beneficial mix of younger people has prompted you to explore doing business in other states, as has been reported in the media? I think that would be a question that I would love to have the answer to.

I know, for instance, in Kentucky, the -- the co-op -- the non- profit Kentucky co-op, which is competing in the exchange, is now getting ready to do business in West Virginia because they don't have a co-op, and they see an opportunity there. And I think the main co- op is planning to do business in (inaudible) Massachusetts co-op in Maine because they see an opportunity there.

So I think all these things are indications that the Affordable Care Act, far from being the train wreck which many have suggested it would become, is actually getting a lot deal of traction as it -- it speeds down the -- the tracks. And just to put it in perspective, in Kentucky, we have -- we have insured, in the period of six months, roughly half of the previously uninsured population of the state. We -- 411,000 people now have coverage in Kentucky under the ACA. Three- quarters of those -- in answer to one of the questions that was asked earlier, three-quarters of those we know previously had no insurance. And 52 percent of all that 411,000 people are under 35.

So we know things are in -- working in Kentucky, and, as Ms. Castor mentioned, things are surprisingly successful in Florida despite an administration there which has done everything it could to sabotage the -- the Affordable Care Act. So, you know, I -- one that we can speculate about and argue about as a level of success, whether it's success or a train wreck, you know, the markets certainly have had something to say about how they view the Affordable Care Act in terms of your businesses.

I look at those share prices of the companies represented here, and one based in my own state -- Humana's based in my district. When the Affordable Care Act was enacted, their stock price was 44. Now it's 110. Aetna's was 33. Now it's 72. United Healthcare was 27. Now it's 75. And Cigna's was 34, and now it's 83, roughly. So the market has made a judgment, I think, about the fact that, at least in terms of your business, the Affordable Care Act has offered a significant financial benefit.

So I think this -- again, this is -- one of the things that's fascinating about this hearing is we know what the Republicans have tried to do, and that's to scare the American people and to use every little indication of a problem that -- to reflect a -- some kind of a doomsday scenario that we are looking at. And, fortunately, the facts on the ground, whether it's the marketplace, whether it's the experience in Kentucky or Florida or California, where literally millions of people -- by one estimate,

20.8 million people -- got coverage under the ACA, or bought coverage because of the ACA in the private markets outside the exchanges, we are doing exactly what we intended it to do.

We know there have been glitches. We know there have been problems. Any undertaking of this magnitude would experience those. But, again, I thank you for your participation, and I thank you for this hearing. And I yield back.

(UNKNOWN): Gentleman from New Mexico is recognized for five minutes, Mr. **Lujan,** for your questions, please.

LUJAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Mathis, your company CEO said last week that the surge in enrollment in March included a higher percentage of young people than in earlier months. Isn't that correct?

MATHIS: That is correct, sir.

LUJAN: And, Mr. Evanko, your CEO said something similar last week as well. Isn't that correct?

EVANKO: That's correct.

LUJAN: And as a general matter, all else being equal, a higher percentage of young people in the risk pool will help lower premiums. Isn't that correct?

Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: That's a complicated question. It's an important one. But it's a complicated question.

LUJAN: I think that all that we've heard and from all the actuaries is that the answer is yes. We need more young people in. It lowers premiums.

Mr. Pratt, insurance company premiums are market sensitive information that companies are not eager to let their competitors know until the last minute. Isn't that correct?

PRATT: Representative, it is competitively sensitive information. I don't know that I could speak to their particular perspective on that question.

LUJAN: Well, it seems like they'd want to keep it to themselves as long as they're able to so that competitors aren't able to get their hands on it and adjust accordingly. Is that correct? Is that fair?

PRATT: It's fair to say it's competitively sensitive information.

LUJAN: And is it correct that many insurance commissioners around the country have the authority to review rates and that the final rates consumers pay are sometimes lower than the rates that are actually filed?

PRATT: Yes, Representative. Typically speaking, rates are filed with the states, and the states review those rates.

LUJAN: Very good. I -- I used to sit on a regulatory body that the superintendent of insurance was under our jurisdiction, so I appreciate the answer to that because I know what we saw when I was there as well, sir. So I'd certainly agree with that. Is it also true that the ACA contains a series of policies, re-insurance, risk adjustment, and risk corridors to help mitigate potential premium increases?

PRATT: Congressman, one goal of the three Rs program -- the so- called three Rs program is to stabilize premiums in the early years of implementation.

LUJAN: And a final question to the panelists. Before the ACA, wasn't it common for insurance premiums to increase significant year to year, often by double digits? Anyone? Is there anyone that would disagree that premiums increased by more than 50 percent between 2003 and 2010? Hearing none, I guess the answer to that is there's agreement.

The 8 million figure only includes people who have signed up for insurance directly through the federal and state marketplaces that my colleagues are trying to dismiss. But people can also sign up for private ACA-compliant plans outside of the marketplaces. We don't have a lot of conversation about that.

Mr. Pratt, are individuals able to enroll in some of the plans that AHIP represents outside of the federal and state marketplaces?

PRATT: That's correct.

LUJAN: The CBO estimates that 5 million people will purchase ACA-compliant plans outside of the marketplace this year. These individuals will obtain the same protections and be a part of the same risk pools in each state as those who enrolled via the marketplaces.

Mr. Rodgers, how many of HSCS's (sic) enrollments have outside been -- have been outside of the marketplace?

RODGERS: As I said in my opening testimony, it was provided in written form to the committee. I believe we had about 230,000 off- exchange applications during the open enrollment period ending April 15.

LUJAN: And about how many applicants have you received overall?

RODGERS: We've received overall about 830,000 applications across our five states.

LUJAN: So that sounds like it's representing about 1.2 million covered lives. So about 28 percent of your enrollees signed up outside of the marketplaces. That's a significant number. And I understand that payment date is not complete. But in the earlier months of this year, what percentage of individuals enrolling in plans outside of the marketplace have paid?

RODGERS: In my written comments to the committee, I shared with you the on-exchange and off-exchange payment rates because there is some difference. Typically, the payment completion rates are a little bit higher off-exchange versus -- versus on-exchange, and you should have that data.

LUJAN: So what -- from what I was able to get from your testimony was that between January and April, 90 to 93 percent, and in May, 63 percent today. And we can verify that in the -- and there's -- that sound accurate, though?

RODGERS: That's correct. That's in my written comments.

LUJAN: Can any of our other witnesses provide us with information on how many off-exchange enrollments they have had to date?

If not, if you -- Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: We have approximately 40,000 off-exchange ACA enrollments. That's about one-third of our total ACA-compliant book.

LUJAN: And what I'd like to do is ask our witnesses if they'd be willing to provide the committee with detailed information on their off-exchange enrollments. Would that be okay with everyone?

RODGERS: Yes.

LUJAN: Very good. I appreciate that. And, you know, later on today, we're going to be having some other hearings in other areas. Despite the demonization and demagoguing of the Affordable Care Act, over 8 million enrollees. Can you imagine what it would have been if Democrats and Republicans would have worked together to fix issues that needed fixing but were able to get more people covered? Who knows where that number would have been.

But later on today, we're going to be having a hearing on taking away someone's Fifth Amendment rights. We have my colleagues that are still refusing to release 39 interview transcripts on an IRS hearing. There is going to be other hearings -- another request on a hearing with Benghazi, even though there's been seven other hearings, 50 repeal attempts on the Affordable Care Act -- think there's a lot of important pressing business that we as the Congress need to get our hands around.

And I'm certainly hopeful that -- in the history and tradition of this committee, with all that I've learned from our senior members, there once upon a time was an effort for us to work together and get along. I certainly hope that those days return. Every time I'm home, that's what we here.

So of all the witnesses that are here today, thank you so much. Chairman, again, for you being here as well and the hearing being brought together today, an important conversation. I hope that we're able to bring more facts into the debate. Thank you very much.

(UNKNOWN): Now his time has expired. The Chair recognizes the ranking members to get -- or follow up.

DEGETTE: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to follow up on Mr. **Lujan's** questioning with the off-exchange enrollments because, as we've learned, there have been a number of off-exchange enrollments as -- in addition to the enrollments in the ACA in the -- both in the federal exchange, in the state exchanges.

So I would ask unanimous consent. The committee has made a request of the -- of 160 plans, including plans from this panel here, that they provide information about enrollment figures and premium payments for -- for those plans that are under the Affordable Care Act, the exchanges.

I would ask also if we would ask those same plans for that same information on the off-exchange enrollment, similar to the -- to the data that we got from Blue Cross Blue Shield. Be helpful to know how many off-exchange enrollments we've had from these 160 plans and -- and what the premium payments have been. So I'd ask unanimous consent, that we also ask for that information.

MURPHY: The gentlelady yields back right now. Myself for follow-up. And I would just say, on the off enrollment, I'm one of those members. I actually had both Blue Cross Blue Shield in healthcare.gov on hold. Well, they had me on hold on December 23 and December 24. And it was kind of a race to see who would have a live person answer the phone first. I think, if I recall correctly, Blue Cross won out that day. So I was probably an off-exchange enrollment. So you may count me as that.

Just like to ask each of you in follow-up, many of the products you are offering are only affordable because the government subsidizes part of the premium cost. Do you know what percentage of the plans with paid premiums and effectuated enrollment received some form of subsidy from a taxpayer?

Mr. Coyne, I'll start with you, and then we just go down the line.

COYNE: We don't have that information at this point.

MURPHY: Would you provide it for the record?

COYNE: Yes, we'd be happy to when we get it.

MURPHY: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: Our experience probably comports with generally available published information on that. It's -- it's a majority of our membership.

MURPHY: And, again, can I ask you to submit that for the record?

Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: For on-exchange customers, 80 to 85 percent are eligible for APTC.

MURPHY: Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Yes. I believe we submitted that information, if I understood your question, in the two submissions for April. And with the May 20th submission, we'll provide something similar.

(UNKNOWN): As did we.

MURPHY: Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: Yes. As you know, that number is a moving target. But it is around 79 percent for us.

MURPHY: And would you do your best to -- to give us an accurate representation for the -- for the record. What about a situation where an individual enrolls but then cancels their plan? Are you only paid the subsidy monthly? Or would you be responsible for turning a portion of the subsidy throughout the year?

Mr. Coyne, we'll start with you.

COYNE: No. We don't have that information.

MURPHY: And will you submit that for the record?

COYNE: Yes.

MURPHY: Please try to find that for us.

Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: Could you repeat the question, please, Mr. Chairman?

MURPHY: A situation where an individual enrolls but then cancels their plan, are you only paid the subsidy monthly? Or would you be responsible for returning the portion throughout the year?

WINGLE: Returning the portion of premium paid or...

MURPHY: The -- the Advanced Premium Tax Credit.

WINGLE: Oh, the subsidy. The subsidy, you know, under the three-month grace period rules, we retain until cancellation.

MURPHY: So you would not be required to return that?

WINGLE: No, not until members cancel.

MURPHY: If the member just simply doesn't pay -- they make their first payment, made their second payment, and then they stop. At the end of that three-month grace period, do you have to return the money for those months where they didn't -- the patient didn't pay?

WINGLE: In compliance with the three-month grace period rules, we retain any premium tax credit received during the period to cover -- help us cover or to -- any claims experience we had during the time the member (inaudible).

MURPHY: So you retain the Advanced Premium Tax...

(CROSSTALK)

WINGLE: According with the design of the rules, yes.

MURPHY: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: Well, at -- at the end of the 90-day grace period, if the individual has not paid any more premiums, then we owe that money back to CMS, and we credit that in the next month's reconciliation process.

MURPHY: Interesting.

Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Yeah. I'm not familiar with that particular aspect of the grace period payments in terms of -- of the return or not. But in my -- I believe that we're only entitled to the money that's -- for the -- the time the policy's in effect.

MURPHY: And Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: That's my understanding as well, sir.

MURPHY: Mr. Coyne, do you know -- do you know how much your company has been paid in Advanced Premium Tax Credits?

COYNE: Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association does not actually sponsor any of the products that are on the exchanges. Our member plans do. So we wouldn't be paid premiums or APTC.

MURPHY: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: We received four payments so far for the months of January through April. And it's in the range of 30 to $40 million.

MURPHY: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: We obviously have that data. We can supply the committee with that data.

MURPHY: And that should be -- free to submit that for the record.

Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: We received some payments. I don't know the value of the payments to date.

MURPHY: And will you find that information and submit it for the record, please?

RODGERS: Certainly.

MURPHY: And Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: Yes. I don't have that number ready today, but we'd be happy to get it for you.

MURPHY: The metal plans, you're all familiar with them? Keep hearing about a Copper Plan that's going to be offered. Are any of you familiar with that? Are you -- be offering Copper Plans?

Mr. Coyne?

COYNE: I'm not familiar with that at this point.

MURPHY: Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: Under the current rules for essential health benefits and the rules for qualified health plans, we're not currently authorized to offer anything at the so-called Copper level. Our plan benefits start at Bronze, unless somebody qualifies for catastrophic care. And that's of the lowest actuarial value we're allowed to offer presently.

MURPHY: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: In the event that Copper Plans were introduced as something that's allowed, we would certainly consider it. Cigna believes in choice as one of our core principles for our customers.

MURPHY: Thank you.

Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Currently, we're not approved to offer the Copper Plans. That's certainly something that we believe that members need more cost-effective programs. So if those are offered, I expect that we would...

(CROSSTALK)

MURPHY: Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: My comments will be similar to my colleagues, sir.

MURPHY: Let me just ask each of you, what is your payment rate for products in the large group market?

Starting with you, Mr. Coyne, what are your payments for products in large group market?

COYNE: Individual group plans have that information rather than the association.

MURPHY: See.

Mr. Wingle?

WINGLE: I carry no responsibility for large group. I'd have to get back to you on that.

MURPHY: Mr. Evanko?

EVANKO: I'm not familiar with the large group payment rates either. I'm sorry.

MURPHY: Your company, though, is -- I mean, you're -- you're in the large group market.

EVANKO: We are, sir, yes.

MURPHY: Will you get that information for us? Thank you.

Mr. Rodgers?

RODGERS: Yeah. I don't have that information with me.

MURPHY: But you will provide it for the committee?

RODGERS: Certainly.

MURPHY: And Mr. Mathis?

MATHIS: I'm not sure I understand the question. Could you clarify it for me, please?

MURPHY: Well, the question was, what are your payment rates for products in the large group market?

MATHIS: So is that what our average premium is or...

MURPHY: Your -- how many people pay.

MATHIS: I'm sorry, sir. I'm still not following the question.

MURPHY: Well, what we've generally been talking about today is how many people -- what percentage of people have -- have paid. So can -- following along with that theme...

(CROSSTALK)

MATHIS: I'm sorry. I was a little slow on the uptake there. Typically, we would experience somewhere around a 98 to 97 percent premium payment in -- in the group -- in the large group market.

MURPHY: Very well. Thank you all for your attendance today. Ask (inaudible) consent that members' written opening statements be introduced into the record. Without objection, the documents will be entered into the record. In conclusion, I'd like to thank all the witnesses and the members that participated in today's hearing. I'd like to thank everyone who stuck with us to the end, although that would be the witnesses. I remind members they have 10 business days to submit questions for the record. And I ask the witnesses to all agree to respond promptly to the questions. The committee now stands in adjournment.

END

LOAD-DATE: May 11, 2014

Federal News Service

May 7, 2014 Wednesday

Hearing of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee Subject: "PPACA (Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act) Enrollment and the Insurance Industry" Chaired by: Representative Timothy Murphy (R-PA) Witnesses: Frank Coyne, Vice President of Operations and Chief Transformation Officer, Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association; Mark Pratt, Senior Vice President of State Affairs

for America's Health Insurance Plans; Paul Wingle, Executive Director of Individual Business and Public Exchange Operations and Strategy at Aetna; Brian Evanko, President of U.S. Individual Segment at Cigna; J. Darren Rodgers, Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer, Health Care Service Corporation; Dennis Matheis, President of Central Region and Exchange Strategy for Wellpoint, Inc. Location: 2123 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. Time: 10:15 a.m. EDT Date: Wednesday, May 7, 2014

LENGTH: 22513 words

Hearing of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee Subject: "PPACA (Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act) Enrollment and the Insurance Industry" Chaired by: Representative Timothy Murphy (R-PA) Witnesses: Frank Coyne, Vice President of Operations and Chief Transformation Officer, Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association; Mark Pratt, Senior Vice President of State Affairs for America's Health Insurance Plans; Paul Wingle, Executive Director of Individual Business and Public Exchange Operations and Strategy at Aetna; Brian Evanko, President of U.S. Individual Segment at Cigna; J. Darren Rodgers, Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer, Health Care Service Corporation; Dennis Matheis, President of Central Region and Exchange Strategy for Wellpoint, Inc. Location: 2123 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. Time: 10:15 a.m. EDT Date: Wednesday, May 7, 2014

REPRESENTATIVE TIMOTHY MURPHY (R-PA): Good morning. I now convene this hearing to examine the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and enrollment of the state and federal exchanges here in the Oversight and Investigation Committee for the Committee on Energy and Commerce. This subcommittee has a long history of trying to get straight answers from the administration on the status of the Affordable Care Act.

Two weeks before the launch of healthcare.gov, the administration official responsible for the implementation of the ACA exchanges told this committee that the Web site would be ready, consumers would be able to go online, shop for, select a plan and then enroll in coverage. When the federal exchange opened on October 1, consumers instead found a crashing Web site. The administration excuse for why the Web site didn't work: volume.

Through this committee's investigation we learned that the administration spent over half a billion dollars on a Web site that they had been warned for several months would not be ready and would not work, a fact that administration officials did not disclose when questioned by this committee during oversight hearings through 2013.

Just after the failed launch we asked the administration on October 8th to provide enrollment data for the first week of healthcare.gov debacle. The administration ignored us. Why?

It wasn't because the data didn't exist. It was because the news wasn't good. When Secretary Sebelius testified before the full Energy and Commerce Committee on October 30th of last year, was asked about enrollment, she stated that she could not provide any data because the administration did not, quote, have any reliable data around enrollment, unquote.

The very next day it was reported that there were only six successful enrollments on October 1st. We tried again during a hearing in January before this subcommittee when we asked the head of the office running the exchanges if the administration collected any data on who has paid their health coverage. This administration official told us that they did not collect this information, quote, but we will be, unquote, as soon as it was finished building the Web site.

While the administration refused to provide straightforward answers to our questions on enrollment, it continues to tout enrollment figures that included individuals who had merely selected a plan online. When pressed by reporters for information on the number of enrollees who had paid their premiums, a White House spokesman said that questions about payment, quote, can best be directed to those private insurance companies that are collecting those payments, unquote.

After months of an administration that refused to be transparent about enrollment, that's what we did. We did exactly what the administration suggested we do. On March 13th we sent a request to each insurance company in the federal marketplace and asked them to submit basic information -- who selected a plan and who paid for it.

The data submitted by the insurers paints an uneven picture about the status of enrollment and payment through April 15th. As of that date just two-thirds of enrollees through the federally facilitated marketplace paid their first month's premium. Some states are doing better than others. My home state of Pennsylvania, for example, has an 81 percent payment rate. Texas, on the other hand, is much lower at 42 percent. We recognize that many individuals still have time to pay their first month's premium, which is why we have asked insurers to update this information on May 20th.

As with any criticism or questions of the Affordable Care Act, the administration predictably protested and attempted to misrepresent the purpose of our inquiry. Let's be clear about why we had to engage in this exercise in the first place. The administration would not be transparent about enrollment and provide the underlying data. For the witnesses today, we ask you to be patient with our questions about enrollment and implementation. After months of promises about the status of healthcare.gov from HHS officials we have learned to be skeptical about blanket statements that everything is well.

One purpose of today's hearing is to examine enrollment because it is a key factor in measuring whether these exchanges are viable. We have a number of other questions for the witnesses today about the status of implementation. The ACA is more than a payment rate. We need to know if Americans can expect the premium reductions they were promised. We need to know if they can keep the plan they like. We need to know if they can keep their doctor.

We cannot understand the status of the law and its implementation without hearing from you, the insurance companies whose plans make up these exchanges. Under the president's health care law these companies will receive taxpayer dollars in the form of premium subsidies and cost-sharing.

We expect the witnesses today to provide the committee with facts and information about the first year of coverage under the Affordable Care Act. Thank you for the witnesses being here today. And I'd now like to recognize the ranking member, Ms. DeGette, for five minutes.

REPRESENTATIVE DIANA DEGETTE (D-CO): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to take a few minutes, since the chairman has walked through the greatest hits of the problems they've had with the ACA, of where we stand now and where we stand after the first enrollment period has just closed. So as we continue to get information about how the exchanges and the Affordable Care Act and the enrollment are performing, let's review what we already know.

The first thing is, despite the disastrous beginning of the federal exchange, good news. The Web site was fixed. More than 8 million people signed up for insurance through the exchanges created through the Affordable Care Act, which is more than a million more than were originally projected before the disastrous unveiling.

Now, of those 8 million people that waited until the last month of enrollment -- of those 8 million people, 3 million of them waited to the last month of enrollment. And so their premiums are not due until April 30th, or in some cases later than April 30th. Even so, my colleagues in their quest for knowledge on the other side of the aisle sent out a questionnaire to insurers that manipulated the payment deadlines to skew the understanding of how new insurance coverage is performing.

How does that happen? Because they cut off the responses April 15th, at least two weeks before many of the premiums of these 3 million people were even due for payment. What this does is it skews the amount of people who are enrolled. Then of course they issued a press release posthaste.

Now for years my friends on the other side of the aisle have made a series of claims that really are unsubstantiated. First they claimed that the bill contained death panels. Then they claimed that the bill would eliminate private insurance within three years. Then they claimed that the law would destroy millions of jobs. When the Web site was broken, they insisted the law would never meet enrollment goals.

Now, Mr. Chairman, today we finally have a chance to see in a snapshot what's happening with the Affordable Care Act. And the facts reveal that every single one of those claims were wrong. As of today, as I said, more than 8 million people enrolled in private plans through federal and state marketplaces. Millions more have enrolled through Medicaid and in off-exchange plans.

Gallup just released a new poll finding that in the last six months the percentage of adults without insurance has dropped about 20 percent, and what that means is there are more than 11 million Americans with insurance today than there were six months ago. Premiums are below the levels predicted by the Congressional Budget Office and the agency has once again reiterated that the Affordable Care Act has slowed inflation and saved billions of dollars and will even reduce deficits. So by any rational, reasonable measure we can call this law a success, and that success will make a real difference in people's lives. That's what's important here.

Yesterday researchers from the Harvard School of Public Health released a comprehensive study on the impact of health insurance coverage. They were looking at mortality rates before and after the passage of "Romneycare," the landmark Massachusetts health insurance expansion that served as a model for the Affordable Care Act. They found that the mortality rate in Massachusetts fell by about 3 percent in the four years after passage of the state's health insurance law.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask unanimous consent to put a copy of that study into the record.

REP. MURPHY: Without objection.

REP. DEGETTE: Thank you. So if we can achieve that same level of success nationwide with the Affordable Care Act -- and there's no reason why we shouldn't be able to do so -- that could result in 17,000 fewer deaths per year. That, Mr. Chairman, in a nutshell is what the Affordable Care Act means for Americans.

Now what I wish we could do in this subcommittee, and I've said this both publicly and privately many, many times, is sit down with the ACA, figure out what the flaws are and figure out how we can work in a bipartisan way to fix it. And that's what I think we should do. Instead, what we get is this misleading analysis last week which said that only 67 percent of enrollees had paid for the coverage they enrolled in on the exchanges. And my chairman, Mr. Upton, said the administration's recent declarations of success may be unfounded.

But again, I will say the report was misleading because almost half of the enrollees in the health care exchanges, 40 percent of them, did not even have to make their initial premium payment until April 31st. I'm glad we've got the insurers here today to clear up this record. I'm glad we have everybody here to see exactly what we're talking about here.

So my suggestion is, let's look at the successes, let's look where we need to make improvements, and let's work together to do just that. Thank you.

REP. MURPHY: The gentlelady's time is expired. I now recommend the chairman of the full committee, Mr. Upton, for five minutes.

REPRESENTATIVE FRED UPTON (R-MI): With a friendly pat on the back I'll just say April 31st has yet to come. Thirty days hath September, April, June and November.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the witnesses for being here today as well, for sure. At this subcommittee our investigations are about getting the facts. A quest for transparency, the self-proclaimed most transparent administration in history has repeatedly dodged our simple questions about the health care law and refused even a semblance of transparency about how its signature legislative achievement is or is not working.

We wanted the basic data from the administration on enrollment one week after the launch of healthcare.gov and the administration has rejected our request for more information each and every time. Members of the press have asked. The administration suggested the only way to get the facts was directly asking the insurance providers themselves. So we took their advice and we did just that, but the administration cried foul again.

We began asking about healthcare.gov months before October 1st of last year. Repeatedly we were told things were on track and working the way it was supposed to. We learned that this was not the case and administration officials did everything in their power, it seems, to hide the chaos behind the scenes. The American public does deserve better.

They deserve better than an administration that promised them $2,500 in savings on health care premiums, only to see the cost rise sharply for many.

They deserve better than an administration that repeated promises officials knew that would be impossible to keep, promises that Americans could keep their doctors and keep their health care plans also. Like it or not, millions of Americans have found themselves with the unwelcome reality of cancellations and lost access to their trusted doctor, and one Democratic colleague from Massachusetts said just two weeks ago the worst is yet to come.

Today we're going to hear firsthand from the insurance providers about how implementation is working, from their perspective. While the administration has declared this conversation over, the fact is that serious questions remain unanswered and it is our responsibility to continue seeking the facts. How many people have completed the enrollment process? Are the risks presented by these pools sustainable?

How much more will premiums rise this next year? Is the back end of the website on track to be working by the next enrollment period? Are there any other delays or changes ahead that will disrupt the ability of families and businesses to plan for their health care coverage and needs? Will more health care plans be cancelled in the coming years?

So what's wrong with seeking that information? Nothing that I know of. We released basic data points on enrollment as of April 15th and will do so again on the data that we collect through May 20th. The facts are the facts, and while the administration and its allies furiously try to muddy reality, the public deserves transparency. And while the administration toasts to the law's success with its Hollywood allies, declaring this conversation over, we will continue our pursuit for facts for the American people so that we can finally have a full accurate picture of this health care law, and I yield the balance of my time to Dr. Burgess.

REPRESENTATIVE MICHAEL BURGESS (R-TX): And I thank the chairman for yielding. I thank our witnesses for being here today. I know it's not always easy or pleasant to come before this subcommittee. I, like the chairman, wish that the administration had been a little bit more forthcoming about information, which would have obviated your need to be here today.

But I do appreciate the fact that you responded to our requests and that you have provided the data. The fact remains the administration has withheld facts or changed facts during the rollout of this law and that the federal agencies responsible for the implementation currently excel only in opacity.

So you are here today to provide that transparency that the American people were promised earlier in this administration and I thank you for being here. I have particular concern over one aspect and I will delve into it a little bit more during the questioning today. But that is the issue on the grace period --the 90-day period of time that is granted to people who are receiving the tax credits -- the advanced tax credits for the offset of the cost of their insurance.

If they don't pay their premium in spite of the tax credit they are given a grace period of 90 days. My understanding is that the companies will be responsible for the first 30 days. Beyond that, it will be the doctor, the hospital, the provider who submits the bill who may be on the hook for that, and I am very interested to know what you have in development to keep practices, to keep providers apprised of the fact that a patient's claim may be in the pending status when that claim is submitted.

I know from running a doctor's office you always call and verify benefits. But now we have a new realm that we've entered into. Not only would you identify that someone has been enrolled but that they've paid and that they're current on their payments so that the provider in question would not be at risk. So we will get into a little bit more on that in the question and answer period. I thank the chairman for the time and yield back.

REP. MURPHY: The gentleman's time has expired. I now recognize the ranking member of the full committee, Mr. Waxman, for five minutes.

REPRESENTATIVE HENRY WAXMAN (D-CA): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Last week, the Republican whip, Representative Kevin McCarthy, wrote an op-ed opposing the Affordable Care Act. He wrote, quote, "President Obama needs to learn a simple lesson -- saying something doesn't make it true," end quote. Well, psychologists call this projection -- a defense mechanism that involves ascribing your own behavior to others.

In one phrase, Representative McCarthy summed up five years of Republican opposition to the Affordable Care Act. Over and over, Republican leaders have fabricated criticism of the Affordable Care Act and none of them have been true. Republican leaders said that the ACA would create death panels. Well, there are none in the law. Republican leaders said that the law was unconstitutional.

The Supreme Court held exactly the opposite. Republican leaders said that the ACA would increase the deficit. Well, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office found that the law will reduce deficits by over a trillion dollars. Republican leaders said that the law would cause health care costs to skyrocket. In fact, in the three years after passage of the ACA, health care spending growth was at its lowest rate in 50 years.

Republican leaders said that the law would cause massive job losses. In reality, there have been 48 consecutive months of job creation since the ACA was passed with more than 9.2 million jobs created. Republican leaders said there would be a huge loss of coverage under the law. But every independent analysis shows that the number of Americans with health insurance is growing and the number of uninsured dropping rapidly. Republicans said enrollment would fall far short of CBO estimates because few Americans would sign up. At 8 million and growing, enrollment has exceeded everyone's expectations.

Mr. Chairman, I just summarized five years of relentless Republican opposition to the Affordable Care Act. It's a sad and, I believe, reprehensible record. The Republican Party is trying to scare families from getting the health insurance they need. We saw the same pattern just last week when this committee released another report claiming imminent failure.

This time, the report said that one-third of enrollees had not paid for coverage. There was just one problem. The data was incomplete, out of date and manipulated. Due to the late surge in enrollment, premiums were not even due for over 3 million Americans.

The testimony we're going to hear today from the insurers contradicts the Republican findings. That testimony says that 80 to 90 percent of enrollees have paid their premiums. Mr. Chairman, it was a mistake to release those inaccurate and misleading findings and it's not the first time this has happened. This morning, I released a memo describing the Republican record of distortion, exaggeration and misdirection. It's a sad record and I'd like to make it part of this hearing record.

The simple fact is despite five years of ceaseless opposition the Affordable Care Act is working. Over 8 million Americans have signed up for private health care coverage on the state and federal exchanges. Millions more have signed up for Medicaid. Premiums are well below CBO expectations.

No American ever has to fear being discriminated against or denied coverage based on a pre-existing condition.

No amount of blatant falsehoods and cynical partisanship can obscure the facts. The Affordable Care Act is an enormous step forward in the health of our nation, and I yield back the balance of my time and I appreciate this opportunity to set the record straight.

REP. MURPHY: Thank you. Gentleman yields back. We'll now move forward here with our witnesses. Just one moment, please. We went quicker and that's good. I just wasn't quite ready. So I'd like to introduce the panel for today's hearing. We have Mr. Mark Pratt, who's a senior vice president of state affairs for America's Health Insurance Plans.

Mr. Frank Coyne is the vice president of operations and chief transformation officer at Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. Mr. Paul Wingle -- am I saying that correctly -- is the executive director of individual businesses and public exchange operations and strategy for Aetna. Mr. Brian Evanko is the president of Individual Segment for Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company. Mr. Darren -- Mr. J. Darren Rodgers is the senior vice president and chief marketing officer at the Health Care Services Corporations (sic) and Mr. Dennis Matheis is the president of central region and exchange strategy at Wellpoint, Inc. I will now swear in the witnesses.

You are aware that this committee is holding an investigative hearing and when doing so we have the practice of taking testimony under oath. Do any of you have any objections to testifying under oath? All the witnesses have indicated no. The chair then advises you that under the rules of the House and the rules of the committee you are entitled to be advised by counsel. Do you desire to be advised by counsel during your testimony today? You do. Are you -- Mr. Wingle is saying you'd like to be advised by counsel. Well, if you're sitting by him that's fine. Anybody else? You have counsel behind you; you're certainly welcome at some point to ask clarification from them. That's fine.

In any case, would all you please rise and raise your right hand and I'll swear you in.

(Oath is administered)

REP. MURPHY: Thank you. You may be seated. All the witnesses have taken that oath and you are now under oath and subject to the penalties set forth in title 18, section 1001 of the United States Code. We'll have you now each give a five-minute opening statement. Please stick to the five minutes. You'll see a red light go on when you're at the end of your time.

Mr. Pratt, you may begin.

MARK PRATT: Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member DeGette and members of the subcommittee, I am Mark Pratt, senior vice president of state affairs in America's Health Insurance Plans. I lead AHIP's legislative and regulatory activities in the states, including implementation of the Affordable Care Act and our work with the National Association of Insurance Commissioners.

We appreciate this opportunity to testify on enrollment in the new health insurance exchanges and implementation of the ACA. Our written testimony focuses on two broad areas. One, our members' experience in the ACA's initial open enrollment period for 2014, and two, our members' priorities for improving access to high quality, affordable health coverage in 2015 and beyond.

Since the enactment of the ACA our members have been working to implement the law's many requirements, with a strong focus on delivering high-value coverage options for consumers. Helping them obtain the secure, affordable coverage they need has been our central goal throughout the implementation process.

While working on operational issues related to ACA implementation and providing recommendations to policymakers, our members have focused on several major goals, among them minimizing disruptions for consumers, businesses and stakeholders, ensuring the workability of the exchanges

and allowing state flexibility; maximizing choice and competition, and addressing specific ACA provisions to make health coverage more affordable.

On numerous issues our members have provided technical assistance and expertise to assist federal agencies in resolving the operational challenges that surrounded the launch of the new exchanges and the healthcare.gov Web site. They have devoted significant resources to performing manual processes and work-arounds that were necessitated by the problems following the October 1 launch. Despite the challenges, our members encountered, we are proud that they ultimately were successful in offering a broad range of high-value coverage options to consumers who were enrolled in exchanges in 2014.

HHS has reported that approximately 8 million individuals signed up for exchange plans during the initial open enrollment period for 2014. While uncertainty remains with respect to how many people have paid their first month's premium, health insurers have been doing everything possible to encourage exchange enrollees to pay their premiums.

In the coming weeks we anticipate that there will be greater clarity on the question of how many exchange enrollees have paid their premiums. A number of individual plans have publicly announced their preliminary data and we anticipate that more announcements will be forthcoming. However, there may be a period of time before system- wide numbers on premium payments are available. Our members will continue their ongoing outreach to encourage exchange enrollees to pay their premiums.

Looking forward, we continue to believe that affordability must be the central priority as we focus on further expanding access to high-quality, affordable health coverage -- health insurance coverage in 2015 and beyond. One critically important step that Congress can take to make coverage more affordable is to delay the ACA health insurance tax and eventually repeal it.

We are deeply concerned that this tax is undermining efforts to control costs and provide affordable coverage options. We strongly support bipartisan legislation to fully repeal the tax introduced by Representatives Boustany and Matheson and co-sponsored by 230 House members. We also support as a short-term solution separate bipartisan legislation that proposes a two-year delay in the tax.

On another front, and in closing, we have worked closely with our members to provide comments to federal agencies on dozens of proposed rules and other regulatory documents. We consistently have emphasized the importance of creating a regulatory environment that promotes a wide range of affordable coverage options.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify. I look forward to your questions.

REP. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Pratt. I thank you for -- (inaudible) -- yield back. Now we recognize Mr. Coyne for his five minutes. Thank you.

FRANK COYNE: Good morning, Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member DeGette and members of the subcommittee. Thank you for the invitation to testify here today. I am Frank Coyne, vice president in the office of the president for the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, which represents the 37 independent community-based Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies that collectively provide health coverage for 100 million Americans.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies offer health care coverage in every zip code in the country and have long been committed to offering consumers across the country a wide variety of insurance options. My remarks today focus on the Blues' participation in the multi-state plan program administered by the Office of Personnel Management and enrollment in Blue Cross and Blue Shield's MSP plans.

The Affordable Care Act authorizes OPM to contract with at least two entities, at least one of which must be a not-for-profit, to offer products on the state and federal marketplaces. Under this multi-state plan program, OPM certifies health plans in conjunction with states for placement on the exchanges. For 2014 OPM certified Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies to offer multi-state plan

products in 30 states and the District of Columbia. Collectively Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies offer more than 150 multi-state plan products.

OPM has developed a standard contract for OPM issuers that meets its requirements. The association is party to that contract with OPM and our Blue licensee plans have agreements with us to fulfill many aspects of that contract, such as customer enrollment, benefits and claims administration and customer service, among other activities.

In addition, the contract contains a requirement to report enrollment information to OPM. In order to fulfill this requirement we ask Blue plans to report information on their multistate plan enrollments to us and we convey enrollment information to OPM. As of April 1st, 2014, a total of 283,783 individuals have selected an MSP plan.

I appreciate the opportunity to discuss Blue participation in enrollment in the MSP plan and I look forward to your questions.

REP. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Coyne. Now Mr. Wingle, you're recognized for five minutes. Move it as close as you can get it.

PAUL WINGLE: Sure.

REP. MURPHY: Thank you.

MR. WINGLE: Good morning, Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member DeGette and distinguished members of the subcommittee. My name is Paul Wingle and I am executive director of individual business and public exchange operations and strategy at Aetna. Thank you for inviting us to today's hearing. I have a brief opening statement and will then be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Aetna is currently participating in the individual market on the exchanges in 17 states. Over the course of approximately the last two months, Aetna has worked with the subcommittee to provide requested data and information related to enrollment in plans offered through federally facilitated marketplaces. As of the third week of April, Aetna had over 600,000 members who had enrolled and roughly 500,000 members who had paid. For those who had reached their payment due date, the payment rate, though dynamic, has been in the low to mid-80 percent range.

As outlined in our prior submissions to the subcommittee, these are dynamic figures and do not reflect final enrollment numbers, as some enrollees have not yet reached their payment due dates. An example would be a member with a June 1 policy effective date who has not yet paid but whose initial payment is not yet due. We are happy to continue to work with the subcommittee to provide updated information and data and note that, as the subcommittee has recognized, this might include material, nonpublic, confidential and proprietary information.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be here today and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

REP. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Wingle. He yields back. And now Mr. Evanko, you're recognized for five minutes.

BRIAN EVANKO: Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member DeGette, members of the subcommittee, good morning and thank you for the opportunity to testify at this hearing on PPACA enrollment and the insurance industry. I'm Brian Evanko and I currently serve as president of the U.S. Individual Segment at Cigna Corporation. I oversee the operation tasked with developing, promoting and maintaining the Cigna products that are offered in the individual health market, including those products that are offered on the exchanges set up pursuant to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, or ACA.

Cigna's a global health services company dedicated to helping people improve their health, well-being and sense of security. Through its subsidiaries, Cigna offers an integrated suite of health services, such as medical, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy and vision care benefits, along with other related products, including group disability, life and accident coverage. We employ more than 26,000 people and have sales capability in 30 countries and jurisdictions. We manage more than 80 million customer relationships throughout the world.

Despite our large footprint, 80 percent of Cigna's overall health care business consists of administrative services. This means that we help employers to administer their policies. We also administer claims processes, which are not risk-based like traditional insurance. Many of the employers that we assist are self-insuring, and the claim payments come out of the employers' own funds.

Cigna's traditional insurance business is concentrated in the large-group market. We have a very limited presence in the individual market, including on the ACA exchanges. The individual market currently constitutes approximately 3 percent of Cigna's total revenue. We currently offer health insurance products on the exchanges in five states, four of which -- Arizona, Florida, Tennessee and Texas -- are Federally Facilitated Marketplaces. The only state- run exchange in which Cigna's participating is in Colorado.

We have entered the exchanges on a focused basis in 2014 to gather deeper learning about consumer behaviors in the individual market, to understand the operational implications of how the exchanges function, and as a potential longer-term source of growth for Cigna. For 2014, we did not expect the exchanges to have a significant financial impact on our company.

The health insurance marketplace is evolving rapidly. And Cigna, like other health insurance companies, is constantly challenged to maintain affordability, accessibility and consumer choice in its product offerings. Cigna has worked collaboratively with our clients and customers, health care professionals, state and federal regulators, as well as other stakeholders to maintain our heritage of providing high-quality health insurance products and services while adapting to the ACA and other statutory and regulatory changes.

We believe that health care is a shared responsibility of the individual, the private sector, the medical community and the government. Accordingly, we look forward to how we can all work together to improve the health and wellness of and the quality of care for all Americans.

I'd welcome any questions that you may have.

REP. MURPHY: Mr. Evanko yields back. We now go to Mr. Rodgers, who we recognize for up to five minutes.

J. DARREN RODGERS: Good morning, Chairman Murphy. Good morning, Chairman Murphy and members of the subcommittee. I'm Darren Rodgers. I'm senior vice president --

REP. MURPHY: Just bring the mic as close to you as possible, because we can't hear up here.

MR. RODGERS: Okay.

REP. MURPHY: Thank you. Speak right into it.

MR. RODGERS: Good morning again, everyone.

I'm Darren Rodgers. I'm senior vice president and chief marketing officer at Health Care Service Corporation, or HCSC.

HCSC is a mutual legal reserve company which does business as Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. HCSC is the largest customer-owned nonprofit health insurance company in the nation. We're headquarted in Chicago, Illinois, with a workforce of

nearly 20,000 employees serving nearly 14 million members throughout our five-state Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans.

For over 80 years, HCSC has been committed to expanding access to cost-effective health care to as many people as possible in every part of each of our five states. Whether through employer-sponsored insurance, government programs or individual products, HCSC is committed to its purpose and to offering our customers a wide range of cost-effective and sustainable product choices to meet the needs of -- to meet their health and wellness needs.

As we transition to a new health care marketplace, HCSC remains committed to its individual and small-employer markets, and continuing to offer accessible products, particularly to those individuals who do not have access to employer-sponsored coverage.

We're proud of what our brands stand for -- security and peace of mind -- and our commitment to the communities in which we operate, as well as our large and geographically diverse network of health care providers in our operating states. This allows us to offer a variety of affordable product choices in every county of every state in which we operate.

To support our individual and small-employer market, HCSC participated in the health insurance exchanges. We offered a similar portfolio of products both on and off exchange, with a variety of deductibles, co-pays, coverages and other options, with the goal of meeting our members' diverse health care needs.

At the current time, enrollment and payment information can only be presented as of each day, when the numbers are counted. As such, there are natural lags between the effective date of coverage and the date on which the member's coverage payment may be due. For instance, applicants with policies with an effective date of May 1 still have time remaining in their payment deadline. In addition, adjustments and reconciliations to this data are ongoing. The data HCSC is providing represents our good-faith estimate based on our records to date.

With these caveats, HCSC received between October 1, 2013 and April 15, 2014, approximately 830,000 applications across our five states, comprised of approximately 600,000 on-exchange and 230,000 off-exchange applications. We estimate that these 830,000 applications represent coverage for just over 1.2 million applicants.

In the written copy of my opening statement we provided a snapshot of our current first-month payment rate. As you can see, January through April look fairly consistent and range from 83 to 93 percent. The payment rates for May are currently less because payments are still coming in and being posted.

HCSC is and always has been committed to improving access to quality of care for all Americans. I thank you on behalf of HCSC for the opportunity to be a part of this important discussion.

REP. MURPHY: I thank the gentleman.

Now Mr. Matheis, you're recognized for five minutes.

DENNIS MATHEIS: Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member DeGette and members of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, thank you for the opportunity to be here today on behalf of Wellpoint.

I am Dennis Matheis, president of the central region and exchange strategy. I am responsible for creating Wellpoint's exchange strategy and overseeing its launch. Prior to my current role, I was president of Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Missouri.

Wellpoint is one of the nation's leading health benefit companies. We believe that our health connects us all. So we focus on being a valued health partner and delivering quality products and services that give members access to the care they need. With nearly 67 million people served by

our affiliated companies, including nearly 37 million enrolled in our family of health plans, we can make a real difference to meet the needs of our diverse constituents.

We are an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. We serve members as the Blue Cross licensee for California and as the Blue Cross and Blue Shield licensee for Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Missouri, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Virginia and Wisconsin. In most of these service areas, our plans do business as Anthem Blue Cross, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Georgia, and Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield, or Empire Blue Cross. We also serve customers in other states through our Amerigroup and CareMore subsidiaries.

Wellpoint is currently operating in the Federally Facilitated Exchange, which includes Georgia, Indiana, Maine, Missouri, New Hampshire, Ohio, Virginia and Wisconsin. We also participate in several state-based exchanges, including California, Colorado, Connecticut, Kentucky, New York and Nevada. While there is no doubt that implementation of the exchanges presents a complex and daunting undertaking, we believe we've been able to apply our knowledge and experience to make the system work better for our members. We are seeing strong membership growth and large percentages of our newly enrolled customers are successfully paying their premiums by the due date.

Our most important priority through all of the complexity of ACA implementation is to ensure that our members receive the best possible care. Working closely and collaboratively with the physician community, our innovative programs -- from new payment models to telehealth solutions to sophisticated data analytics that arm physicians with better information -- we are creating value for our members, for physicians, and for the health care system. We are proud of the work we are doing to transform health care.

Wellpoint was pleased to provide the committee last month with enrollment data from October 1st, 2013 through April 15th, 2014 for states where we participate in the Federally Facilitated Exchange. As we stated to the committee at the time of submission, this data is not final and only represents a snap-shot in time. The data included enrollees whose policies have effective dates of April 1st, May 1st, and June 1st, which means that premiums for such policies would not be due until April 10th, May 10th and June 10th, respectively. Also, the reported enrollment and premium payment data is subject to adjustments. For examples, enrollees may elect to drop their coverage, elect to change the effective date of their coverage after submission of their application, or continue to enroll through special enrollment periods.

In response to the committee's request, we submitted the total number of applications received for enrollment in the Federally Facilitated Exchange during the period October 1, 2013 through April 15, 2014.

The percentage of applications that have paid a premium will differ depending on whether the percentage is calculated based on the total number of applications and premium payments received during this entire period, roughly, 70 percent, or is calculated based on the total number of applications and premium payments received for policies whose premium deadline has passed, ranging up to 90 percent, depending on the state.

Wellpoint feels privileged to be able to serve our growing community of members. We take great pride in transforming health care with trusted, caring, creative and innovative solutions. I thank the committee for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of Wellpoint and look forward to your questions.

REP. MURPHY: Thank you. (Inaudible) -- record all the witnesses did not go over time and we'll make sure we fill in the gaps here with what was not been provided to us and see if we can get some information. Do any of you -- particularly from the insurance companies, do any of you have -- I'm recognizing myself for five minutes, by the way -- have any data among those people who have subscribed is if the cost they're paying for their overall health insurance plan is more, less or the same as they were paying in a previous year? Mr. Wingle, does your -- do you keep that data?

MR. WINGLE: I don't have that data available.

REP. MURPHY: Mr. Evanko, do you know if your -- if your plan has that?

MR. EVANKO: I don't have specific figures to share. I can try to provide some context -- (inaudible).

REP. MURPHY: Would you submit it for the record? Mr. Rodgers, Mr. Matheis, do your plans keep that record of what people paid in a previous year versus what they're paying now?

MR. : No. I haven't looked.

REP. MURPHY: Thank you. And of those who have signed up for insurance, do any of your companies ask for -- have any data if people were among those who had lost their insurance -- that is, their insurance was cancelled because (of change ?) in the Affordable Care Act? Any of you from insurance companies -- any of you have that data?

MR. : We currently do not have that information available.

REP. MURPHY: OK. And all right. Thank you. So we don't know if the people who were signing up for these health insurance plans are people who are renewing insurance, had lost insurance or never had insurance. Am I correct? Mr. Wingle, Mr. Evanko, Mr. Rodgers, Matheis? OK.

MR. : That's correct.

REP. MURPHY: I know -- I know Secretary Sebelius said that she didn't think we had that data either. Mr. Wingle, your chief executive, Mark Bertolini, said that premium rates in 2015 will range from very low single digits to some that will be over double digits. Can consumers expect this for their 2015 premiums?

MR. WINGLE: It's important to recognize, first of all, that we're at the start of the rate filing and approval process. So we're very early in the process of establishing those rates and submitting them to state regulators for approval and review. Our rates, it's also important to understand, reflect a number of key factors, most importantly the benefits covered by the plans we're filing, the population covered by those plans and the underlying health care costs and the geographies where those plans are offered. There will be some variability across geography and depending on those circumstances.

REP. MURPHY: So some might face double digit increases -- we don't know yet, you're saying?

MR. WINGLE: I can't say for certain whether some will pay double digits, single digits or no increase at all. It's too early to say.

REP. MURPHY: If there's no increase in insurance we should all celebrate because I'm not sure that has existed in my lifetime. Will there -- will there be decreases?

MR. WINGLE: It's hard to say. It'll vary by geography and ratings.

REP. MURPHY: All right. Mr. Matheis, you announced your quarterly earnings and noted that if the ramp-up in the fee (of ?) government is charging insurers under the health care law would impact marketplace premiums next year. What can consumers expect?

MR. MATHEIS: So similar to my colleague's comment, we are in the process of developing our rates now for the 138 rating regions in which we do business across the 14 states. So I don't have exact numbers yet, Chairman, in terms of what our rate increases are going to be. Certainly, inputs into that are the experience that we're developing through the population that we're serving, the expected medical trend that's going to occur and then the fees and taxes that occur through the ACA and through state and other federal constructs. That all goes into the rate construct process.

REP. MURPHY: I think I'm going down the same hole with each of you so let me cut to the chase. The bottom line here is you do get -- for risk corridors you do get some money back from the federal

government to balance out some of the -- your costs -- am I correct -- with each plan? Mr. Evanko, is that true?

MR. EVANKO: The risk corridors, as you know, sir, are part of the three R's. We at Cigna Corporation are not expecting a material receivable or a payable as it relates to risk corridors.

REP. MURPHY: My point is that as we're looking at this data, and we'll continue to monitor and we recognize some of this is still preliminary, based upon who has signed up and what their health care costs are -- for example, if we don't reach -- if you don't reach the 40 percent number that the president -- (inaudible) -- people between 18 and 35 and mostly those who've signed up have been the older and sicker, then that's going to have an impact upon your plan costs. Am I correct, Mr. Rodgers?

MR. RODGERS: Could you restate that question?

REP. MURPHY: That if people who have signed up are not the young healthy invincibles but are, indeed, the older folks who have pre- existing conditions and other health care costs that you're going to have to face some sort of an increase in premiums. Am I correct?

MR. RODGERS: Well, as two of my colleagues have said, the rates that we filed for 2015 haven't been finalized yet but those will reflect -- (inaudible).

REP. MURPHY: I understand. Anticipating -- you've been in the business for a while. And the federal government does provide some funds for you to help balance these out. Am I correct? Federal money comes to you to help (as ?) the risk corridors and you have other people there who -- the increased costs go up. Am I correct?

MR. RODGERS: The three R's program does exist to provide some guardrails. We have not --

REP. MURPHY: Right. But over time that amount of money from the federal government will decline. Am I correct?

MR. RODGERS: Some of those programs are traditional -- transitional and one is permanent.

REP. MURPHY: I understand. But we're going to -- we'll get back to this. Thank you. I yield and recognize Ms. DeGette for five minutes.

REP. DEGETTE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Last week, the majority Republicans on this committee put out a report stating that only 67 percent of the people who signed up for insurance through the state and federal marketplaces had paid their first month's premiums and then had a big press blitz about that, saying that "Obamacare" had once again failed. So I kind of want to walk some of you through that allegation and see how true it is. I want to start with you, Mr. Matheis.

I believe that the press reports I've seen -- the reports from the administration show that through the end of March, which was the deadline, about 8.1 people enrolled through either the federal or state exchanges. Is that correct, to your knowledge?

MR. MATHEIS: Did you mean 8.1 million?

REP. DEGETTE: Yes.

MR. MATHEIS: Yes.

REP. DEGETTE: And --

MR. MATHEIS: I have -- I have the same source of data that you do have -- (inaudible).

REP. DEGETTE: That's fine. Now, in your -- in your testimony you said that the data used in that Republican analysis, quote, "included enrollees whose policies have effective dates of April 1, May 1 and June 1." Is that correct?

MR. MATHEIS: Yes.

REP. DEGETTE: And that's about 3 million out of 8 million people -- about 40 percent. Is that correct?

MR. MATHEIS: Again, since we didn't enroll all 8 million people I can't attest to that question or not.

REP. DEGETTE: But -- okay. Well, I will say what I've seen is it's about 3 million out of 8 million. Now, so the 3 million people who enrolled -- or let me just say the people who enrolled in March they had coverage in general that began no earlier than May 1. Is that right?

MR. MATHEIS: If you enrolled in March you would have potentially an effective date, depending on what day of the month you enrolled in, could be April 1st, could have been May 1st.

REP. DEGETTE: May 1st. And so those people's premiums were not due until at the earliest the end of April. Is that correct? If you enrolled March 31st your premiums were due at the end of April or later, right?

MR. MATHEIS: To help facilitate members enrolling what we have done at Wellpoint is actually extended the payment period 10 days beyond the last day of -- (inaudible).

REP. DEGETTE: So it could -- it could be April 30th or it could even be later, correct?

MR. MATHEIS: So an April 1st --

REP. DEGETTE: Yes or no will work.

MR. MATHEIS: An April 1st effective --

REP. DEGETTE: Right.

MR. MATHEIS: -- could actually have until May 10th to pay their premium.

REP. DEGETTE: OK. Now, Mr. Matheis, let me ask you, your testimony said for Wellpoint ACA policies whose deadline for paying premiums has passed about 90 percent have paid their premiums. Is that correct?

MR. MATHEIS: So our data in our --

REP. DEGETTE: You can say yes or no. That's what your testimony said.

MR. MATHEIS: Yes. So it --

REP. DEGETTE: OK. Now, that's more than 67 percent. Is that correct?

MR. MATHEIS: Last time I looked, yeah, it's greater than 67.

REP. DEGETTE: OK. Now, Mr. Wingle, let me -- let me take you off the hot seat, Mr. Matheis. Mr. Wingle, I want to ask you, Aetna has shown of the -- of the 5 (hundred) to 600 enrollees who have paid about 85 percent up until March paid their premiums. Is that correct?

MR. WINGLE: Our range is in the low to mid-80s month to month.

REP. DEGETTE: OK. And that's also more than 67 percent, isn't it?

MR. WINGLE: Empirically, yes.

REP. DEGETTE: Yes. And Mr. Rodgers, let me ask you, for your company the ACA payment policies whose premium payment deadlines have passed about 83 to 85 percent of them have paid their premiums. Is that correct?

MR. RODGERS: Except for the most recent months.

REP. DEGETTE: Right. The ones whose payment -- the deadlines have passed.

MR. RODGERS: Yes. That is correct.

REP. DEGETTE: Yes. And that's also more than 67 percent, isn't it?

MR. RODGERS: That is more than 67.

REP. DEGETTE: Yes.

So what I wanted to ask about is, do any of you expect to see substantially lower payment percentages than you saw historically before the latest enrollment? Mr. Matheis?

MR. MATHEIS: So I will give a little context. My --

REP. DEGETTE: OK, I need a yes or no. I don't have much time. I'm sorry. Do you expect to see it go down to 67 percent for April?

MR. MATHEIS: I don't think we have enough information to know exactly where it's going to be.

REP. DEGETTE: OK. Well, Mr. Rodgers, let me ask you this question then. Mr. Upton said that he thinks suddenly maybe they won't pay for their enrollment in March. So I wanted to kind of go through because you've got a nice chart in your testimony and it shows that the payments month by month that people made when they enrolled. So for 1/1/2014 on the exchange, 85 percent of the people, is that correct?

MR. RODGERS: That's correct.

REP. DEGETTE: For 2/1/2014, 86 percent paid, correct?

MR. RODGERS: That's correct.

REP. DEGETTE: For 3/1/2014, 88 percent paid. Is that correct?

MR. RODGERS: Yes.

REP. DEGETTE: And for 4/1/2014, 83 percent paid. Is that correct?

MR. RODGERS : That is correct.

REP. DEGETTE: And you're still waiting for everybody else to pay because their deadline has not passed yet. Is that correct?

MR. RODGERS : That's correct.

REP. DEGETTE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

REP. MURPHY: Can I just ask a follow-up clarifying question? When she asked about historical data, were you referring to the last couple of months or comparison with previous years under a different plan?

REP. DEGETTE: Well, we didn't have an exchange --

REP. MURPHY: No, no, I just --

REP. DEGETTE: Mr. Chairman, we only just got the exchange --

REP. MURPHY: No, I wasn't sure if you meant under historical -- you mean previous years of plan versus just the exchange.

REP. DEGETTE: No, Mr. Chairman, what I mean is, since the ACA was implemented starting on October 1.

REP. MURPHY: Thank you. I just wanted clarification on that. I now recognize Ms. Blackburn for five minutes.

REPRESENTATIVE MARSHA BLACKBURN (R-TN): Thank you all so much for being with us. I want to stay with this issue on the premiums because we get asked about this a lot. So Mr. Wingle, Aetna. Your CEO said that premium increases will vary over 17 states and encompass 132 rating areas, correct?

MR. WINGLE: That is correct.

REP. BLACKBURN: OK. Can you identify where premiums will decrease in 2015? What identification can you place on that?

MR. WINGLE: At this point in the filing season we can't offer any guidance on or speculate on where they're going to fall. We're still gathering the information on file.

REP. BLACKBURN: None?

MR. WINGLE: I can't say none, I can't (ph 2:30) say any.

REP. BLACKBURN: OK. Mr. Matheis, can you tell me -- identify any states where you are offering products in the exchanges where consumers can expect a premium decrease?

MR. MATHEIS: At this juncture we do not have the information.

REP. BLACKBURN: You don't have the information?

MR. MATHEIS: No. The filing rates are due starting in late May into June, and so we have not computed yet with any certainty what the actual rates are going to look like in our 138 rating regions.

REP. BLACKBURN: OK, a lot of uncertainty floating around out there. OK, Mr. Evanko?

MR. EVANKO: I would echo my colleague's comments. We're in the process of making decisions. Some decisions on certain assumptions are made but most assumptions are still to be determined.

REP. BLACKBURN: So you don't know if your consumers are going to see any decreases. You know, they were promised decreases through the Affordable Care Act. So OK, Mr. Rodgers, to you.

MR. RODGERS: As the company's marketing officer, I can tell you I'm not involved in rate-setting but I'm aware of some of the deadlines we're facing, which are generally toward the end of --

REP. BLACKBURN: OK, well, let me ask you all this then. Have any of you conducted any internal analysis of what your organization's premiums are going to look like in 2015? Do any of you have any internal analysis? Raise your hand for me. So you all have conducted no -- we've got some of our

nation's biggest insurers and you have done no internal analysis on what the trend line is for these premiums. None? Oh, Mr. Evanko, have at it.

MR. EVANKO: I'd like to just clarify our comments here a little bit, at least my comments as it relates to this issue. The decisions related to this are very complicated and they impact each individual a little bit differently because of where someone's located, maybe what their APTC eligibility is, et cetera. There's a long list of reasons.

REP. BLACKBURN: Right. We understand that. You're talking about a 2,300-page law that became about -- over 20,000 pages of rules and regulations and we know this changes daily. We appreciate the predicament that you are in. We also appreciate the predicament that our constituents find themselves in, and it is baffling that we can have some of our nation's largest insurers and you all don't have any internal analysis as to what these rates are -- I thought that, reading your reports, you all did analysis and trend lines for the near term, the midterm and the long term, and you look at what the expectations were so that your stakeholders would all be aware of what was happening within that market.

You know, has anybody done any kind of analysis? Yes, please, have it, Mr. Matheis. Your mic, please.

MR. MATHEIS: So analysis is typically ongoing in our organization. Rate development typically takes three to six months to occur once you have credible information. So just for context purposes we, I mean as has been stated earlier --

REP. BLACKBURN: OK, let me --

MR. MATHEIS: in this meeting -- let me finish.

REP. BLACKBURN: OK, go ahead.

MR. MATHEIS: We are just now understanding what membership we have attracted, and so the work is ongoing but it has not been finalized. That's the important point.

REP. BLACKBURN: What has been prepared for your CEO? Any of you.

MR. MATHEIS: At this juncture we do not have a compiled package to sit down and say, here's what we believe a rate is going to be in any of our 138 rate --

REP. BLACKBURN: OK, when do you expect to have that?

MR. MATHEIS: Typically it will be towards the end of this month as rates need to be filed in our states starting end of May through the June, July time period.

REP. BLACKBURN: Would you submit that to us for the record, each of you. Do you agree to submit this for the record so that we will have this?

MR. : Representative, I want to concur with my colleague. We are constantly analyzing our exchange experience. This is a new population. We don't have a long claims record or history we have from -- we had in the previous markets. So the more data we get the better, and more confident we feel as we propose rates. It's an ongoing analysis --

REP. BLACKBURN: OK, we appreciate that and we would like to have that analysis and the information you have as you get it and ask that you please stay in touch with us and do those orderly insertions for the record. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

REP. MURPHY: The gentlelady yields back. I now recognize Mr. Dingell for five minutes.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN DINGELL (D-MI): Mr. Chairman, I thank you for your courtesy, I thank you for the hearing. I am pleased the committee is examining the first open enrollment period under the Affordable Care Act. I would like to examine the staff report where it claims only 67 percent of "Obamacare" enrollees have paid their first month's premium. We want to find out whether that's so and what it means.

The bottom line, I think, is ACA is working. After a turbulent start we got the Web site up and running and HHS now reports that 8 million people have selected plans through the exchanges. Furthermore, some 4.8 million people are enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP and that number would be much higher if all 50 states chose to expand Medicaid.

CBO estimates that another 5 million people purchased ACA- compliant plans outside the marketplaces. Finally, Gallup just found that the percentage of Americans who do not have health insurance fell to 13.4 percent, down from some 18 percent one year ago. So let's examine and see what goes on.

This question to Mr. Matheis, and yes or no, if you please. When Wellpoint turned over enrollment figures to the majority, you did this under the caveat that the data was not final and only represented a snapshot in time. Is that correct?

MR. MATHEIS: Yes, it is.

REP. DINGELL: Yes?

MR. MATHEIS: Yes.

REP. DINGELL: Now, this question again to you, Mr. Matheis. And that is because the committee only requested data through April 15, 2014. Is that correct?

MR. MATHEIS: Yes, it is.

REP. DINGELL: Now Mr. Matheis, is it correct that the people who signed up after May 15 may not have to pay their premium until later in April, May or even June? Yes or no.

MR. MATHEIS: Is there anybody after April 15th would have --

REP. DINGELL: That's folks who signed up after March 15.

MR. MATHEIS: Yes.

REP. DINGELL: Now Mr. Matheis, is it correct that nearly 90 percent of Wellpoint's customers whose premium deadline has passed have already paid their first month's premium? Yes or no.

MR. MATHEIS: Yes, it is.

REP. DINGELL: Now, in your experience have you found that people are more likely to make their premium payment right before the deadline?

MR. MATHEIS: That is typically human nature, sir.

REP. DINGELL: And we know that from the behavior of Americans with regard to income tax, things like that. Now this question is for Mr. Wingle of Aetna. Is it correct that according to your best estimate roughly 80 percent of Aetna beneficiaries who reached their payment due date have paid their first months premium? Yes or no.

MR. WINGLE: Month to month, it ranges from the low to mid-80s.

REP. DINGELL: Say that again.

MR. WINGLE: It ranges from the low to mid-80s month by month.

REP. DINGELL: Thank you.

Now, this question for you, Mr. Coyne, of Blue Cross Blue Shield. Is it correct that according to your best estimate, 80 to 85 percent of the individuals buying Blue Cross Blue Shield plans through the marketplace have paid their first month's premiums? Yes or no?

MR. COYNE: Yes, that is correct.

REP. DINGELL: I'm not hearing you, sir.

MR. COYNE: Yes, that is correct based on a report --

REP. DINGELL: That's correct. Now, gentlemen, it doesn't take I think a genius or an atomic physicist to figure out the numbers we just heard from the actual insurance companies greatly differ from the staff report. I hope everyone will take these companies at their word instead of falling for smoke and mirrors from my friends on the other side of the aisle. I can understand why my friends on the other side of the aisle are not in attendance because they would get a very unpleasant taste of fact which they might not like. My old daddy taught me, he used to say to me, son, figures don't lie. But liars can figure.

And I've always thought that it would be a good thing when this committee does its business that we know what we're doing, that we deal in hard facts so that when the legislation that we work on, the laws that we are dealing with, the oversight in which we engage, actually leads to truth and correct response so that public policies may be founded on fact rather than fiction and on staff reports that mislead all. I would suggest that the staff report should be reviewed with the utmost of care and deposited then very carefully in the nearest large wastebasket. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. MURPHY: The gentleman yields back. I'll now recognize the vice chair of the committee, Mr. Burgess, or Dr. Burgess, for five minutes.

REPRESENTATIVE MICHAEL BURGESS (R-TX): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for the recognition. I remind the chairman emeritus that we are friends. Let me ask you a question. April 17th, the day the president came out with his mission accomplished speech at the White House in the press briefing, there was a briefing of executives of your companies, is that correct? Anyone is free to answer. Well, Mr. Coyne, let me --

MR. COYNE: I believe that was correct, sir.

REP. BURGESS: And was your company represented?

MR. MATHEIS: I'm not sure which particular meeting you're describing but I know there have been some.

REP. BURGESS: Well, let me give you the particular meeting. It was on April the 17th, at 1:35 p.m. The president and vice president meet with insurance executives in the Roosevelt Room. Did that meeting take place?

MR. MATHEIS: Wellpoint was present at that meeting, sir.

REP. BURGESS: Wellpoint was present. Was Cigna present?

MR. EVANKO: Our CEO was not present at that meeting.

REP. BURGESS: Was not, OK.

MR. WINGLE: I'm advised that our CEO was not present at that meeting.

REP. BURGESS: That was Blue Cross?

MR. WINGLE: That's Aetna for me.

REP. BURGESS: Was Blue Cross represented at the meeting?

MR. COYNE: I don't have that information right now.

REP. BURGESS: Well, for those that were --

MR. PRATT: Just for the record, I'm advised that AHIP's president was present at the meeting.

MR. COYNE: And I don't -- I can't remember the exact date of those meetings but I can tell you that when we're called to the White House, generally we would attempt to be there.

REP. BURGESS: It was April 17th. I mean, I would think you'd remember. It's a pretty big deal. I mean, I haven't had a meeting with the president and the vice president.

REP. DEGETTE: Will the gentleman yield? Perhaps -- (inaudible) -- there.

REP. BURGESS: No, I will not. My time is -- my time is limited. What I would like from those that answered affirmatively, Mr. Matheis and Mr. Pratt, can you provide us information as to what was covered in that meeting? Who made the presentation, how long it was and was there in fact time for there to be question-and-answer or was it simply a presentation to you from the president and vice president.

MR. MATHEIS: Mr. Congressman, I was not personally present at that meeting. Our CEO was and I do not know the facts of the meeting.

REP. BURGESS: Would you make an attempt to answer for me those questions? Was in fact -- was this an interactive process or was this a proclamation? Was it a monologue or was it a dialogue? And then, Mr. Pratt, if you would provide us that information as well. And here's the deal. I mean, why am I making -- why am I making a big deal of this? You all are here today because the White House won't respond to us.

And I would think if it was possible for the White House to provide a briefing to your executives on April 17th, that same person could be made available to this committee and be prepared to answer our questions. I don't see what is so difficult about that. If the news is as great as everyone has said it is this morning, I think that they would welcome the opportunity to come to our committee and give us the information that we're asking for.

So one of the questions that I raised in the opening statement, and I do want your answers on this because it is important, this 90- day grace period and the coverage that can't be cancelled during that 90-day grace period because of nonpayment, is there any way for any of your individual companies to keep up with that information on a rolling basis and keep your providers informed as to the status of a person's payment or nonpayment of their premium? Start with you, Mr. Coyne, and let's just work down the table.

MR. COYNE: We're working with Blue Plans to inform providers of the enrollee status, as you indicated.

REP. BURGESS: Mr. Wingle?

MR. WINGLE: Yes. We do have a unique identifier for our exchange membership on the I.D. card and we do provide updates on the member's payment status in our physician information centers. So when the physician offices call or the provider calls, they understand what the payment status is of the member.

REP. BURGESS: Mr. Evanko?

MR. EVANKO: Our doctors and our hospitals that are servicing the customers have the ability to call or check online the status of the individual's payment grace period situation.

REP. BURGESS: And Mr. Rodgers, would that even pertain to you?

MR. RODGERS: Yes, similarly we have electronic means as well as a telephone service as well, providers of various types of verified coverage.

REP. BURGESS: And Mr. Matheis?

MR. MATHEIS: Yes, we provide the same service.

REP. BURGESS: And what I would ask of each of you is will you make available to the committee the type of information and how it is transferred to your providers, your doctors and hospitals when they call for that information.

And then, Mr. Chairman, further I'd like to ask unanimous consent, when the secretary was here in December, the secretary of Health and Human Services, after that hearing, I submitted a letter to the secretary with several questions that I wanted answered. They have not been answered to date. I am going to ask those same questions of our insurance representatives today. I'm going to ask those in writing and I would appreciate your response to those questions that the secretary was unwilling to answer.

REP. DEGETTE: Reserving the right to object, I would just point out that the secretary was here in front of this committee testifying three times last year and if there's questions she has not answered, we certainly will be happy to work with the majority and get those questions answered. I'll withdraw my reservation.

REP. MURPHY: Well, the members do have the right to submit questions for --

REP. BURGESS: And I will be submitting those questions in writing for our panel. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. MURPHY: Mr. Green, you're now recognized for five minutes.

REPRESENTATIVE GENE GREEN (D-TX): Thank you, Chairman Murphy and Ranking Member DeGette, for having this hearing today and our wittiness for their testimony. Our district in Texas is a very urban district in Houston and has one of the highest rates of uninsured people who don't receive insurance through their employer in the country.

One of the other talking points that my Republican colleagues have seized upon last year, especially when the healthcare.gov was encountering problems early in the enrollment period, was the idea that fewer people would have health insurance following the implementation of the Affordable Care Act than did beforehand. Now, I know that all our representatives here today see that the information of how many people enrolled and their total number of customers are proprietary. And I understand that.

But you all also I would hope are familiar with the general insurance landscape and how it's changed under the Affordable Care Act. Earlier this week, the Gallup Poll released a survey examining the total number of Americans that have insurance. Mr. Pratt, are you familiar with that survey?

MR. PRATT: Generally, yes.

REP. GREEN: The Gallup Poll conducted interviews with 14,000 American adults. Gallop found that the number of adults without insurance had dropped to its lowest level since the beginning of 2008.

A drop of this magnitude correlates to more than 11 million people gaining coverage. Are you familiar enough with the poll to say that that sounds like a reasonable amount?

MR. PRATT: Congressman, I think that's what they reported. I'm not in a position to say whether that's a reasonable amount or not.

REP. GREEN: OK, OK. Anyone else on the panel want to talk about that Gallup poll, because, you know, again, these are -- these are what we're seeing and since the enrollment period ended. RAND and the Urban Institute released similar reports in March and April. Are any of you familiar with these reports.

MR. : I'm not familiar with the reports.

REP. GREEN: OK.

Well, in early April, Rand Corporation released the results of their poll, which found overall number of Americans with insurance had grown to 9.3 million as of mid-March, even before the late enrollment date surge.

The Urban Institute also released a report in the past month suggesting that millions more people have coverage than before the ACA was implemented.

My question of any of our witnesses: Would you agree that the findings of these, whether it be Rand, Gallup or the Urban Institute, are consistent with millions of Americans signing up for health insurance? Did y'all experience that with your companies during the sign-up that they selected your company as part of the -- if you happened to be part of the exchange, both national or the state exchanges?

MR. : Congressman, we do not have at one point -- we do not have enough information at this point to know how many uninsured are actually among the enrollees because that data is -- we just don't have access to that data at this point.

REP. GREEM: OK. Well, generally the ACA has led to a huge increase in coverage. Even without the polls, we've seen some of the numbers. And is that -- can you verify that with your companies, whether it be Wellpoint, Blue Cross? Have you seen that increase in the number of people who have signed up with your companies since the deadline?

MR. RODGERS: Speaking for Health Care Service Corporation, I've provided in my written testimony as well as in my opening comments the number of people that we signed up on and off exchanges during the open enrollment period. I can't tell you today how many of those came from the ranks of the uninsured or from our competitors or either from a prior policy with one of our five Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans, but we're certainly happy to have the membership.

REP. GREEN: OK. Well, and we understand the -- there were people who were using the websites and the national exchange to shop. And I had some companies who said, I'm a small business, I encourage -- in fact I have a number of them in my area. He said, we have actually helped our employees sign up individually because, you know, you have 10 employees -- they weren't required but the actually used it. So -- and I know that's an analogy but I've heard that from a lot of my employers.

Now, I know my Republican colleagues with the missed data from these polls that -- anything that comes through the administration on the overall sign-up. In March, Speaker Boehner said that there were less people today with health insurance than there were before this law went into effect, I think not even basing on a poll. Would y'all agree that there are more people in -- that have health insurance now, let's say, since May 1st than we had before the ACA?

MR. : I can't speak to numbers on that enrollment.

REP. : I don't know how my colleagues continue to make unfounded claims in the face of the clear evidence that the Affordable Care Act is providing millions of Americans with health care coverage. It makes me wonder what would possibly convince them that millions of Americans have gained coverage under the law. I suspect that ultimately once the information becomes so indisputable it will -- maybe will change the subject and rather concede that clearly people have health insurance as a result of the ACA.

And having served many years in Congress and even before that in the state legislature in Texas, no law Congress ever passes is perfect. That's not how our forefathers created this system. So we do need to go back, like our ranking member said, and see what we can do to fix the ACA. And I appreciate y'all's efforts to help us do that once we get to that point.

And I'll yield back my time.

REP. MURPHY: The gentleman yields back.

Now recognize Mr. Griffith of Virginia for five minutes.

REPRESENTATIVE MORGAN GRIFFITH (R-VA): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all for being here.

Ms. Blackburn asked you earlier for a show of hands; I'm going to do the same. If your company anticipates a reduction for the average family that you ensure of $2,500 or more, would you raise your hand? (Pause.)

If your company anticipates a reduction in premium of $2,000 per average family for your subscribers, raise your hand. (Pause.)

Same for $1,500. (Pause.)

All right. I appreciate that.

When will your companies submit their rates to the administration for 2015? Do y'all have a date that you're going to do that by? Yes?

MR. : I believe the rates are due by -- toward the end of June. I believe it's June 27th. I think that some of the states are a little bit ahead of that.

REP. GRIFFITH: All right. And do you know when those will become public?

MR. : Depending on the market, sir, that will vary, depending on the states.

REP. GRIFFITH: All right. And when you submit those to the administration, will you commit today to submitting those rates to us as well?

MR. : I'm not involved in the rate submission process, but to the extent that's possible -- I'll need to talk with our company representatives about that.

REP. GRIFFITH: Well, I certainly can't see how it would be illegal to share information with the United States Congress, but --

MR. : (Inaudible.)

REP. GRIFFITH: But if possible you will do it, Mr. Rodgers?

MR. RODGERS: I need to confirm with our actuaries who are involved with the rate filing process because I'm not --

MR. : We're happy to work with this committee as long -- as long as the rates remain proprietary until they do become public and then all of our competitors see them.

REP. GRIFFITH: All right. That's certainly fair.

Any others? Mr. Wingle?

MR. WINGLE: I'd have to take that under advisement about how we share rates.

REP. GRIFFITH: Mr. Evanko?

MR. EVANKO: I'd just say that the rates are very competitively sensitive for obvious reasons, so we want to make sure that it's a level playing field at the time any rates are disclosed.

REP. GRIFFITH: Have either you or anyone in your organizations -- and again, it's for all of you all -- engaged in discussions with the administration already about the 2015 rates?

MR. : Not that I'm aware of

MR. : No.

MR. : Not to my knowledge.

REP. GRIFFITH: Everyone is silent. Does that mean there have been none? Anybody had any discussions with the administration about rates for 2015?

MR. : None that I'm aware of.

REP. GRIFFITH: OK.

MR. : No.

MR. : No.

REP. GRIFFITH: All right. Appreciate that. Thank you very much.

Mr. Pratt, the ACA includes a tax credit for small businesses to purchase health insurance coverage for employees. It also levees a tax on health insurance purchased by small businesses. On the one hand we give the employers a tax credit to make health insurance more affordable, and then we turn around with the other hand and we tax those policies. Does that not seem as an inherent conflict in policy view?

MR. PRATT: Congressman, we've expressed significant concerns with the new tax on small businesses and individuals that total some hundred billion dollars that will largely be passed on to them in the form of higher premiums.

REP. GRIFFITH: And what we're trying to do, of course, is to see if we can't keep premiums down, and ACA -- "Obamacare" has failed to meet its promise of the $2,500 reduction for the average family. That's pretty straightforward, isn't it?

MR. PRATT: Congressman, we do believe that the health insurance tax runs counter to the goal of providing more affordable coverage.

REP. GRIFFITH: And as a part of this, we're actually taxing government itself. We've got federal programs including Medicare Advantage, Medicaid Managed Care. The federal government is in fact taxing itself with the tax that you spoke of earlier through its subsidization of Medicare and in part Medicaid, and then state governments are also having to pay the tax. Do you have any idea how

much that tax is on the American people? You said a hundred billion (dollars) in increase, but how much for the federal and state governments?

MR. PRATT: Congressman, I don't have that information handy, but we did commission a study by Oliver Wyman that does break out that information in more detail, including on a state-by-state basis, and we'd be happy to make that available.

REP. GRIFFITH: All right. I'd appreciate that if you would.

Also in your testimony you write that insurers have many duplicate enrollments because of the problems with healthcare.gov. And I can tell you that we had that in both -- I've heard it from constituents and in our family. Apparently we didn't push the right button the first time around -- I say we; my wife did it all. I don't want to take on any assumptions that it was us doing it. It was my wife working over the computer for hours and hours, but actually submitted several different applications -- ended up with one. How widespread is that problem for citizens out there, and is that part of the confusion between whether or not people have paid their premiums or not?

MR. PRATT: Congressman, the challenge you referred to I think was presented as a result of the problems with the website and the technology. And anecdotally we have heard from our members about a number of duplicate enrollments. I don't have an order of magnitude on that other than to note that it has been a problem and an issue.

REP. GRIFFITH: All right. I appreciate that.

And Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

REP. MURPHY: The gentleman yields back.

Now recognize Ms. Schakowsky for five minutes.

REPRESENTATIVE JAN SCHAKOWSKY (D-IL): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This morning the Democratic committee staff released a memorandum on the amazing number of distortions and false claims that Republicans have made about the Affordable Care Act. It's a deplorable record. Virtually every major prediction or claim made by the Republicans about the ACA since 2009 turned out to be wrong.

Today we have the benefit of hearing from some of the companies that are actually working on the Affordable Care Act in the real world. These companies were not the biggest supporters of the law. They still oppose many provisions, but they do not live in the Republican echo chamber. They live in the real world, and I hope they can provide some clarity on a few questions.

The first question I have for all of you is whether the ACA is a government takeover of health care. Republicans have made that claim I don't know how many times. By one count the phrase appeared on Speaker Boehner's website 90 different places. It's mentioned on the RNC, Republican National Committee, website 200 times. Days before Affordable Care Act's passage in 2010, then-House Minority Leader John Boehner's office wrote that, quote, "Democrats have opted for a government takeover of health care."

So, Mr. Wingle, the ACA is now in effect.

Has the government nationalized Aetna, or is it still a for-profit corporation?

MR. WINGLE: We are a publicly traded for-profit corporation.

REP. SCHAKOWSKY: And Mr. Evanko, what about you? Has Cigna been taken over by the federal government?

MR. EVANKO: No. We're a for-profit organization.

REP. SCHAKOWSKY: Mr. Rodgers, Mr. Matheis, have your companies been nationalized, or are they still non-profits?

MR. RODGERS: We're a not-for-profit mutual legal reserve company.

MR. MATHEIS: We're actually a for-profit organization.

REP. SCHAKOWSKY: Oh, you're for-profit.

MR. MATHEIS: Yes.

REP. SCHAKOWSKY: Sorry. (Laughs.)

Mr. Pratt, you work for the trade group that represents the private insurance industry. Is there still a private insurance industry, or has the industry been destroyed or taken over by the government, as Republicans predicted?

MR. PRATT: There is still a private industry, and we represent many of those companies.

REP. SCHAKOWSKY: Thank you.

Republicans also questioned whether the private health insurance -- whether private health insurance would even exist in 2014. In 2010, Senator Coburn said, quote, "There will be no insurance industry left in three years," and that, quote, "private health insurance will be dead in three years," unquote.

I should note that nearly four years have passed since that statement was made. Mr. Pratt, is the private industry, health industry, dead?

MR. PRATT: Representative, no.

REP. SCHAKOWSKY: Does anybody else on the panel believe that private industry has disappeared? Private insurance industry. Thank you.

Republicans have also claimed that Americans will no longer be able to see their doctors because of the ACA. Mr. Wingle, does your company health care plan -- do the plans cover physician care?

MR. WINGLE: They do.

REP. SCHAKOWSKY: And Mr. Evanko, what about you? Does Cigna have doctors in its health care plans?

MR. EVANKO: Yes, we do.

REP. SCHAKOWSKY: Mr. Rodgers, what about HCSC? Do you include doctors in your networks?

MR. RODGERS: Certainly.

REP. SCHAKOWSKY: And Mr. Matheis, what about WellPoint?

MR. MATHEIS: Yes, we cover physician services.

REP. SCHAKOWSKY: Thank you. Thank you very much.

Republicans have claimed that nobody would sign up for coverage. They claim that huge numbers have not paid for coverage. Eight million people have signed up for coverage on the exchanges.

Millions more have coverage outside the exchanges. And each of the insurance companies here today have testified that people have signed up in droves, and upwards of 80 or 90 percent have paid their premiums.

Mr. Chairman, I don't know if there will ever come a day when Republicans will admit their criticisms of the ACA have been unfounded. I think we may have reached a turning point last week when you released your misleading report on the Affordable Care Act enrollment. I think the American public finally realize that Republicans have absolutely no credibility on this issue. You cannot be this wrong this many times and still expect to be taken seriously.

One commentator, Ezra Klein, even gave the Republican behavior a name, "Obamacare" derangement syndrome. He defined it as, and I quote, "the acute inability to see 'Obamacare' as anything but a catastrophic failure that the American people will soon reject. For those suffering from ODS, all bad 'Obamacare' news is good news and all good 'Obamacare' news is spin. In this world, delays of minor provisions in the law prove that the entire structure is collapsing, while surges of millions of people enrolling in insurance don't prove anything at all.

Mr. Chairman, perhaps we can ask our panel of insurers if their policies cover "Obamacare" derangement syndrome. But really that's rhetorical. And I yield back. Thank you.

REP. MURPHY: But it would be important to know if that's a preexisting condition. Then I think it's not coverable.

REP. DEGETTE (?): It would be covered now. Good news, Mr. Chairman. (Laughter.)

REP. MURPHY: Depends what the death panel says, I think. (Laughter.)

Mr. Olson is now recognized for five minutes.

REPRESENTATIVE PETE OLSON (R-TX): I thank the chair.

And welcome to our witnesses.

I wish you weren't here, but you are here. You're here because the administration would not give us the information we need to educate our constituents about "Obamacare" and the rollout of HealthCare.gov.

I want to talk about all of the questions about the back end and the money you're supposed to be getting from the exchange (and ?) the information.

In your experiences, is it working? Mr. Pratt, is the back end working? Do you get what you need from HealthCare.gov?

MR. PRATT: Representative, throughout the open-enrollment period, we worked very closely to develop workarounds, manual processes and other things that were necessary to make the system work better. It's my understanding that while the back-end problems have improved, some remain.

REP. OLSON: Workarounds. You guys stepped up to the plate to work around the disaster of the health care exchange rollout. Is that what you're trying to say? I mean, you guys took it upon yourselves instead of depending on what -- they got information. You depend upon them. And it's sort of trickling out, just coming slowly, slowly, slowly, not what you need. Is that what you're saying? You guys stepped around to make that happen?

MR. PRATT: Representative, I think what I would say is that we kept the interests of our members squarely in mind in terms of minimizing disruption for them. And our members did what was necessary to make sure that it was as soon as it possibly could be.

REP. OLSON: Mr. Coyne?

MR. COYNE: I would agree with Mr. Pratt. There are still back- end issues to be worked through, (but ?) that we are working with CMS on those. CMS has called a meeting of health insurers in the federal marketplace on May 20th to consider some of those back-end issues and try and find solutions to them.

REP. OLSON: I hope you'll keep us apprised of what that meeting puts forth; give us that information, because we're not getting it from the Obama administration.

Mr. Wingle.

MR. WINGLE: We've worked closely to share our concerns about technical needs and helped work with the industry through our trade association with colleagues to recommend and -- recommend prioritization on fixes for back-end issues, whether they're data- cleanup issues or other issues related to the back end of the exchange.

REP. OLSON: Mr. Evanko?

MR. EVANKO: There are certainly more manual processes than we anticipated prior to the exchanges launching. I'd say there have been improvements in some areas. The one back-end issue that we're most focused on is the APTC payments coming from CMS to us as a carrier. That's a manual process today. We have been getting the payments we've been requesting, though, as it relates to the APTC.

REP. OLSON: Manual process; 21st century manual process.

Mr. Rodgers?

MR. RODGERS: We're continuing to work with the enrollment process to make sure that any of the members that have selected one of our five Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans get the information they need from us, and ultimately the care they need.

REP. OLSON: Mr. Matheis.

MR. MATHEIS: Yes, we've seen significant improvement, but we still have a number of opportunities for improvement as we move through the remainder of this year.

REP. OLSON: And one final question for all the panelists. Is the website fixed? Mr. Pratt, if it's not fixed, when will it be fixed?

MR. PRATT: Representative, I don't work in the operations area. I think if the back-end issues are considered part of the website, I would suggest --

REP. OLSON: They are.

MR. PRATT: -- that there are still issues outstanding that we're working on.

REP. OLSON: Not fixed.

Mr. Coyne.

MR. COYNE: There are still issues on the back end.

REP. OLSON: Another one not fixed.

Mr. Wingle.

MR. WINGLE: There's still work to be done.

REP. OLSON: Not fixed.

Mr. Evanko.

MR. EVANKO: I can't comment on the end-to-end process. I can only comment on the component when CMS sends us enrollment transactions. And there's still work to do before that's 100 percent.

REP. OLSON: Not fixed.

Mr. Rodgers.

REP. RODGERS: We're still working with the files that we get. And I think there could be some improvement.

REP. OLSON: Still not fixed.

Mr. Matheis.

MR. MATHEIS: Yes, to echo my colleagues' statements, we still have opportunities for improvement.

REP. OLSON: Six for six, all not fixed.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

REP. MURPHY: (Off mic) -- now recognize Mr. Tonko for five minutes.

REPRESENTATIVE PAUL TONKO (D-NY): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

So much of the debate we have with our Republican colleagues about the Affordable Care Act comes down to one simple question: Is it a good thing for Americans to have access to quality health insurance? You would think this is a simple question. Every Republican member of the committee has health insurance. I'd bet that every pundit who makes a living attacking the ACA has health insurance. They all make certain their children have health insurance. I bet they wouldn't dream of going without it for an extended period of time.

Two big reasons these people make sure they have coverage is that it can help them stay healthy and it can prevent catastrophic medical bills that can lead to financial ruin. But this week we got clear evidence from Massachusetts that health insurance actually saves lives. Researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health looked at mortality rates in Massachusetts and in surrounding states.

My question, Mr. Pratt, is that in 2006 Massachusetts passed major health reform legislation. Is that not correct?

MR. PRATT: Yes, that's correct.

REP. TONKO: And did that coverage expansion bear some significant similarities to the Affordable Care Act, including an individual mandate, expanded Medicaid coverage, and insurance exchanges?

MR. PRATT: Generally, I would say that's fair to say.

REP. TONKO: Thank you. The Harvard researchers found that following health care reform in Massachusetts, mortality rates dropped significantly compared to surrounding states. The death rate from treatable illnesses like cancer and heart disease declined even faster.

These findings are truly remarkable: nearly a 5-percent drop in mortality from preventable illnesses. They found that for every 830 individuals who gained coverage, one life was saved. Extrapolating that onto the national scene, if the trend holds, it means that ACA will save tens of thousands of lives.

I'm not going to ask the witnesses to comment on the specifics of that study, but these witnesses know the value that health insurance provides.

Mr. Matheis, do you have any doubt that your health insurance plans cover life-saving treatments?

MR. MATHEIS: No, they do, sir.

REP. TONKO: Mr. Evanko, what about you? Do you help members access life-saving treatments?

MR. EVANKO: Absolutely.

REP. TONKO: Thank you.

And Mr. Rodgers, Mr. Wingle, what about your plans?

MR. : As a health care company, we are proud of providing consumers with high-quality plans, competitively priced. We're very proud of that.

MR. : Yes, sir, I agree.

REP. TONKO: Thank you for your affirmative answers. Thank you. I think Republicans are really outside of the mainstream when they try to argue that Americans aren't better off if they have health insurance coverage. Their tireless efforts to discourage people from getting covered are truly shameful.

Even more shameful is the refusal of Republican governors and some legislatures to expand the Medicaid program. Doing that would provide millions of Americans with health care coverage. And the Harvard study indicates that doing so would save thousands of lives.

So we thank you for your affirmative answers.

I yield back.

REP. MURPHY: Gentleman yields back.

Now we'll recognize Mr. Gardner for five minutes.

REPRESENTATIVE CORY GARDNER (R-CO): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the witnesses for being here today and your time.

Last year the president apologized for his broken promise -- if you like your plan, you can keep your plan -- after millions of Americans received plan cancellations. I'd like each insurer to reply in turn how many plans did you cancel or discontinue last year because of "Obamacare".

Mr. Coyne.

MR. COYNE: We don't have that information at the association. Individual health plans have that information.

REP. GARDNER: Mr. Wingle.

MR. WINGLE: We can provide that information to the committee.

REP. GARDNER: Could you submit that for the record and by state with the total for all of you?

Mr. Evanko.

MR. EVANKO: Sure, yes.

REP. GARDNER: Do you have the number of the top of your head right now?

MR. EVANKO: I can give you approximations that I've heard.

REP. GARDNER: Sure. That'd be great.

MR. EVANKO: We had approximately 2,000 customers, individual customers, in South Carolina and Connecticut.

REP. GARDNER: Mr. Wingle.

MR. WINGLE: Again, we want to get you the firm data.

REP. GARDNER: OK. Mr. Rodgers.

MR. RODGERS: I don't have that data with me. I think we've provided it to other congressional committees, so we'd certainly be happy --

REP. GARDNER: But that's not a number that you keep on the top of your head?

MR. RODGERS: Not at all.

REP. GARDNER: OK. Mr. Matheis.

MR. MATHEIS: I don't have the number of products off the top of my head, but we'd be happy to provide that --

REP. GARDNER: Yeah, if you could submit for the record by state and with the total, I'd appreciate it.

Then to AHIP, does your organization know how many plan cancellations there were nationwide last year or for your members?

MR. PRATT: Congressman, we would not have that information.

REP. GARDNER: Your -- you don't ask that of your members? They don't provide that to you?

MR. PRATT: To my knowledge, we did not, no.

REP. GARDNER: OK. Mr. Coyne, does your organization know how many member plans were canceled? You don't?

MR. COYNE: We haven't asked for that information either.

REP. GARDNER: In order to avoid these cancellations, some insurers offered early renewal plans so that they could continue into 2014. If each of the insurers could reply in turn how many plans did you offer early renewals to last year that would have been otherwise canceled?

Mr. Matheis.

MR. MATHEIS: We offered early renewals to all of our customers in all 14 states. That was allowable. So California did not allow us to offer early renewal, but in the majority of every other market, we offered it to every customer.

REP. GARDNER: Mr. Rodgers.

MR. RODGERS: We offered early renewals in four of our five states. The Montana plan became part of our larger --

REP. GARDNER: And how many -- how many were those offers -- how many offers were there?

MR. RODGERS: I don't have the number with me, but they're significant numbers, yes.

REP. GARDNER: And could you provide -- all of you provide those for the record and by state, breaking it down, please?

Mr. Evanko.

MR. EVANKO: Yes, we offered early renewal to about 235,000 customers in all states except for Connecticut and South Carolina, as I had testified earlier.

REP. GARDNER: OK. And Mr. Wingle.

MR. WINGLE: We offered early renewals as consistent with state laws and regulations.

REP. GARDNER: OK. Last year president apologized -- President Obama apologized for these canceled plans and offered a one-year delay of enforcing the "Obamacare" requirements that led to the cancelations. This delay has since been extended.

I'd like each insurer to answer, how many plans do you currently offer that do not meet the law's requirements but you are able to continue offering because of this delay?

Mr. Matheis.

MR. MATHEIS: I would have to get you that number, sir. I don't know it off the top of my head.

REP. GARDNER: Mr. Rodgers.

MR. RODGERS: Yeah, I don't know the number.

REP. GARDNER: Mr. Evanko.

MR. EVANKO: I don't know the exact figure either.

REP. GARDNER: Mr. Wingle.

MR. WINGLE: I don't have the hard numbers on the pre-ACA plans.

REP. GARDNER: To AHIP, do you know how many plans your member organizations correctly offer under this delay?

MR. PRATT: Could you please repeat that question?

REP. GARDNER: The question is, the one-year delay of enforcing "Obamacare" requirements that led to the cancellation -- this delay has been extended -- how many plans do you currently offer that do not meet the law's requirements but you're able to continue offering because of this delay?

MR. PRATT: We don't have that information.

REP. GARDNER: (Inaudible) -- that number?

Mr. Coyne.

MR. COYNE: The only information we have has been informally reported to us, and it contains all non-ACA-compliant plans across the Blue system, and that number is 3.2 million.

REP. GARDNER: Mr. Matheis, what happens when those plans -- when the time runs out, when the delay expires?

MR. MATHEIS: So, depending on how the state handles it, with the extension, in theory a customer could sign up for two more years --

REP. GARDNER: What happens after that time expires?

MR. MATHEIS: Then they would be moved to an ACA product.

REP. GARDNER: So that plan would be canceled?

MR. MATHEIS: Yes, sir.

REP. GARDNER: Mr. Rodgers, would that plan be canceled at the end of the time period?

MR. RODGERS: Mr. Matheis' characterization was correct, I believe.

REP. GARDNER: So, yes, that's a cancellation after the time expires.

Mr. Evanko, would those plans be canceled after the time expired?

MR. EVANKO: Based on the current guidance, yes.

REP. GARDNER: Mr. Wingle, would those plans be canceled after the time expires?

MR. WINGLE: Where feasible, we would offer the member an ACA- compliant alternative.

REP. GARDNER: Could you submit the total numbers for all of those plans that would be canceled when the time expires, break it down by state, please? Thank you.

And one of the excuses that we've heard from the supporters of the health care bill is that the law didn't do this, didn't cause the cancellations, that you were the ones who planned the cancellations and planned all the cancellations. Were the massive cancellation notices sent last year the ones the president apologized for -- were these because of "Obamacare" or because of you?

Mr. Matheis.

MR. MATHEIS: The law required us to send out those cancellations.

REP. GARDNER: So "Obamacare" required the cancellations.

Mr. Rodgers.

MR. RODGERS: The law required us to in certain situations --

REP. GARDNER: So "Obamacare" caused and required the cancellations.

Mr. Evanko.

MR. EVANKO: We had such a fraction of our book of business -- that was not offered, early renewals, but that was --

REP. GARDNER: But "Obamacare" required the 2,000 cancellations that you said?

MR. EVANKO: In the two states where we did not offer early renewals.

REP. GARDNER: Mr. Wingle, did "Obamacare" cause the cancellations?

MR. WINGLE: Plans that weren't compliant with the benefit requirements of the law were canceled.

REP. GARDNER: So that's a yes?

MR. WINGLE: That is a yes.

REP. GARDNER: In attempting to pass this law, the president said repeatedly, if you like your plan, you can keep it. Did that turn out to be true for all of your customers?

Mr. --

MR. : No, that was not true for a hundred percent of our customers.

REP. GARDNER: Mr. Rodgers.

REP. : Time's over.

MR. RODGERS: Not for 100 percent.

REP. GARDNER: Mr. Evanko.

MR. EVANKO: For over 99 percent of our customers, that was the case.

REP. GARDNER: Mr. Wingle.

MR. WINGLE: Not in all cases, no.

REP. GARDNER: OK. I appreciate your time, and I yield back.

REP. MURPHY: Thank you.

Now recognize Ms. Castor for five minutes.

REPRESENTATIVE KATHY CASTOR (D-FL): Well, thank you very much, and good morning. And thank you, Mr. Chairman, for calling this hearing to discuss the strong enrollment numbers of the Affordable Care Act. When the enrollment numbers were released last week, coming from the state of Florida, we were floored. About 1 million Floridians signed up under the Affordable Care Act. This far exceeded our expectations. We thought 600,000, 700,000. But get to about a million signed up that doesn't include the about 300,000 children that signed up under children's health insurance or our disabled neighbors, children under Medicaid. And then I learned from our Florida Blue executives Friday -- Florida Blue's the market leader in Florida -- that that million-dollar figure does not include others that signed up for -- with private health insurance companies, so that's -- add on another probably couple hundred thousand.

It's really remarkable, and it has far exceeded our expectations. So I really -- you know, I just think about all of my neighbors all across the state that are breathing easier because now they have financial security in their lives that they did not have before. And I want to thank all of our navigators, the insurance brokers, many of the insurance companies that were out providing information, all of our community outreach partners. You have made a fundamental difference in the lives of millions of Floridians. And it's going to be very meaningful for them and their families.

It's also good news for neighbors that have insurance already. Most people across America already have insurance. And if you have insurance, what you want most of all is that you want other people to have insurance, because the cost of these high premium increases and rates -- rate increases over time were largely caused by this huge uninsured population, and those costs, when they show up at the hospital for health care, they have to be paid somewhere.

So that's what we're hoping then. And we've heard time and time again the scare tactics here, and we will -- we'll see what happens with premium increases. But do we want to go back to the double-digit consistent premium increases of the past? I don't think so. So this is the way that hopefully over time we will be able to stabilize the marketplace.

And I think my colleague Congressman Tonko was right.

I think my Republican friends now are in danger of sounding like they are opposed to people taking personal responsibility and having health insurance. People need to have health insurance to maintain their quality of life, to make sure they don't go bankrupt. And I would hope that my Republican friends could now turn the page and we could get to work on many of the complicated issues with health policy in America.

Now, one of my Republican colleagues' favorite attacks on health care reform is that it will cause people to lose their doctors. Now, you have to say, OK, even in Florida, where you have over a million people now that have -- now have health insurance, they're going to be able to see a doctor, 8 million nationwide. But this is especially bizarre coming from Republicans because they have long opposed any policy proposals to broaden networks. They have fought efforts to increase the reimbursement for primary care providers who serve Medicare and Medicaid patients.

What has been lost in this debate is the fact that the ACA set important new network adequacy standards that guarantee access to key essential community providers. It ensures that no consumer will ever see a huge out-of-network bill if they are taken to an emergency room. And it gives consumers strong appeal rights. It's a huge step forward in patient access. Mr. Pratt, can you give us some context here? Providers and insurance regulatory negotiate rates and determine who will be inside of a network. Isn't that correct?

MR. PRATT: Representative, yes, that's correct.

REP. CASTOR: And if insurers had to include every provider in their network, wouldn't that eliminate their bargaining power and substantially increase premiums?

MR. PRATT: Congresswoman, I think that is generally correct. I wouldn't characterize the amount of the increase but it is a very important aspect of keeping premiums affordable.

REP. CASTOR: OK. Can these high value networks improve care coordination and move us towards a system where we pay for quality rather than quantity in our health care system?

MR. PRATT: Absolutely. Our members are working very hard toward that end.

REP. CASTOR: See, I think this network adequacy in the marketplace is an important issue. We need to make sure that consumers have access to providers in their area and that they have enough choices to get the care that they need when they need it. Republicans should not attack the ACA for letting the private market work.

And remember, personal responsibility is fundamental. It's a fundamental tenet of the Affordable Care Act and it's oftentimes the customer's responsibility to review all of the choices they have, whether it's bronze, silver, gold, platinum and the network contained therein and make their own choice. So the law sets key new standards and provides important protections but insurers and providers will continue to negotiate to ensure sufficient access at fair prices. Thank you very much. I yield back.

REP. BURGESS: The gentlelady yields back. The chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio, Mr. Johnson, for five minutes for your questions please.

REPRESENTATIVE BILL JOHNSON (R-OH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Wow. So much to talk about, so little time to talk about it all. Gentlemen, thank you for joining us today. You know, one of the reasons this committee has requested -- has requested this information from you is because the

administration has refused repeatedly to provide any data on who is actually paying for the Affordable Care Act.

In fact, one White House spokesman told reporters to ask your industry for this information. Do you -- so here's the question for you. Do you currently provide any information to the administration on who has paid for their plan? If yes, what information do you provide and how is it provided and how often? Do you provide any information to the administration?

MR. WINGLE: The only information we provide around payment is related to the invoicing we do with the government to get the premium tax credit.

REP. JOHNSON: And how is it provided and how often?

MR. WINGLE: It's the process we described earlier. It's a workaround process because the financial management module is not fully constructed on the FFM.

REP. JOHNSON: And who do you send it to, Mr. Wingle?

MR. WINGLE: Send it to CMS.

REP. JOHNSON: OK. Well, for -- it's a little confusing. So the administration will pay your industry a subsidy for potential customers who never even effectuate their enrollment. So if you're not providing the details to the administration on who's paying for the Affordable Care Act, how are they paying you? How are they -- what are they basing their payments to you on?

MR. WINGLE: I'd only make one clarification. We do not submit information for payment from the government for members who are not effectuated, who haven't made their own portion of the binder payment. We do not do that.

REP. JOHNSON: Well, let me dig a little deeper then. So how do you get paid? How do you get paid and what is that based on? What information do you provide the government, the administration that gets you paid?

MR. WINGLE: The process essentially works because we have the enrollment file information. We understand the premium for the plan selected by the consumer on that enrollment file.

REP. JOHNSON: So you're paid based on enrollment, not on actual payment?

MR. WINGLE: We understand the member's responsibility on the enrollment and the difference between the premium rate and the member responsibility tells us what the government is and we roll that figure up monthly.

REP. JOHNSON: So if you only submit for effectuated, I can't even pronounce that word, doesn't the administration know the pay rate? Don't they know how much these people are paying?

MR. : Yes, sir. They've determined the subsidy eligibility as part of the enrollment process. And so, a file would come to us. We'd bill for the member responsibility. Upon collection of that member responsibility, then we would typically if the system were working as designed, we would send a file to the government, to the exchange saying here are the members that have effectuated enrollment and here's ultimately the payment that is due to us.

REP. JOHNSON: OK. So do you believe the administration is currently able to report the payment rate or who is fully enrolled? Do you think they have that information based on what you give them?

MR. : So today the payments that are coming back and forth are estimated. So there's not been a direct reconciliation between our company and the exchange on a member-by-member basis. That's one of the works in progress that we discussed on the backend discussion we had earlier in the day, sir.

REP. JOHNSON: Considering then that the administration is able to report who selects a plan on healthcare.gov, would it be possible for them to gather information on who has actually paid for a plan? Let's start down with Mr. Pratt.

MR. PRATT: Representative, it's my understanding that that capability is not present yet.

REP. JOHNSON: Mr. Coyne?

MR. PRATT: I'm not sure whether it may be in the future.

REP. JOHNSON: OK.

MR. COYNE: Yeah, it's my understanding as well that that capability isn't ready yet.

REP. JOHNSON: Mr. Wingle?

MR. WINGLE: I don't know what the administration can infer from the data they have. But I know the financial management module itself is not available.

REP. JOHNSON: Mr. Evanko?

MR. EVANKO: One bit of color I'll add to my colleagues is the submission for APTC is only for those that are APTC-eligible. So there's also people that do not qualify for that that should be in that calculation.

REP. JOHNSON: Mr. Rodgers?

MR. RODGERS: Yes, I think my colleagues are correct in their statements and we're still working on the reconciliation process for payments.

REP. JOHNSON: OK. Mr. Matheis?

MR. MATHEIS: I would concur with earlier statements.

REP. JOHNSON: OK. Final question, does the administration know who's paid for their plan? Mr. Pratt?

MR. PRATT: Congressman, I don't know the answer to that question.

REP. JOHNSON: Mr. Coyne?

MR. COYNE: I don't know either.

MR. WINGLE: I don't know what the administration knows about the enrollment in terms of who's paid.

MR. EVANKO: I don't know either.

MR. RODGERS: No, sir.

MR. MATHEIS: No, sir.

REP. JOHNSON: It's interesting that they sent us to ask you folks. OK, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

REP. BURGESS: The gentleman yields back his time. The chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky, Mr. Yarmuth, for five minutes for your questions please.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN YARMUTH (D-KY): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And I'm really glad we had this hearing. That's something I usually don't say very often. But this has been a very

illuminating hearing because I think what it's done very clearly is to show what our colleagues' on the side side strategy is which is to try and hold a hearing in which they can grab a headline that will in some way scare the American people about what's -- about the Affordable Care Act rather than providing true information about what's going on.

And you know, it's clear from the desperation, once their initial strategy of trying to deal with this alleged failure to pay premiums, now they've moved on to trying to scare people about what premiums might increase by later either next year or in the future. So you know, and I'm glad you all stressed how important it was that you not give up your competitive position because obviously you're all competing in the markets.

And, you know, I could turn that strategy around and do the same thing and ask you speculative questions like "Will the premium increases that we are likely to see approach the 38 percent that we saw -- we were seeing in 2010, before the Affordable Care Act was passed?" and ask you to speculate on that. But I won't do that. And I would -- I could ask you about what the rate of cancellations of policies were prior to the Affordable Care Act.

And I could also ask you -- and I think this would be a fair question. I wouldn't expect you to answer -- how many of your insurance companies, because of the success of the Affordable Care Act enrollment so far and the beneficial mix of younger people, has prompted you to explore doing business in other states, as has been reported in the media? I think that would be a question that I would love to have the answer to.

I know for instance in Kentucky, the co-op -- the non-profit Kentucky co-op which is competing in the exchange is now getting ready to do business in West Virginia, because they don't have a co-op and they see an opportunity there. And I think the main co-op is planning to do business in -- I'm sorry the Massachusetts co-op in Maine, because they see an opportunity there.

So I think all these things are indications that the Affordable Care Act, far from being the train wreck which many have suggested it would become, is actually getting a lot -- deal of traction as it speeds down the tracks.

And just to put it in perspective, in Kentucky, we have -- we have insured in the period of six months roughly half of the previously uninsured population of the state. We -- 411,000 people now have coverage in Kentucky under the ACA. Three-quarters of those -- in answer to one of the questions that was asked earlier -- three- quarters of those we know previously had no insurance. And 52 percent of all that 411,000 people are under 35. So we know things are in -- working in Kentucky. And as Ms. Castor mentioned, things are surprisingly successful in Florida, despite an administration there which has done everything it could to sabotage the Affordable Care Act.

So you know, I -- we can speculate about and argue about the level of success, whether it's a success or a train wreck. But, you know, the markets certainly have had something to say about how they view the Affordable Care Act in terms of your businesses. I look at the share prices of the companies represented here, and one based in my own state -- Humana is based in my district. When the Affordable Care Act was enacted, their stock price was 44. Now it's 110. Aetna's was 33. Now it's 72. United Health Care was 27. Now it's 75. And Cigna's was 34 and now it's 83, roughly.

So the market has made a judgment, I think, about the fact that at least in terms of your business, the Affordable Care Act has offered a significant financial benefit.

So I think this -- again, this is -- one of the things that's fascinating about this hearing is we know what the Republicans have tried to do, and that's to scare the American people and to use every little indication of a problem to reflect a -- some kind of a doomsday scenario that we are looking at. And fortunately, the facts on the ground -- whether it's the marketplace, whether it's the experience in Kentucky or Florida or California where literally millions of people -- and by one estimate, 20.8 million people -- got coverage under the ACA or bought coverage because of the ACA in the private markets outside the exchanges, we are doing -- it is doing exactly what we intended it to do.

We know there have been glitches. We know there have been problems. Any undertaking of this magnitude would experience those. But again, I thank you for your participation and I thank you for this hearing.

And I yield back.

REP. BURGESS: (Off mic) -- back. The gentleman from New Mexico's recognized five minutes, Mr. **Lujan,** for your questions, please.

REPRESENTATIVE **BEN RAY LUJAN** (D-NM): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Matheis, your company CEO said last week that the surge in enrollment in March included a higher percentage of young people than in earlier months. Isn't that correct?

MR. MATHEIS: That is correct.

REP. **LUJAN:** And Mr. Evanko, your CEO said something similar last week as well. Isn't that correct?

MR. EVANKO: That's correct.

REP. **LUJAN:** And as a general matter, all else being equal, a higher percentage of young people in the risk pool will help lower premiums. Isn't that correct?

Mr. Evanko?

MR. EVANKO: That's a complicated question. It's an important one, but it's a complicated question.

REP. **LUJAN:** I think that all that we've heard from all the actuaries is that the answer is yes. We need more young people in. It lowers premiums.

Mr. Pratt, insurance company premiums are market-sensitive information that companies are not eager to let their competitors know until the last minute. Isn't that correct?

MR. PRATT: Representative, it is competitively sensitive information. I don't know that I could speak to their particular perspective on that question.

REP. **LUJAN:** Well, it seems like they'd want to keep it to themselves as long as they're able to, so that competitors aren't able to get their hands on it and adjust accordingly. Is that correct? Is that fair?

MR. PRATT: It's fair to say it's competitively sensitive information.

REP. **LUJAN:** And is it correct that many insurance commissioners around the country have the authority to review rates and that the final rates consumers pay are sometimes lower than the rates that are actually filed?

MR. PRATT: Yes, Representative. Typically speaking, rates are filed with the states and the states review those rates.

REP. **LUJAN:** Very good. I used to sit on a regulatory body that the superintendent of insurance was under our jurisdiction. So I appreciate the answer to that, because I know what we saw when I was there as well, sir. So I'd certainly agree with that.

Is it also true that the ACA contains a series of policies -- reinsurance, risk adjustment and risk corridors -- to help mitigate potential premium increases?

MR. PRATT: Congressman, one goal of the "three Rs program" -- the so-called "three Rs program" is to stabilize premiums in the early years of implementation.

REP. **LUJAN:** And a final question to the panelists: Before the ACA, wasn't it common for insurance premiums to increase significantly year to year, often by double digits? Anyone?

Is there anyone that would disagree that premiums increased by more than 50 percent between 2003 and 2010?

Hearing none, I guess the answer to that is that there's agreement.

The 8 million figure only includes people who have signed up for insurance directly through the federal and state marketplaces that my colleagues are trying to dismiss. But people can also sign up for private ACA-compliant plans outside of the marketplaces. We don't have a lot of conversation about that.

Mr. Pratt, are individuals able to enroll in some of the plans the AHIP represents outside of the federal and state marketplaces?

MR. PRATT: That's correct.

REP. **LUJAN:** The CBO estimates that 5 million people will purchase ACA-compliant plans outside of the marketplace this year. These individuals will obtain the same protections and be a part of the same risk pools in each state as those who enrolled via the marketplaces.

Mr. Rodgers, how many of HCSC's enrollments have -- outside been -- have been outside of the marketplace?

MR. RODGERS: As I said in my opening testimony -- it was provided in written form to the committee -- I believe we had about 230,000 off-exchange applications during the open enrollment period ending April 15th.

REP. **LUJAN:** And about how many applicants have you received overall?

MR. RODGERS: We've received overall about 830,000 applications across our five states.

REP. **LUJAN:** So that sounds like it's representing about 1.2 million covered lives -- so about 28 percent of your enrollees signed up outside of the marketplaces. That's a significant number.

And I understand that payment data is not complete, but in the earlier months of this year, what percentage of individuals enrolling in plans outside of the marketplace have paid?

MR. RODGERS: In my written comments to the committee, I shared with you the on-exchange and off-exchange payment rates, because there is some difference. Typically the payment completion rates are a little bit higher off-exchange versus on-exchange. And you should have that data.

REP. **LUJAN:** So from what I was able to get from your testimony was that between January and April 90 to 93 percent and in May 63 percent today. And we can verify that in the -- and there -- does that sound accurate, though?

MR. RODGERS: That's correct. That's in my written comments.

REP. **LUJAN:** Can any of our other witnesses provide us with information on how many off-exchange enrollments they have had to date? If not, if you could -- Mr. Evanko?

MR. EVANKO: We have approximately 40,000 off-exchange ACA enrollments. That's about one-third of our total ACA-compliant book.

REP. **LUJAN:** And what I'd like to do is ask our witnesses if they'd be willing to provide the committee with detailed information on their off-exchange enrollments. Would that be okay with everyone?

MR. : Yes.

MR. : Yes.

REP. **LUJAN:** Very good. I appreciate that.

And, you know, later on today, we're going to be having some other hearings in other areas. Despite the demonization and demagoguing of the Affordable Care Act, over 8 million enrollees -- can you imagine what it would have been if Democrats and Republicans would have worked together to fix issues that needed fixing, if we were able to get more people covered? Who knows where that number would have been?

But later on today, we're going to be having a hearing on taking away someone's Fifth Amendment rights. We have my colleagues that are still refusing to release 39 interview transcripts on an IRS hearing. There's going to be other hearings -- another request on a hearing with Benghazi, even though there's been seven other hearings, 50 repeal attempts on the Affordable Care Act. I think there's a lot of important, pressing business that we of the Congress need to get our hands around.

And I'm certainly hopeful that in the history and tradition of this committee -- with all that I've learned from our senior members -- there once upon a time was an effort for us to work together and get along. And I certainly hope that those days return. Every time I'm home, that's what we hear.

So to all the witnesses that are here today, thank you so much, Chairman, again for you being here as well and the hearing being brought together today. An important conversation, I hope, that we're able to bring more facts into the debate. Thank you very much.

REP. BURGESS: Gentleman's time has expired. The chair recognizes Ranking Member DeGette for a follow-up.

REP. DEGETTE: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to follow up on Mr. **Lujan's** questioning with the off-exchange enrollments because as we've learned there have been a number of off-exchange enrollments as -- in addition to the enrollments in the ACA and the -- both in the federal exchange and the state exchanges. So I would ask unanimous consent.

The committee has made a request of 160 plans, including plans from this panel here, that they provide information about enrollment figures and premium payments for those plans that are under the Affordable Care Act -- the exchanges. I would ask also if we would ask those same plans for that same information on the off-exchange enrollments similar to the -- to the data that we got from Blue Cross Blue Shield. Be helpful to know how many off-exchange enrollments we have had from these 160 plans and what the premium payments have been. So I'd ask unanimous consent that we also ask for that information.

REP. BURGESS: Without objection. The gentlelady yields back. Recognize myself for follow-up and I would just say on the off- enrollment, I'm one of those members. I actually had both Blue Cross Blue Shield and HealthCare.gov on hold, or they had me on hold, on December 23rd and December 24th and it was kind of a race to see who would have a live person answer the phone first. I think, if I recall correctly, Blue Cross won out that day. So I was probably an off- exchange enrollment. So you may count me as that.

I'd just like to ask each of you in follow-up, many of the products you're offering are only affordable because the government subsidizes part of the premium cost. Do you know what percentage of the plans with paid premiums (and ?) effectuated enrollment received some form of subsidy from the taxpayer? Mr. Coyne, I'll start with you and then we'll just go down the line.

MR. COYNE: We don't have that information at this point.

REP. BURGESS: Would you provide it for the record?

MR. COYNE: Yes, we'd be happy to, when we get it.

REP. BURGESS: Mr. Wingle.

MR. WINGLE: Our experience probably comports with generally available published information on that. It's the majority of our membership.

REP. BURGESS: And, again, can I ask you to submit that for the record? Mr. Evanko.

MR. EVANKO: For on-exchange customers, 80 to 85 percent are eligible for APTC.

REP. BURGESS: Mr. Rodgers.

MR. RODGERS: Yes. I believe we submitted that information, if I understood your question, in the two submissions for April and with the May 20th submission we'll provide something similar.

MR. : As did we.

REP. BURGESS: Mr. Matheis.

MR. MATHEIS: Yes. As you know, that number is a moving target but it is around 79 percent for us.

REP. BURGESS: And will you do your best to give us an accurate representation for the -- for the record? What about a situation where an individual enrolls but then cancels their plan? Are you only paid the subsidy monthly or would you be responsible for returning a portion of the subsidy throughout the year? Mr. Coyne, let's start with you.

MR. COYNE: We don't have that information.

REP. BURGESS: And will you submit that for the record?

MR. COYNE: Yes.

REP. BURGESS: Will you try to find that for us? Mr. Wingle.

MR. WINGLE: Could you repeat the question please, Mr. Chairman?

REP. BURGESS: A situation where an individual enrolls but then cancels their plan -- are you only paid the subsidy monthly or would you be responsible for returning the portion throughout the year?

MR. WINGLE: Returning the portion of premium paid or --

REP. BURGESS: The advanced premium tax credit.

MR. WINGLE: The subsidy -- the subsidy, you know, under the three-month grace period rules we retain until cancellation.

REP. BURGESS: So you would not be required to return that?

MR. WINGLE: No. Not until a member is cancelled.

REP. BURGESS: If the member just simply doesn't pay -- they make their first payment, maybe their second payment and then they stop, at the end of that three-month grace period do you have to return the money for those months where they didn't -- the patient didn't pay?

MR. WINGLE: In compliance with the three-month grace period rules, we retain any premium tax credit received during the period to cover -- help us cover -- (inaudible) -- any claims experience we had during the time the member was enrolled.

REP. BURGESS: So you retain the advanced premium tax credit?

MR. WINGLE: According with the design of the rules, yes.

REP. BURGESS: Mr. Evanko.

MR. EVANKO: Well, at the end of the 90-day grace period if the individual has not paid any more premiums then we owe that money back to CMS and we credit that in the next month's reconciliation process.

REP. BURGESS: It's interesting. Mr. Rodgers.

MR. RODGERS: I'm not familiar with that particular aspect of the grace period payments in terms of the return or not. But my -- I believe that we're only entitled to the money that's -- for the time the policy is in effect.

REP. BURGESS: And Mr. Matheis.

MR. MATHEIS: That's my understanding as well, sir.

REP. BURGESS: Mr. Coyne, do you know -- do you know how much your company has been paid in advanced premium tax credits?

MR. COYNE: Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association does not actually sponsor any of the products that are on the exchanges. Our member plans do. So we wouldn't be paid premiums or APTC.

REP. BURGESS: Mr. Evanko.

MR. EVANKO: We've received four payments so far for the months of January through April and it's in the range of 30 (million dollars) to $40 million.

REP. BURGESS: Mr. Wingle.

MR. WINGLE: We, obviously, have that data. We can supply the committee with that data.

REP. BURGESS: And that -- (inaudible) -- submit that for the record, Mr. Rodgers?

MR. RODGERS: We've received some payments. I don't know the value of the payments to date.

REP. BURGESS: And will you find that information and submit it for the record, please?

MR. RODGERS: Certainly.

REP. BURGESS: And Mr. Matheis.

MR. MATHEIS: Yes. I don't have that number ready today but we'd be happy to get it for you.

REP. BURGESS: The metal plans -- you're all familiar with them. Keep hearing about a copper plan that's going to be offered. Are any of you familiar with that? Are you going to be offering copper plans? Mr. Coyne.

MR. COYNE: I am not familiar with that at this point.

REP. BURGESS: Mr. Wingle.

MR. WINGLE: Under the current rules for essential health benefits and the rules for qualified health plans we are not currently authorized to offer anything at the so-called copper level. Our plan

benefits start at bronze unless somebody qualifies for catastrophic care and that's the lowest actuarial value we're allowed to offer presently.

REP. BURGESS: Mr. Evanko.

MR. EVANKO: In the event that copper plans were introduced as something that's allowed, we would certainly consider it. Cigna believes in choice as one of our core principles for our customers.

REP. BURGESS: Thank you. Mr. Rodgers.

MR. RODGERS: Currently, we're not approved to offer the copper plans. That's, certainly, something that -- you know, we believe that members need more cost-effective programs. So if those are offered I expect that we would --

REP. BURGESS: Mr. Matheis.

MR. MATHEIS: My comments would be similar to my colleagues', sir.

REP. BURGESS: Let me just ask each of you what is your payment rate for products in the large-group market? Starting with you, Mr. Coyne, what are your payments for products on the large-group market?

MR. COYNE: Individual (blue ?) plans have that information rather than the association.

REP. BURGESS: I see. Mr. Wingle.

MR. WINGLE: I carry no responsibility for large-group. I'd have to get back to you on that.

REP. BURGESS: Mr. Evanko.

MR. EVANKO: I'm not familiar with the large-group payment rates either. I'm sorry.

REP. BURGESS: Your company, though, is -- I mean, you're in the large-group market.

MR. EVANKO: We are, sir. Yes.

REP. BURGESS: Will you get that information for us? Thank you. Mr. Rodgers.

MR. RODGERS: I don't have that information with me.

REP. BURGESS: But you will provide it for the committee?

MR. RODGERS: Certainly.

REP. BURGESS: And Mr. Matheis.

MR. MATHEIS: I'm not sure I understand the question. Could you clarify it for me, please?

REP. BURGESS: Well, the question was what are your payment rates for products in the large group market.

MR. MATHEIS: So is that what our average premium is or --

REP. BURGESS: Your -- how many people pay.

MR. MATHEIS: I'm sorry, sir. I'm still not following the question.

REP. BURGESS: Well, what we have generally been talking about today is how many people --what percentage of people have paid. So can -- following along with that theme --

MR. MATHEIS: (Inaudible.) I'm sorry. I was a little slow on the uptake there. Typically, we would experience somewhere around a 98 to 97 percent premium payment in the group -- in the large-group market.

REP. BURGESS: Very well. Thank you all for your attendance today. I ask unanimous consent that members' written opening statements be introduced into the record. Without objection, the documents will be entered into the record. In conclusion, I'd like to thank all the witnesses and the members who participated in today's hearing. I'd like to thank everyone who stuck with us to the end. That would be the witnesses. I remind members they have 10 business days to submit questions for the record and I ask the witnesses to all agree to respond promptly to the questions. The committee now stands in adjournment.

(C) 2014 Federal News Service

LOAD-DATE: May 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Transcript

Copyright 2014 Federal News Service, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

153 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

May 6, 2014 Tuesday

Tohatchi student wins District 3 art competition

BYLINE: Richard Reyes Staff writer city@gallupindependent.com

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 6

LENGTH: 187 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE

SANTA FE - A Tohatchi High School student 's tribute to his elders earned first place in the Congressional Art Competition for District 3, Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** announced in a news release Monday.

Davin Nez, of Tohatchi, won the competition with his black and white drawing "Tribute to the Elders: Navajo Woman." **Luján** honored Nez and five others for having the top pieces of artwork out of a field of 56 entries during a reception at the city of Santa Fe Arts Commission Community Gallery Saturday.

"Just as in year's past, the submissions for the 2014 Congressional Art Competition showcased the tremendous talent of New Mexico's young artists," **Luján** stated. "These students have shown great potential and are continuing a proud tradition of artistic excellence that is a hallmark of New Mexico."

Nez has earned a trip to Washington, where members of Congress will honor winners from across the country. The winning entries from each congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the U.S. Capitol for one year.

The other top pieces will be displayed in **Luján's** district offices across northern New Mexico.

LOAD-DATE: May 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

154 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Quarterly Member Profiles

May 5, 2014 Monday

Rep. Ben Ray Lujan (D-N.M.)

LENGTH: 1129 words

CQ Politics in America Profile

(Updated: May 5, 2014)

Politics has been a going concern in Santa Fe since 1610, when the Spanish made it a provincial capital. **Lujan** grew up surrounded by that tradition and proved to be a student of it as well: He is good in a room and comes across as a friendly, confident and passionate liberal.

Lujan credits his personal style to his father, a former ironworker who served in the New Mexico House for almost four decades and was its speaker for the last 12 years of his life. (Ben **Lujan** died of lung cancer in 2012.) "I was able to learn from dad the importance of talking to people and treating everyone with respect," he said.

While tackling a policy agenda heavy in energy and technology, he does a lot of legwork for the Democratic Party. In his third term, he has political jobs with the potential to increase his national exposure. House Democratic leaders named him one of the party's 10 chief deputy whips. As both parties ponder the electoral implications of the growing Hispanic population, **Lujan** serves as the first vice chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

And he's a co-chairman (along with Henry Cuellar of Texas) of the Latino Council for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. "Sadly, in many parts of the country ... the only time [Latino voters] were reached out to or spoken to was two weeks before Election Day," **Lujan** said in 2014. His work for the DCCC involves networking with voters, potential candidates and donors -- he's an accomplished fundraiser.

Some people would claim that **Lujan** also climbed the ladder on the policy side of things by joining the Energy and Commerce Committee at the start of the 113th Congress (2013-14). The panel's broad jurisdiction allows him to continue work he started on the Natural Resources and Science, Space and Technology committees -- chiefly, dealing with New Mexico's national laboratories and energy sector.

The Energy Department operates the Los Alamos lab in **Lujan's** district and the Sandia lab in Albuquerque. Both facilities have dealt with budget crunches, and **Lujan's** strategy for stabilizing them is to "broaden the mission" and increase the number of stakeholders. **Lujan** often argues for legislative language compelling agencies -- such as the Department of Homeland Security -- to use the labs for their research and development needs whenever practicable. He wouldn't mind if the White House directed the labs to work on improvements to energy transmission and storage.

He also wants labs to work more closely with private industry in developing and testing technology to get it to the market. He formed the Technology Transfer Caucus in 2011 with Republican Frank R. Wolf of Virginia, and he now co-chairs it with Gus Bilirakis of Florida. According to **Lujan**, the Energy Department has been lax in using tech transfer programs that are already authorized. He'd like a renaissance for Cooperative Research and Development Agreements, which partner businesses with federal labs; though popular in the 1990s, CRDAs now require too much investment from the private sector, meaning only deep-pocketed companies can use them, he said.

Energy has been on **Lujan's** plate since his first elective office: As a member of the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission, he helped implement the state's standard for renewable energy production. He favors tax credits for such production and a national standard. He also says there's a long-term economic argument that isn't being made: "What happens if you have buildup of electricity generation in the country, and you get to a point where all those assets are depreciated and the cost of the fuel is free?"

Lujan ramped up his rhetoric on climate change starting in 2013, making more public statements on the issue as a member of the Safe Climate Caucus. Many New Mexicans "wouldn't consider themselves environmentalists or conservationists, but it's been a way of life" in the high desert, he said. **Lujan** joins those Democrats who try to link various natural disasters, such as forest fires that have damaged his district, to climate change.

On the Communications and Technology Subcommittee, **Lujan** voices his support for federal programs to expand broadband and cellular networks into the rural areas of his district. "From a safety perspective, there should be connectivity," he said, as first-responders try to locate anyone in distress. The Public Regulation Commission oversaw utilities, telecommunications, motor carriers and insurance companies, so **Lujan** has some experience in the consumer protection issues that come before the full committee.

Lujan grew up in the small farming community of Nambe, just north of Santa Fe. His great-grandparents, grandparents and parents all lived in his current home. **Lujan's** grandfather was a sheep herder, and the family still raises sheep on the land. He won a victory for the state's rural interests in 2014; a reauthorization of farm programs allows groups managing acequias -- small irrigation channels that sometimes predate the United States -- to apply for funds in the Agriculture Department's Environmental Quality Incentives Program.

Ben **Lujan** entered the state House in 1975, and his son remembers wandering the halls of the New Mexico Legislature and attending political events from an early age. After high school, he took classes at the University of New Mexico, though he did not receive a college degree until 2007, when he completed his course work at New Mexico Highlands University. In between, he worked a series of jobs, including stints as a dealer at a casino and in human resources at a horse racetrack.

He entered government in 2002 as deputy state treasurer. In the sometimes surly world of New Mexico politics, opponents accused Ben **Lujan** of nepotism when his son landed that job. Ben Ray was then accused of riding his father's coattails when he took a seat on the Public Regulation Commission in 2005. The family has shrugged off those criticisms, sometimes with a smile. **Lujan's** office features a photo of his father doing yard work with a chainsaw, while he stands

to the side. After he had joked with his father that he might become the more famous **Lujan**, "this picture was kind of a reminder to say, 'Dad's still in charge.' "

Lujan entered the 2008 House race to succeed Democrat Tom Udall, who successfully ran for the Senate. He campaigned energetically while taking advantage of his family's fundraising connections. He beat five other primary candidates, taking more than 41 percent of the vote. The primary was the hard part. In November,**Lujan** took 57 percent in the heavily Democratic district. He hasn't been seriously challenged since then.

Source: CQ Member Profiles
Copyright 2014 Congressional Quarterly Inc. All Rights Reserved.

LOAD-DATE: October 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: NEWSLETTERS

Copyright 2014 CQ-Roll Call, Inc. All Rights Reserved

155 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Quarterly Member Profiles

May 5, 2014 Monday

Rep. Ben Ray Lujan (D-N.M.)

LENGTH: 1129 words

CQ Politics in America Profile

(Updated: May 5, 2014)

Politics has been a going concern in Santa Fe since 1610, when the Spanish made it a provincial capital. **Lujan** grew up surrounded by that tradition and proved to be a student of it as well: He is good in a room and comes across as a friendly, confident and passionate liberal.

Lujan credits his personal style to his father, a former ironworker who served in the New Mexico House for almost four decades and was its speaker for the last 12 years of his life. (Ben **Lujan** died of lung cancer in 2012.) "I was able to learn from dad the importance of talking to people and treating everyone with respect," he said.

While tackling a policy agenda heavy in energy and technology, he does a lot of legwork for the Democratic Party. In his third term, he has political jobs with the potential to increase his national exposure. House Democratic leaders named him one of the party's 10 chief deputy whips. As both parties ponder the electoral implications of the growing Hispanic population, **Lujan** serves as the first vice chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

And he's a co-chairman (along with Henry Cuellar of Texas) of the Latino Council for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. "Sadly, in many parts of the country ... the only time [Latino voters] were reached out to or spoken to was two weeks before Election Day," **Lujan** said in 2014.

His work for the DCCC involves networking with voters, potential candidates and donors -- he's an accomplished fundraiser.

Some people would claim that **Lujan** also climbed the ladder on the policy side of things by joining the Energy and Commerce Committee at the start of the 113th Congress (2013-14). The panel's broad jurisdiction allows him to continue work he started on the Natural Resources and Science, Space and Technology committees -- chiefly, dealing with New Mexico's national laboratories and energy sector.

The Energy Department operates the Los Alamos lab in **Lujan's** district and the Sandia lab in Albuquerque. Both facilities have dealt with budget crunches, and **Lujan's** strategy for stabilizing them is to "broaden the mission" and increase the number of stakeholders. **Lujan** often argues for legislative language compelling agencies -- such as the Department of Homeland Security -- to use the labs for their research and development needs whenever practicable. He wouldn't mind if the White House directed the labs to work on improvements to energy transmission and storage.

He also wants labs to work more closely with private industry in developing and testing technology to get it to the market. He formed the Technology Transfer Caucus in 2011 with Republican Frank R. Wolf of Virginia, and he now co-chairs it with Gus Bilirakis of Florida. According to **Lujan**, the Energy Department has been lax in using tech transfer programs that are already authorized. He'd like a renaissance for Cooperative Research and Development Agreements, which partner businesses with federal labs; though popular in the 1990s, CRDAs now require too much investment from the private sector, meaning only deep-pocketed companies can use them, he said.

Energy has been on **Lujan's** plate since his first elective office: As a member of the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission, he helped implement the state's standard for renewable energy production. He favors tax credits for such production and a national standard. He also says there's a long-term economic argument that isn't being made: "What happens if you have buildup of electricity generation in the country, and you get to a point where all those assets are depreciated and the cost of the fuel is free?"

Lujan ramped up his rhetoric on climate change starting in 2013, making more public statements on the issue as a member of the Safe Climate Caucus. Many New Mexicans "wouldn't consider themselves environmentalists or conservationists, but it's been a way of life" in the high desert, he said. **Lujan** joins those Democrats who try to link various natural disasters, such as forest fires that have damaged his district, to climate change.

On the Communications and Technology Subcommittee, **Lujan** voices his support for federal programs to expand broadband and cellular networks into the rural areas of his district. "From a safety perspective, there should be connectivity," he said, as first-responders try to locate anyone in distress. The Public Regulation Commission oversaw utilities, telecommunications, motor carriers and insurance companies, so **Lujan** has some experience in the consumer protection issues that come before the full committee.

Lujan grew up in the small farming community of Nambe, just north of Santa Fe. His great-grandparents, grandparents and parents all lived in his current home. **Lujan's** grandfather was a sheep herder, and the family still raises sheep on the land. He won a victory for the state's rural interests in 2014; a reauthorization of farm programs allows groups managing acequias -- small irrigation channels that sometimes predate the United States -- to apply for funds in the Agriculture Department's Environmental Quality Incentives Program.

Ben **Lujan** entered the state House in 1975, and his son remembers wandering the halls of the New Mexico Legislature and attending political events from an early age. After high school, he took classes at the University of New Mexico, though he did not receive a college degree until 2007, when he completed his course work at New Mexico Highlands University. In between, he worked a series of jobs, including stints as a dealer at a casino and in human resources at a horse racetrack.

He entered government in 2002 as deputy state treasurer. In the sometimes surly world of New Mexico politics, opponents accused Ben **Lujan** of nepotism when his son landed that job. Ben Ray

was then accused of riding his father's coattails when he took a seat on the Public Regulation Commission in 2005. The family has shrugged off those criticisms, sometimes with a smile. **Lujan's** office features a photo of his father doing yard work with a chainsaw, while he stands to the side. After he had joked with his father that he might become the more famous **Lujan**, "this picture was kind of a reminder to say, 'Dad's still in charge.' "

Lujan entered the 2008 House race to succeed Democrat Tom Udall, who successfully ran for the Senate. He campaigned energetically while taking advantage of his family's fundraising connections. He beat five other primary candidates, taking more than 41 percent of the vote. The primary was the hard part. In November,**Lujan** took 57 percent in the heavily Democratic district. He hasn't been seriously challenged since then.

Source: CQ Member Profiles
Copyright 2014 Congressional Quarterly Inc. All Rights Reserved.

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: NEWSLETTERS

Copyright 2014 CQ-Roll Call, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Congressional Quarterly Member Profiles

May 5, 2014 Monday

Rep. Ben Ray Lujan (D-N.M.)

LENGTH: 1129 words

CQ Politics in America Profile

(Updated: May 5, 2014)

Politics has been a going concern in Santa Fe since 1610, when the Spanish made it a provincial capital. **Lujan** grew up surrounded by that tradition and proved to be a student of it as well: He is good in a room and comes across as a friendly, confident and passionate liberal.

Lujan credits his personal style to his father, a former ironworker who served in the New Mexico House for almost four decades and was its speaker for the last 12 years of his life. (Ben **Lujan** died of lung cancer in 2012.) "I was able to learn from dad the importance of talking to people and treating everyone with respect," he said.

While tackling a policy agenda heavy in energy and technology, he does a lot of legwork for the Democratic Party. In his third term, he has political jobs with the potential to increase his national exposure. House Democratic leaders named him one of the party's 10 chief deputy whips. As both parties ponder the electoral implications of the growing Hispanic population, **Lujan** serves as the first vice chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

And he's a co-chairman (along with Henry Cuellar of Texas) of the Latino Council for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. "Sadly, in many parts of the country ... the only time [Latino voters] were reached out to or spoken to was two weeks before Election Day," **Lujan** said in 2014. His work for the DCCC involves networking with voters, potential candidates and donors -- he's an accomplished fundraiser.

Some people would claim that **Lujan** also climbed the ladder on the policy side of things by joining the Energy and Commerce Committee at the start of the 113th Congress (2013-14). The panel's broad jurisdiction allows him to continue work he started on the Natural Resources and Science, Space and Technology committees -- chiefly, dealing with New Mexico's national laboratories and energy sector.

The Energy Department operates the Los Alamos lab in **Lujan's** district and the Sandia lab in Albuquerque. Both facilities have dealt with budget crunches, and **Lujan's** strategy for stabilizing them is to "broaden the mission" and increase the number of stakeholders. **Lujan** often argues for legislative language compelling agencies -- such as the Department of Homeland Security -- to use the labs for their research and development needs whenever practicable. He wouldn't mind if the White House directed the labs to work on improvements to energy transmission and storage.

He also wants labs to work more closely with private industry in developing and testing technology to get it to the market. He formed the Technology Transfer Caucus in 2011 with Republican Frank R. Wolf of Virginia, and he now co-chairs it with Gus Bilirakis of Florida. According to **Lujan**, the Energy Department has been lax in using tech transfer programs that are already authorized. He'd like a renaissance for Cooperative Research and Development Agreements, which partner businesses with federal labs; though popular in the 1990s, CRDAs now require too much investment from the private sector, meaning only deep-pocketed companies can use them, he said.

Energy has been on **Lujan's** plate since his first elective office: As a member of the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission, he helped implement the state's standard for renewable energy production. He favors tax credits for such production and a national standard. He also says there's a long-term economic argument that isn't being made: "What happens if you have buildup of electricity generation in the country, and you get to a point where all those assets are depreciated and the cost of the fuel is free?"

Lujan ramped up his rhetoric on climate change starting in 2013, making more public statements on the issue as a member of the Safe Climate Caucus. Many New Mexicans "wouldn't consider themselves environmentalists or conservationists, but it's been a way of life" in the high desert, he said. **Lujan** joins those Democrats who try to link various natural disasters, such as forest fires that have damaged his district, to climate change.

On the Communications and Technology Subcommittee, **Lujan** voices his support for federal programs to expand broadband and cellular networks into the rural areas of his district. "From a safety perspective, there should be connectivity," he said, as first-responders try to locate anyone in distress. The Public Regulation Commission oversaw utilities, telecommunications, motor carriers and insurance companies, so **Lujan** has some experience in the consumer protection issues that come before the full committee.

Lujan grew up in the small farming community of Nambe, just north of Santa Fe. His great-grandparents, grandparents and parents all lived in his current home. **Lujan's** grandfather was a sheep herder, and the family still raises sheep on the land. He won a victory for the state's rural interests in 2014; a reauthorization of farm programs allows groups managing acequias -- small irrigation channels that sometimes predate the United States -- to apply for funds in the Agriculture Department's Environmental Quality Incentives Program.

Ben **Lujan** entered the state House in 1975, and his son remembers wandering the halls of the New Mexico Legislature and attending political events from an early age. After high school, he took classes at the University of New Mexico, though he did not receive a college degree until 2007, when he completed his course work at New Mexico Highlands University. In between, he worked a series of jobs, including stints as a dealer at a casino and in human resources at a horse racetrack.

He entered government in 2002 as deputy state treasurer. In the sometimes surly world of New Mexico politics, opponents accused Ben **Lujan** of nepotism when his son landed that job. Ben Ray was then accused of riding his father's coattails when he took a seat on the Public Regulation Commission in 2005. The family has shrugged off those criticisms, sometimes with a smile. **Lujan's** office features a photo of his father doing yard work with a chainsaw, while he stands to the side. After he had joked with his father that he might become the more famous **Lujan**, "this picture was kind of a reminder to say, 'Dad's still in charge.' "

Lujan entered the 2008 House race to succeed Democrat Tom Udall, who successfully ran for the Senate. He campaigned energetically while taking advantage of his family's fundraising connections. He beat five other primary candidates, taking more than 41 percent of the vote. The primary was the hard part. In November,**Lujan** took 57 percent in the heavily Democratic district. He hasn't been seriously challenged since then.

Source: CQ Member Profiles
Copyright 2014 Congressional Quarterly Inc. All Rights Reserved.

LOAD-DATE: April 13, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: NEWSLETTERS

Copyright 2014 CQ-Roll Call, Inc. All Rights Reserved

157 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Quarterly Member Profiles

May 5, 2014 Monday

Rep. Ben Ray Lujan (D-N.M.)

LENGTH: 1129 words

CQ Politics in America Profile

(Updated: May 5, 2014)

Politics has been a going concern in Santa Fe since 1610, when the Spanish made it a provincial capital. **Lujan** grew up surrounded by that tradition and proved to be a student of it as well: He is good in a room and comes across as a friendly, confident and passionate liberal.

Lujan credits his personal style to his father, a former ironworker who served in the New Mexico House for almost four decades and was its speaker for the last 12 years of his life. (Ben **Lujan** died of lung cancer in 2012.) "I was able to learn from dad the importance of talking to people and treating everyone with respect," he said.

While tackling a policy agenda heavy in energy and technology, he does a lot of legwork for the Democratic Party. In his third term, he has political jobs with the potential to increase his national exposure. House Democratic leaders named him one of the party's 10 chief deputy whips. As both parties ponder the electoral implications of the growing Hispanic population, **Lujan** serves as the first vice chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

And he's a co-chairman (along with Henry Cuellar of Texas) of the Latino Council for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. "Sadly, in many parts of the country ... the only time [Latino voters] were reached out to or spoken to was two weeks before Election Day," **Lujan** said in 2014. His work for the DCCC involves networking with voters, potential candidates and donors -- he's an accomplished fundraiser.

Some people would claim that **Lujan** also climbed the ladder on the policy side of things by joining the Energy and Commerce Committee at the start of the 113th Congress (2013-14). The panel's broad jurisdiction allows him to continue work he started on the Natural Resources and Science, Space and Technology committees -- chiefly, dealing with New Mexico's national laboratories and energy sector.

The Energy Department operates the Los Alamos lab in **Lujan's** district and the Sandia lab in Albuquerque. Both facilities have dealt with budget crunches, and **Lujan's** strategy for stabilizing them is to "broaden the mission" and increase the number of stakeholders. **Lujan** often argues for legislative language compelling agencies -- such as the Department of Homeland Security -- to use the labs for their research and development needs whenever practicable. He wouldn't mind if the White House directed the labs to work on improvements to energy transmission and storage.

He also wants labs to work more closely with private industry in developing and testing technology to get it to the market. He formed the Technology Transfer Caucus in 2011 with Republican Frank R. Wolf of Virginia, and he now co-chairs it with Gus Bilirakis of Florida. According to **Lujan**, the Energy Department has been lax in using tech transfer programs that are already authorized. He'd like a renaissance for Cooperative Research and Development Agreements, which partner businesses with federal labs; though popular in the 1990s, CRDAs now require too much investment from the private sector, meaning only deep-pocketed companies can use them, he said.

Energy has been on **Lujan's** plate since his first elective office: As a member of the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission, he helped implement the state's standard for renewable energy production. He favors tax credits for such production and a national standard. He also says there's a long-term economic argument that isn't being made: "What happens if you have buildup of electricity generation in the country, and you get to a point where all those assets are depreciated and the cost of the fuel is free?"

Lujan ramped up his rhetoric on climate change starting in 2013, making more public statements on the issue as a member of the Safe Climate Caucus. Many New Mexicans "wouldn't consider themselves environmentalists or conservationists, but it's been a way of life" in the high desert, he said. **Lujan** joins those Democrats who try to link various natural disasters, such as forest fires that have damaged his district, to climate change.

On the Communications and Technology Subcommittee, **Lujan** voices his support for federal programs to expand broadband and cellular networks into the rural areas of his district. "From a safety perspective, there should be connectivity," he said, as first-responders try to locate anyone in distress. The Public Regulation Commission oversaw utilities, telecommunications, motor carriers and insurance companies, so **Lujan** has some experience in the consumer protection issues that come before the full committee.

Lujan grew up in the small farming community of Nambe, just north of Santa Fe. His great-grandparents, grandparents and parents all lived in his current home. **Lujan's** grandfather was a sheep herder, and the family still raises sheep on the land. He won a victory for the state's rural interests in 2014; a reauthorization of farm programs allows groups managing acequias -- small irrigation channels that sometimes predate the United States -- to apply for funds in the Agriculture Department's Environmental Quality Incentives Program.

Ben **Lujan** entered the state House in 1975, and his son remembers wandering the halls of the New Mexico Legislature and attending political events from an early age. After high school, he took classes at the University of New Mexico, though he did not receive a college degree until 2007, when he completed his course work at New Mexico Highlands University. In between, he worked a series of jobs, including stints as a dealer at a casino and in human resources at a horse racetrack.

He entered government in 2002 as deputy state treasurer. In the sometimes surly world of New Mexico politics, opponents accused Ben **Lujan** of nepotism when his son landed that job. Ben Ray was then accused of riding his father's coattails when he took a seat on the Public Regulation Commission in 2005. The family has shrugged off those criticisms, sometimes with a smile. **Lujan's** office features a photo of his father doing yard work with a chainsaw, while he stands to the side. After he had joked with his father that he might become the more famous **Lujan**, "this picture was kind of a reminder to say, 'Dad's still in charge.' "

Lujan entered the 2008 House race to succeed Democrat Tom Udall, who successfully ran for the Senate. He campaigned energetically while taking advantage of his family's fundraising connections. He beat five other primary candidates, taking more than 41 percent of the vote. The primary was the hard part. In November,**Lujan** took 57 percent in the heavily Democratic district. He hasn't been seriously challenged since then.

Source: CQ Member Profiles
Copyright 2014 Congressional Quarterly Inc. All Rights Reserved.

LOAD-DATE: April 22, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: NEWSLETTERS

Copyright 2014 CQ-Roll Call, Inc. All Rights Reserved

158 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

May 5, 2014

LUJAN ANNOUNCES WINNER OF 2014 CONGRESSIONAL ART COMPETITION;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 282 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced at a reception at the City of Santa Fe Arts Commission Community Gallery on Saturday May 4th that Davin Nez of Tohatchi High School is this year's winner of the Congressional Art Competition.

"Just as in year's past, the submissions for the 2014 Congressional Art Competition showcased the tremendous talent of New Mexico's young artists. These students have shown great potential and are continuing a proud tradition of artistic excellence that is a hallmark of New Mexico. I want to thank all the contestants for sharing their work and I hope that they will continue to develop their skills," Congressman **Lujan** said. "I would like to congratulate Davin Nez for winning this prestigious honor and I look forward to welcoming him to Washington, D.C. as we honor all of the nation's winners. Davin's artwork will be displayed in our nation's Capitol, where visitors from across the country can view it. In addition, the other top pieces will hang in my district offices across Northern New Mexico for all our neighbors, friends, and family to see."

Davin won for his entry "Tribute to the Elders: Navajo Woman"

The top 6 pieces of artwork were recognized out of a field of 56 entries. The winning entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year. Those works of art placing second through 6 will be displayed in **Lujan's** district offices across Northern New Mexico.

Davin Nez's, "Tribute to the Elders: Navajo Woman"

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-announces-winner-of-2014-congressional-art-competition/

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

159 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

May 5, 2014 Monday

LUJAN ANNOUNCES WINNER OF 2014 CONGRESSIONAL ART COMPETITION

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 288 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced at a reception at the City of Santa Fe Arts Commission Community Gallery on Saturday May 4th that Davin Nez of Tohatchi High School is this year's winner of the Congressional Art Competition.

"Just as in year's past, the submissions for the 2014 Congressional Art Competition showcased the tremendous talent of New Mexico's young artists. These students have shown great potential and are continuing a proud tradition of artistic excellence that is a hallmark of New Mexico. I want to thank all the contestants for sharing their work and I hope that they will continue to develop their skills," Congressman **Lujan** said. "I would like to congratulate Davin Nez for winning this prestigious honor and I look forward to welcoming him to Washington, D.C. as we honor all of the nation's winners. Davin's artwork will be displayed in our nation's Capitol, where visitors from across the country can view it. In addition, the other top pieces will hang in my district offices across Northern New Mexico for all our neighbors, friends, and family to see."

Davin won for his entry "Tribute to the Elders: Navajo Woman"

The top 6 pieces of artwork were recognized out of a field of 56 entries. The winning entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year. Those works of art placing second through 6 will be displayed in **Lujan's** district offices across Northern New Mexico.

Davin Nez's, "Tribute to the Elders: Navajo Woman"

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** congratulates Davin Nez on winning this year's Congressional Art Competition.

LOAD-DATE: May 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

160 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

May 5, 2014 Monday 2:20 AM EST

Lujan Announces Winner of 2014 Congressional Art Competition

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 303 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced at a reception at the City of Santa Fe Arts Commission Community Gallery on Saturday May 4th that Davin Nez of Tohatchi High School is this year's winner of the Congressional Art Competition.

"Just as in year's past, the submissions for the 2014 Congressional Art Competition showcased the tremendous talent of New Mexico's young artists. These students have shown great potential and are continuing a proud tradition of artistic excellence that is a hallmark of New Mexico. I want to thank all the contestants for sharing their work and I hope that they will continue to develop their skills," Congressman **Lujan** said. "I would like to congratulate Davin Nez for winning this prestigious honor and I look forward to welcoming him to Washington, D.C. as we honor all of the nation's winners. Davin's artwork will be displayed in our nation's Capitol, where visitors from across the country can view it. In addition, the other top pieces will hang in my district offices across Northern New Mexico for all our neighbors, friends, and family to see."

Davin won for his entry "Tribute to the Elders: Navajo Woman"

The top 6 pieces of artwork were recognized out of a field of 56 entries. The winning entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year. Those works of art placing second through 6 will be displayed in **Lujan's** district offices across Northern New Mexico.

Davin Nez's, "Tribute to the Elders: Navajo Woman"

Photo omitted.

View photo at http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-announces-winner-of-2014-congressional-art-competition/.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140506-4725345 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

May 2, 2014

Lujan Grisham sends letter to President, calls for 2015 Aging Conference;
Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 577 words

Today, Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01), former Secretary of the New Mexico Department of Aging and Long-Term Services, along with 29 Members of Congress sent a letter to President Obama asking him to host a 2015 White House Conference on Aging.

"I am thrilled to have my colleagues' support to send this letter to the President," said Rep. **Lujan** Grisham. "The White House Conference on Aging is the first step in addressing the challenges of caring for an aging population and dealing with the increasing costs of long-term care. We must ensure that our health care system is viable and seniors have the care they need."

The last conference was held in 2005 and hosted by President George W. Bush.

Full text of the letter and a list of signers is below and is linked here http://lujangrisham.house.gov/uploadedfiles/white_house_conference_on_aging_05.02.2014.pdf.

May 2, 2014

The President

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As we approach the 50th anniversary of the Medicare and Medicaid programs, along with the 50th anniversary of the Older Americans Act, we write to encourage you to host a White House Conference on Aging next year.

As you know, the White House Conference on Aging has been held with some regularity for more than 50 years. The last conference, held in 2005, brought together approximately 1200 delegates from across the nation to make recommendations to the President and the Congress on aging policy for the next decade. Those discussions spurred dialogue on the issue of long-term care and preceded congressional action on the Older Americans Act in 2006 and the Elder Justice Act of 2010.

The conference is particularly important in light of the changing demographics of our population. By 2030, there will be more than 72 million older Americans, making up 19% of the total population. This growth will have profound impacts on our health care system, federal health and retirement programs, and our nation's debt and deficit. In a time of financial uncertainty, it is particularly important that we leverage all available resources to ensure that this growing segment of our population is well cared for.

The 2015 White House Conference on Aging would provide a forum to discuss these issues and develop the immediate and long-term solutions needed to address the challenges of an aging population. It would allow policymakers and advocates from across the country to come together to develop a comprehensive approach that puts the needs of older Americans and their families first.

We thank you for your attention to this request, and we look forward to working with you to continue dialogue on these important issues.

Sincerely,

Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01)

Frank Pallone, Jr. (NJ-06)

Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30)

Matt Cartwright (PA-17)

Suzanne Bonamici (OR-01)

Yvette D. Clark (NY-09)

Jan Schakowsky (IL-09)

Joaquin Castro (TX-20)

Gwen Moore (WI-04)

Cheri Bustos (IL-17)

Marcy Kaptur (OH-09)

Tim Ryan (OH-13)

Sam Farr (CA-20)

Madeleine Bordallo (GU)

Dina Titus (NV-01)

Suzan DelBene (WA-01)

Earl Blumenauer (OR-03)

Carol Shea-Porter (NH-01)

Ruben Hinojosa (TX-15)

Mark Pocan (WI-02)

Lois Frankel (FL-22)

Ben Ray Lujan (NM-03)

Collin Peterson (MN-07)

Scott Peters (CA-52)

Joyce Beatty (OH-03)

Danny K. Davis (IL-07)

Chris Van Hollen (MD-08)

Raul Ruiz (CA-36)

Julia Brownley (CA-26)

Kathy Castor (FL-14)

Read this original document at: http://lujangrisham.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=378766

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

May 2, 2014 Friday

LUJAN GRISHAM SENDS LETTER TO PRESIDENT, CALLS FOR 2015 AGING CONFERENCE

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 560 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham:

Today, Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01), former Secretary of the New Mexico Department of Aging and Long-Term Services, along with 29 Members of Congress sent a letter to President Obama asking him to host a 2015 White House Conference on Aging.

"I am thrilled to have my colleagues' support to send this letter to the President," said Rep. **Lujan** Grisham. "The White House Conference on Aging is the first step in addressing the challenges of caring for an aging population and dealing with the increasing costs of long-term care. We must ensure that our health care system is viable and seniors have the care they need."

The last conference was held in 2005 and hosted by President George W. Bush.

Full text of the letter and a list of signers is below and is linked here.

May 2, 2014

The President

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As we approach the 50th anniversary of the Medicare and Medicaid programs, along with the 50th anniversary of the Older Americans Act, we write to encourage you to host a White House Conference on Aging next year.

As you know, the White House Conference on Aging has been held with some regularity for more than 50 years. The last conference, held in 2005, brought together approximately 1200 delegates from across the nation to make recommendations to the President and the Congress on aging policy for the next decade. Those discussions spurred dialogue on the issue of long-term care and preceded congressional action on the Older Americans Act in 2006 and the Elder Justice Act of 2010.

The conference is particularly important in light of the changing demographics of our population. By 2030, there will be more than 72 million older Americans, making up 19% of the total population. This growth will have profound impacts on our health care system, federal health and retirement programs, and our nation's debt and deficit. In a time of financial uncertainty, it is particularly important that we leverage all available resources to ensure that this growing segment of our population is well cared for.

The 2015 White House Conference on Aging would provide a forum to discuss these issues and develop the immediate and long-term solutions needed to address the challenges of an aging population. It would allow policymakers and advocates from across the country to come together to develop a comprehensive approach that puts the needs of older Americans and their families first.

We thank you for your attention to this request, and we look forward to working with you to continue dialogue on these important issues.

Sincerely,

Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01)

Frank Pallone, Jr. (NJ-06)

Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30)

Matt Cartwright (PA-17)

Suzanne Bonamici (OR-01)

Yvette D. Clark (NY-09)

Jan Schakowsky (IL-09)

Joaquin Castro (TX-20)

Gwen Moore (WI-04)

Cheri Bustos (IL-17)

Marcy Kaptur (OH-09)

Tim Ryan (OH-13)

Sam Farr (CA-20)

Madeleine Bordallo (GU)

Dina Titus (NV-01)

Suzan DelBene (WA-01)

Earl Blumenauer (OR-03)

Carol Shea-Porter (NH-01)

Ruben Hinojosa (TX-15)

Mark Pocan (WI-02)

Lois Frankel (FL-22)

Ben Ray Lujan (NM-03)

Collin Peterson (MN-07)

Scott Peters (CA-52)

Joyce Beatty (OH-03)

Danny K. Davis (IL-07)

Chris Van Hollen (MD-08)

Raul Ruiz (CA-36)

Julia Brownley (CA-26)

Kathy Castor (FL-14)

LOAD-DATE: May 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

May 2, 2014 Friday 11:46 PM EST

Lujan Grisham Sends Letter to President, Calls for 2015 Aging Conference

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 586 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M. (1st CD), issued the following news release:

Today, Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01), former Secretary of the New Mexico Department of Aging and Long-Term Services, along with 29 Members of Congress sent a letter to President Obama asking him to host a 2015 White House Conference on Aging.

"I am thrilled to have my colleagues' support to send this letter to the President," said Rep. **Lujan** Grisham. "The White House Conference on Aging is the first step in addressing the challenges of caring for an aging population and dealing with the increasing costs of long-term care. We must ensure that our health care system is viable and seniors have the care they need."

The last conference was held in 2005 and hosted by President George W. Bush.

Full text of the letter and a list of signers is below and is linked here.http://lujangrisham.house.gov/uploadedfiles/white_house_conference_on_aging_05.02.2014.pdf

May 2, 2014

The President

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As we approach the 50th anniversary of the Medicare and Medicaid programs, along with the 50th anniversary of the Older Americans Act, we write to encourage you to host a White House Conference on Aging next year.

As you know, the White House Conference on Aging has been held with some regularity for more than 50 years. The last conference, held in 2005, brought together approximately 1200 delegates from across the nation to make recommendations to the President and the Congress on aging policy for the next decade. Those discussions spurred dialogue on the issue of long-term care and preceded congressional action on the Older Americans Act in 2006 and the Elder Justice Act of 2010.

The conference is particularly important in light of the changing demographics of our population. By 2030, there will be more than 72 million older Americans, making up 19% of the total population. This growth will have profound impacts on our health care system, federal health and retirement programs, and our nation's debt and deficit. In a time of financial uncertainty, it is particularly important that we leverage all available resources to ensure that this growing segment of our population is well cared for.

The 2015 White House Conference on Aging would provide a forum to discuss these issues and develop the immediate and long-term solutions needed to address the challenges of an aging population. It would allow policymakers and advocates from across the country to come together to develop a comprehensive approach that puts the needs of older Americans and their families first.

We thank you for your attention to this request, and we look forward to working with you to continue dialogue on these important issues.

Sincerely,

Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01)

Frank Pallone, Jr. (NJ-06)

Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30)

Matt Cartwright (PA-17)

Suzanne Bonamici (OR-01)

Yvette D. Clark (NY-09)

Jan Schakowsky (IL-09)

Joaquin Castro (TX-20)

Gwen Moore (WI-04)

Cheri Bustos (IL-17)

Marcy Kaptur (OH-09)

Tim Ryan (OH-13)

Sam Farr (CA-20)

Madeleine Bordallo (GU)

Dina Titus (NV-01)

Suzan DelBene (WA-01)

Earl Blumenauer (OR-03)

Carol Shea-Porter (NH-01)

Ruben Hinojosa (TX-15)

Mark Pocan (WI-02)

Lois Frankel (FL-22)

Ben Ray Lujan (NM-03)

Collin Peterson (MN-07)

Scott Peters (CA-52)

Joyce Beatty (OH-03)

Danny K. Davis (IL-07)

Chris Van Hollen (MD-08)

Raul Ruiz (CA-36)

Julia Brownley (CA-26)

Kathy Castor (FL-14)

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TacordaCheng-140503-4723408 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: May 3, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Political Transcript Wire

May 1, 2014 Thursday

REP. TIM MURPHY HOLDS A HEARING ON PRESCRIPTION DRUG AND HEROIN ABUSE

LENGTH: 20517 words

(CORRECTED COPY)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS HOLDS A HEARING ON HOLDS A HEARING ON PRESCRIPTION DRUG AND HEROIN ABUSE

APRIL 29, 2014

SPEAKERS: REP. TIM MURPHY, R-PA. CHAIRMAN REP. MICHAEL C. BURGESS, R-TEXAS REP. MARSHA BLACKBURN, R-TENN. REP. PHIL GINGREY, R-GA. REP. STEVE SCALISE, R-LA. REP. CORY GARDNER, R-COLO. REP. MORGAN GRIFFITH, R-VA. REP. GREGG HARPER, R-MISS. REP. PETE OLSON, R-TEXAS REP. RENEE ELLMERS, R-N.C. REP. BILL JOHNSON, R-OHIO REP. BILLY LONG, R-MO. REP. JOE L. BARTON, R-TEXAS EX OFFICIO REP. FRED UPTON, R-MICH. EX OFFICIO

REP. DIANA DEGETTE, D-COLO. RANKING MEMBER REP. GENE GREEN, D-TEXAS REP. JAN SCHAKOWSKY, D-ILL. REP. KATHY CASTOR, D-FLA. REP. BRUCE BRALEY, D-IOWA REP. G.K. BUTTERFIELD, D-N.C. REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M. REP. PAUL TONKO, D-N.Y. REP. PETER WELCH, D-VT. REP. JOHN D. DINGELL, D-MICH. EX OFFICIO REP. HENRY A. WAXMAN, D-CALIF. EX OFFICIO

WITNESSES: MR. JOSEPH T. RANNAZZISI, DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF DIVERSION CONTROL, DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

MR. MICHAEL BOTTICELLI, ACTING DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY, EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,

DR. DANIEL M. SOSIN, ACTING DIRECTOR, NATIONAL CENTER FOR INJURY PREVENTION AND CONTROL, CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

DR. NORA D. VOLKOW, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DRUG ABUSE, NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

DR. H. WESTLEY CLARK, DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT, SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION [*] BURGESS: Good morning. I now convene the hearing of the Subcommittee of Oversight Investigations entitled "Examining the Growing Problems of Prescriptions Drug and Heroine Abuse." Just a brief housekeeping detail for those of you who are expecting to see Dr. Murphy here in the Chair, he was called away back to his district for a family issue, so you're stuck me as the saying goes, but we will get through this together.

On the issue of prescription drug and heroine abuse, these separate and distinct problems, but unfortunately they do share a common endpoint addiction abuse, overdose and death.

As we know the abuse of prescription drugs and illegal drugs such heroine have plagued our nation for decades. However, over the last several months, there have been increasing reports that prescription drug and heroine abuse in communities around the country continues to grow. Sadly, those reports indicate that overdose deaths as a result of prescription drug and heroine are also on the rise. Families have lost sons and daughters, mothers and fathers to this addiction.

Data from the Federal agencies charged with addressing drug abuse paint a startling picture of the severity of the public health crisis. Prescription drug abuse kills more than 16,000 people a year. From 2007 to 2012, heroine use rose by almost 80 percent in this country and 3,000 people died each year from heroine overdoses.

The United States Attorney General Eric Holder declared recently that heroine abuse constitutes "An urgent and growing public health crisis". Certainly, there is a law enforcement aspect to solving this problem and stopping the bad actors who illegally distribute prescription drugs or traffic heroine. But the other part of the equation is treating the addiction, the addiction to prescription drug and heroine and preventing deaths. The answer to a burgeoning heroine epidemic, as the administration has called it, is not to wage war on all opioids. To address a complex to solution cannot be simple.

The purpose of today's hearing is to examine the federal response, including the public health response to prescription drug and heroine abuse. Our oversight has revealed that this is a complex problem. Those who abuse drugs also have often an underlying mental illness. Treating their addiction means that the underlying mental illness must be successfully diagnosed and treated.

As testimony of Mr. Botticelli states, the substance abuse is a "progressive disease." Those who suffer from addiction often started at young age with alcohol, maybe marijuana move on to other drugs like opioids. In examining opioid abuse, we must also consider the factors that lead people to abuse and what we are doing to address those factors.

Many Americans also suffer from chronic and debilitating pain. It's important to remember that the millions of individuals who safely use opioid narcotics under the guidance of their physicians, pain and we that a loved one would never have to suffer is involved. As Dr. Volkow of NIH recognizes in her testimony, we need to recognize the special character of prescription drug abuse. On the one hand, we have a growing prescription drug and opiate addiction. On the other, we have a very real need for these drugs to treat chronic pain, treat acute pain and alleviate suffering where it exists, especially in patients with chronic conditions who are suffering from illnesses like cancer. These drugs are safe when used as directed. It is their improper use that leads to abuse, overdose and death.

Over recent years, we've heard a great deal about doctor shopping, about pill mills, and about the efforts of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Plans to address these problems. We need to ensure that doctors and pharmacists have the tools at their disposal to adequately fill their role in ensuring appropriate prescribing. But addicts also get these drugs through illegal channels, such as rogue Internet pharmacies, off the street and obtaining them through family members who may have out dated prescription. Although some question whether federal efforts to crackdown and prevent prescription drug abuse have contributed to the recent rise in heroine abuse and whether this should have been anticipated, there's no question that both are on the rise. And as a consequence we have a responsibility to recognize and solve that problem.

While most prescription drug abusers do not go on to abuse heroine there is data from the Whitehouse Office of National Drug Control Policy and the Substance Abuse in Mental Health Services Administration that indicates over 80 percent of people who started using heroine in 2008 to 2010 had previously abused prescription drugs.

The federal government is devoting resources to drug control programs. Some would say significant--some would say significant resources over $25 billion annually, of which about $10 billion goes towards drug abuse, prevention and treatment programs across 19 different federal agencies. We

will ask today's witnesses to identify the specific policies to programs, the initiatives that have the most effective in combating prescription drug and heroine abuse and which have not. With 19 agencies having a hand in over 70 drug controlled programs we need to know what is working and what is not. What can we do better? Is oversight by the federal agencies also an important issue as a significant funding a block granted to the states for their treatment programs.

Testifying before us today are representatives of five the agencies with lead roles in addressing opiate abuse. Mr. Michael Botticelli, the Acting Director of the White House Office national Drug Control Policy, Mr. Daniel Sosin of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Nora Volkow of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, Dr. Westley Clark of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and Mr. Joseph Rannazzisi of the Drug Enforcement Agency. This is a prestigious panel, and we are very grateful for you presence here today. We certainly look forward to your testimony. I would now like to recognize for five minutes for the purposes of opening statement the Ranking Member Ms. DeGette of Colorado. DEGETTE: Thank you so much Mr. Burgess and we're glad to have you presiding today.

Prescription drug and heroine abuse is a public health crisis, and its growing everyday. In many communities across the country, we're seeing an epidemic of opioid overdose deaths. I'm interested in learning from the panel about what more we can do to prevent the abuse of these drugs and also to save lives. The non-medical use of opiates has escalated in recent years. In 2011, hospitals tallied nearly half a million emergency room visits related to these medications, the number of these visits nearly tripled over a seven-year period. The link between prescription opioid use and heroine abuse is also deeply troubling. And as the chairman noted, only a small percentage of people who used pain relievers go on to abuse heroine but the opposite is not true. The vast majority of those who abuse heroine previous abused prescription drugs.

While far more people can continue to abuse prescription drugs, the number of individuals who reported using heroine nearly doubled between 2007 and 2012. There's also evidence to suggest the people who abuse prescription drugs move on to heroine as pain relievers become less available or too costly. At 2012 study in the New England Journal of Medicine found heroine use rose dramatically after the introduction of an abused deterrent form of Oxycotin. The use of drugs that ultimately lead to addiction and abuse often begins innocently.

The majority of people who illegally use a prescription drug get that drug from a friend or a family member often and sometimes the drug has been stolen. But in other times, a parent may even give the drug to a child unaware of the risks. We must educate patients on the dangers of abuse of these drugs as well as the need to properly store and dispose of them. If we could reduce inappropriate access to drugs, we can also reduce the incidence of their abuse. We must change the public perception of the prescription opioids. We face the inaccurate perception that just because the drug legal, it is somehow less harmless, less addictive and less risky.

Providers should also be better educated on the use and potential abuse of these drugs, so they can be more effective in recognizing problems of abuse and in turn more effective in educating and treating the patients. Study show that even brief interventions by health care providers can be successful in reducing or eliminating substance abuse by patients who began abusing prescription opioids but have not yet become addicted to them.

When prescribed appropriately, these medicines provide much needed relief and many patients have had their suffering reduced by opiate pain killers. However, a patient with an acute short-term pain may be able to find relief from a less addictive pain killer. Prescription drug abuse is a public health problem and it's not just law enforcement problem. Reducing this abuse will require a multi- faceted approach and partnership among federal state and local agencies. Every state should effectively use prescription drug monitoring programs. These databases help states identify and address drug diversion so they should be as robust and effective as possible. State should be able to share information with due regard for privacy expectations. Information should be added to the databases regularly including by encouraging prescribers and pharmacist to use the databases. When used, they can help doctors and public health authorities to prevent and respond to the potential devastating effects of prescription drug abuse.

I'm interested in learning from our witnesses today about the effects of this medication assisted treatment that we're hearing about, and also whether we have the resources to meet the demand for these treatment programs. I'm also interested in learning about the state of research into new medications with lower abuse potential and how we can expand access to over doors interventions like Nexium.

Prescription opioid and heroine abuse as you said Mr. Chairman is a serious public health treat. I look forward to hearing from all of the witnesses and to working with all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to ensure that Congress plays a vital role in protecting families from the growing danger of these drugs and yield back the bouncing my time.

BURGESS: The young lady yields back. The Chair now recognizes gentlelady from Tennessee. Five minutes for purposes of opening statement, please.

BLACKBURN: Thank you Mr. Chairman. And I know we are all cheering for Congressman Murphy and his daughter as they are about to welcome that new baby into their family. What an exciting, exciting time. I can only tell you the joys of being a grandparent are marvelous. It is a big part of my day.

Well, I thank you for the attention that we are putting on this issue. Prescription drug and heroine abuse are epidemic in our country. And I think you can tell by what is being said in this room this morning. It is an issue that our Committee is concerned about. And I applaud the efforts of the committee to take a very thoughtful approach in process as how we move forward. It is clear that we need to understand the factors that have contributed to the rise and prescription drug and heroin abuse.

We need to understand which prevention treatment and law enforcement efforts are the most effective in reducing the abuse of prescription drug and heroin. Another side of this issue are the millions of Americans who have legitimate need for prescription medication for the control of pain. Reduction of anxiety began the overall improvement of their lives. These medications must be available to them. HR 4069 the Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act to the 2013 that is a bill by Representative Marino and I. It will establish a combating prescription drug abuse working group.

This group will include members from the DEA, FDA, ONDCP, state Attorney Generals, patient groups, pharmacies industry, healthcare providers and others. Within one year of enactment, the working group shall provide. They must do this provide recommendation is a congress on initiatives to reduce prescription drug diversion and abuse. We think this is the right approach. We welcome each about were witnesses we look forward to hearing your testimony and to the discussion. And with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back my time or to anyone who is seeking time.

BURGESS: Seem no one seeking time. Gentlelady yields back. The Chair now recognizes the Ranking Member of the Full Committee, Mr. Maxman, five minutes for opening statement, please.

WAXMAN: Thank you Mr. Chairman for holding this important hearing today.

We're here to discuss the epidemic of opioid abuse. The numbers of stark each year approximately 17,000 people die from prescription opioid overdoses, and 3,000 died from heroin overdoses.

For far too long, prescription opioid pain relievers were prescribed too easily, without enough attention paid to the potential risks, and a large number people became addicted. Some of those who became addicted to prescription opioid eventually moved on to heroin, because that's a cheaper alternative offering the same high.

Fortunately, there are steps that we can take to fight this problem. I appreciate our witnesses being here today to discuss their efforts to educate the public and providers about the dangerous of abusing these drugs. We'll also hear how we can change prescribing practices monitor the use opioids, effectively treat those who are addicted, and investigate and prosecute those involve in diverting and trafficking these drugs.

Our five witnesses Mr. Rannazzisi from DEA, Mr. Botticelli from ONDCP, Mr. Sosin from CDC, Mr. Volkow from NIH, and Dr. Clark from SAMHSA represent an all-star panel of experts. We're delighted that you're here.

There are many reasons that be thankful for the launch of the Affordable Care act. Let me repeat that, there are many reasons to be thankful for the launch of the Affordable Care Act. One that is often overlooked is the help the law offers to individuals addicted to prescription opioids and heroin. The lack of insurance and the high cost of treatment can presented an insurmountable barrier to receiving the health they need.

The Affordable Care Act addresses this problem by expanding insurance coverage and requiring all policies to cover the concepts substance abuse services. This will mean that millions of individuals with addiction disorders will have access to the tools they need to have break their addictions.

We need to build upon this hopeful step and increase our efforts to comeback this epidemic.

And Mr. Chairman at this point, I wish to yield the balance of my time to Welch from Vermont.
WELCH: I thank the member from California for yielding. And I thank the Committee for having this hearing. But I want to give some credit to Governor Peter Shumlin of Vermont. He just something extremely unusual. He dedicated his entire stay to the state address to the single problem. And that was of all his decision for two reasons. One, most of the times the state to the state is a under lists objectives and hopes. This got very specific about one topic.

But second, in taking this on, he made public what people new was real but didn't want to acknowledge. And what we seen in Vermont as a result in that, was that we're facing what is the terrible problem but it creates enormous anxiety for the folks that are in the grip of this addiction. But their families -- and before we begin talking about this, it was restricted to our law enforcement folks and our mental health folks who are dealing with these isolated individuals, as though, they were the only ones in the world that face this incredible challenge.

And what Governor Shumlin did is he brought out in the open and that was enlarged part because he's travels around and governors do get around. Just talking to our law enforcement people like Chief Taylor in St. Albans, like Chief Baker in Rutland. And they were dealing on the street with kids that they knew and with adults that they knew who had jobs. But have this horrible addiction and they have to deal with it.

And what our police kept saying who have front line responsibilities, you can not arrest your way out of this. And there is a distinction that they make between the dealers who came from out of state and starts deflecting our kids and other with this opioid addiction, you know, throw to book at them and forget about them.

But a lot of the kids who are in the grip, they are kids. They got a future. They got a challenge. And what has happen in our communities with the leadership of our police and our mental health people, and our Mayor like Liz Gamache in Saint Albans and like Chris Louras in Rutland is that by bringing this out into the open, it helped us talk about this in concrete ways so that there's not only the treatment program the (inaudible) program which I hope you might talk about. But it also is allowing parents in the community to see this is something where we all have to be engage to provide some basis to support for these kids and adults who want not to be in the grip of this horrible opioid addiction. So, I thank you the committee for having this hearing and making it a collective effort to try to bring our resources together to help people get hold. Thank you.

BURGESS: The gentleman yields back. I would now like to introduce the witnesses on the panel for today's hearing. Mr. Michael Botticelli is the Acting Director of the Office Of National Drug Control Policy in the Executive Office of the President, Dr. Daniel Sosin, he is the Acting Director of the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control at the Center For Disease Prevention, Dr. Nora Volkow is the Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse at the National Institute of Health, Dr, Wesley Clark is the Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment within the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and Mr. Joseph Rannazzisi is the Deputy Assistant

Administrator in the Office Diversion Control within the Drug Enforcement Agency at the United States Department of Justice.

I will swear in the witnesses as you're aware to committee is holding -- this committee is holding an investigative hearing, and when doing so has have the practice of taking testimony under oath. Do you have any objections to testifying under oath this morning?

Seeing a negative response from the witnesses, the Chair then advises that under the rules to the House or the rules to the Committee, you are entitled to be advised by council. Do any of our witnesses desired to be advised by council during testimony today? And negative response was received from the panel witnesses. In that case, if you would please rise and raise your right hand I will swear you in.

Do you swear that the testimony you are about to give this the truth the whole truth and nothing by the truth.

Let it be noted that the witnesses answer affirmatively. You're now under oath. In subject to penalty set forward in Title 18, Section 1001 of the United States Code. We would now welcome a five-minute summary of your written statements. We will start with Mr. Botticelli and moved down the table.

BOTTICELLI: Chairman Burgess, Ranking Member DeGette, and members of the Subcommittee. I want to thank you for the opportunity to appear today to discuss the tremendous public health and safety issues surrounding the diversion and abuse of opioid drug, including many prescription pain killers and heroin in the United States.

I know that given reason media attention to overdose test. There was high in public interest in the threat of opioid drug use. But this is something many communities have been dealing with her very long time and it's a matter of great concern for this administration.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drug overdose deaths primarily driven by prescription opioids, now surpass homicides and traffic crashes and the number of injury deaths in America.

In 2010 the latest here (ph) for which nationwide data are available. Approximately, 100 Americans died on average from overdose everyday. Prescription analgesics were involved, you know, most 17,000 of those deaths that year and heroin was involved in about 3,000.

In more recent data posted by several states indicates that death from heroin continue to increase. While heroin use remains relatively low in the United States as compared to other drugs, there has been a troubling increase in the number of people using heroin in recent years, from 373,000 past year users in 2007 to 669,000 in 2012.

It is clear that we cannot arrest our way out of the drug problem. Science has shown us that drug addiction is the disease of the brain, a disease that can be prevented, treated and from which one, can recover.

We know that substance use disorders include those driven by opioids are progressive disease. Many people who develop a substance use disorder begin using at a young age and often start with alcohol, tobacco, and or marijuana. We know that as an individual's abuse of prescription opioids becomes more frequent or chronic, that person is more inclined to purchase the drugs from dealers or obtain prescriptions from multiple doctors rather than simply getting it from a friend or relative for free or without asking.

This progression of an opioid use disorder may lead an individual to pursue a lower cost alternatives such as heroin. With these circumstances in mind, we release the Obama administration's inaugural National Drug Control Strategy in 2010 in which we set out a wide array of actions to expand public health interventions and criminal justice reforms to reduce drug use and its consequences in the

United States. That strategy noted opioid overdose as a growing national crisis and set specificals for reducing drug use including heroin.

Three years ago, the Administration released the first comprehensive action plan to combat the prescription drug abuse epidemic. The Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Plan strikes a balance between the need to prevent diversion and abuse and the need to ensure legitimate access to prescription pain medications.

The plan expands on the National Drug Control Strategy and brings together a variety of federal state, local and tribal partners to support one, the expansion of state based prescription drug monitoring programs, two, more convenient and environmentally responsible disposal methods for removing expired or unneeded medication from the home, three, education for patients and training of healthcare providers in the proper prescribing practices and treatment of substance use disorders, and four, reducing the prevalence of pill mills and doctor shopping through enforcement efforts.

This work has been paralleled by efforts to address heroin trafficking and use. The Administration is also focusing on several key areas to reduce and prevent opioid overdoses including educating the public about overdose risk and interventions, increasing access to naloxone and emergency overdose reversal medication. And working with states to promote Good Samaritan laws and other measures that can help save lives, because police are often the first on seen of an overdose, the Administration strongly encourages local law enforcement agencies to train and equip their personnel with this life-saving drug.

It is not enough, however, to save a life from an overdose. A smart public health approach requires us to catch the signs and symptoms of substances early before it develops into a chronic disorder. We have been encouraging the use of screening and brief intervention to catch risky substance use before it becomes an addiction.

And since only 11 percent of those who need substance use disorder treatment in 2012 actually received it, the Administration has dramatically expanding access to treatment. The Affordable Care Act and Federal parity law are extending access to substance use disorders and mental health benefits for an estimated 62 million Americans helping to close the treatment gap and integrate substance use treatment into mainstream healthcare. This represents the largest expansion of treatment access in the generation and can help guide millions into successful recovery.

The standard of care for treating substance use disorder is driven by heroin or prescription opioids involves the use of medication-assisted treatment, and approach to treating opioid addiction that utilizes behavioral therapy along with FDA approved medications either methadone, buprenorphine or nalterxone.

Medication-assisted treatment has already helped thousands of people in long-term recovery. And I applaud the recent comment carried by my HHS colleagues and the New England Journal of Medicine to expand the use of medications to treat opioid addiction and reduce overdose deaths.

There are sometimes that our national efforts are working. The number of Americans 12 and older initiating the nonmedical use of prescription opioids in the past year has decreased significantly since 2009. Additionally, according to the latest Monitoring the Future survey, the rate of past year use of OxyContin or Vicodin among high school seniors in 2013 is at its lowest since 2002.

And recent studies have shown that implementation of robust naloxone distribution programs and the expansion of medication- assisted treatment can reduce mortality and also be cost effective.

However, continuing challenges with prescription opioids and the reemergence of heroin use underscore the need for leadership at all levels of government. We will, therefore, continue to work with our federal state tribal and community partners to continue to reduce and prevent the health and safety consequences of prescription opioids and heroin.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee today.

BURGESS: The gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes Dr. Sosin for purposes of five-minute opening statement, please.

SOSIN: Good morning, Chairman Burgess and members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify about the public health issues related to prescription drug overdoses and the Centers for Disease Control and Preventions role in preventing them.

It is an honor to be with you today to talk about CDC's approach to prescription drug overdoses and the prevention of them.

Drug overdose death rates are higher than they have ever been. With prescription opioids being a key driver of this trend, more than 125,000 Americans have died from prescription opioid overdoses in the last decade. CDC has played an important role in raising the visibility of the health impact of prescription opioid overdoses in helping to identify the role of increased opioid prescribing and fueling this epidemic. Research also suggests that the growth in heroin use maybe due impart to the increase addiction cost by the rise in prescribing of opioid pain relievers.

The doubling in heroin use in the past six years is worrisome trend and undoubtedly has a relationship to prescription opioids, reducing inappropriate opioid prescribing as one of the approaches needed to keep people from becoming addicted to opioids and preventing them from later transitioning to heroin. Because of the complexity of these issues, the response demands engagement from a diverse group of federal state and local partners. The partners at this table are all critical in the overall goal to reduce abuse and overdose of opioids while ensuring that patients with pain are safely and effectively treated.

As the nation's health protection agency, CDC is focused on upstream drivers of this epidemic and this instance, the prescribing behaviors that created and continued to fuel this crisis. Our approach fits into three pillars that leverage CDC's unique expertise. One, improving data quality and use to monitor the trends and causes of the epidemic, timely drug specific information on prescribing and the health of facts of prescription drugs is critical. We generate, use and improve data to identify threats, assess local trends and evaluate the impact of prevention measures.

Two, strengthening state prevention efforts. States maintain Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs or PDMPs. They regulate healthcare professionals and institutions. They monitor the problem through their health departments and they run large public insurance programs including Medicaid. CDC provides resources and technical assistance to states to implement interventions and evaluate and adapt their approach to have the most impact.

And three, improving patient safety by supporting healthcare providers and systems with tools and data needed to respond effectively. For example, CDC is working to promote responsible opioid prescribing through guidelines and decision support tools. While CDC has ongoing work in each of these areas, we are focusing this year on accelerating state prevention efforts. We will be funding 45 state health departments for up to a total of $2 million per year to implement and evaluate the strategies I just outlined.

The 2015 President's Budget includes a request for $15.6 million in new funds to expand CDC's Core Violence and Injury Prevention Program, which is a state based program addressing injury and violence prevention. This will allow us to include additional states with a high burden of prescription drug overdose to prevent injuries and violence and expand the investments of these programs on reducing prescription drug overdose.

In conclusion, prescription drug abuse and overdose is a serious public health problem in United States. The burden of prescription drug abuse and overdose affects people of all walks of life and many sectors of our economy. Addressing this complex problem requires a multi-faceted approach and collaboration. CDC is committed to tracking and understanding the epidemic, supporting states working on the frontlines of this crisis, and rigorously evaluating what works to improve patient safety, prevent overdoses and save lives.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be here today.

BURGESS: Thank you, the gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes Dr. Volkow for five minutes for an opening statement. Thank you.

VOLKOW: These are component of the NIH to speak about the value of science in helping address the problem from the diversion and abuse of prescription opioid pain killers and the related rising abuse of heroin.

Opioid medications are the most effective intervention we currently have for management severe pain. Unfortunately, these drugs, not only inhibit pain centers in the brain, but they are also potently activate brain reward regions which is why they are abuse and they can cause addiction.

So we face the unique challenge of preventing their abuse while safeguarding their value for managing severe pain which, if untreated, is terribly debilitating.

It is estimated that 2.1 million Americans are addicted to opioid pain killers which reflects in part the wide spread availability of these drugs.

Indeed, the number of yearly prescriptions for opioids has more than double over the past 20 years from 76 million to 207 million prescriptions per year. During that period, that in parallel, so a fourfold increase in overdoses -- death overdoses from prescription opioids.

Pain killers like OxyContin and Vicodin affect the brain similarly to heroin. They interact with exactly the same opioid receptors. Their difference depends on their potency, that is how strongly they activate those receptors and how rapidly they do so. So as for heroin, they can produce euphoria which some abusers of prescription medications intensify by taking higher doses, crushing the pills so that they can snort them or inject them, or taking them in combination with other drugs like alcohol and benzodiazepines.

These practices make opioids far more dangerous, not only because they are more addictive, but also because they increase the risk for respiratory depression which is the main cause of death from overdoses.

Recent trends, as the other witnesses have mentioned, also indicate the rising heroin abuse which currently affects more than half million Americans and this rise is possibly driven in part by people switching from prescription opioids to heroin because it is cheaper and some instances more available. Heroin is dangerous, not just because of its high addictiveness and overdose risk that it posses, but also because it is frequently injected which increases the risk of diseased like HIV and hepatitis C predominantly from the use of contaminated injection material.

So what is NIDA doing about the problem? We're funding research in three major areas. One, research that will allow us to manage pain more effectively, research that will allow us to in -- prevent deaths from overdoses, from opioids, and our research will allow us to treat substance use disorders more effectively including prescription medications.

As it relates to the safe management of pain, we still don't know enough about the risk for addiction among chronic pain patients or about how pain mechanisms in the brain interrupt with prescriptions opioid to influence their addictive potential, but ongoing research will help us clarify some of these issues.

So with respect to treatment, we're funding research to develop non-opioid based analgesics that are nonaddictive. Opioid medications that have less risk for diversion and abuse as -- given by different formulations or different ways of administering them. And finally, non-medication strategies for such as transcranial magnetic stimulation or electrical brain stimulation for the management of pain.

Research related to preventing overdoses making the effective opioid overdose antidote naloxone, which is very safe, more available, will help prevent many deaths. The FDA recently approved the hand- held auto-injector of naloxone that patients and others can use easily.

NIDA is supporting the development of user-friendly naloxones in the form of nasal spray to be used by non-medical personnel or the overdose victim.

Also, since many overdoses of when no one is around or during sleep, NIDA is supporting the development of self-activated systems that initiate an emergency response when wireless ends or signal than of an overdose is abhorring (ph).

As it relates to opioid addiction, methadone, buprenorphine or nalterxone have been shown to be effective in treating opioid addiction and in preventing overdoses. But these medications are not dangerous widely. NIDA is working to overcome the barriers that interfere with their adoption.

In parallel, research of new interventions such as vaccines for heroin will allow us to treat this problem in a different way and to prevent it.

Additionally, we work with our partner, CDC, SAMHSA, ONDCP and ONC in implementing and evaluating evidence based interventions.

Again, I want to thank you for recognizing the urgency of the problem post by the abuse of prescription opioids and for inviting NIDA to this (inaudible) science and help address this problem.

BURGESS: The Chair thanks the doctor, gentlelady yields back. The Chair recognizes Dr. Clark five minutes for the purposes of summarizing your opening statement, please.

Your microphone, sir.

CLARK: Thank you for inviting Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to participate in this panel. I echoed (ph) the testimony of my colleagues regarding the importance of the topics of this hearing. I'll focus on census, programs and activities, but I want to point out that we've worked with our federal partners with states, tribes and local communities.

According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health which SAMHSA conducts 4.9 million people reported non-medical use of pain relievers during the past month in 2012. 335,000 reported past month use of heroin, it figured that has more than doubled in six years.

In 2012, more than 1.89 million people reported initiating non- medical use of pain relievers. And 156,000 reported initiating the use of heroin. One challenge in combating the misuse of pain relievers is educating the public on dangerous of sharing medications.

According to our national survey, 54 percent of those who obtained pain relievers or non-medical use in the past year received them from a friend or relative for free. Another 14.9 percent either bought them or took them from a friend or relative. Thus, we have both a public health problem intertwined with the cultural problem. SAMHSA has several programs focused on educating the public including the not worth the risk even if it's legal campaign which encourages parents to talk to their teens about preventing prescription drug abuse.

Our prevention of prescription abuse in the workplace effort supports programs who are employers, employees and their families. Our partnership for success grant includes prescription drug abuse prevention as one of the capacity building activities in communities of high need. Our Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment program include screening for illicit drugs including heroin and other opioids. We've developed programs to help physicians maintain a balance between providing appropriate pain management and minimizing the risk of pain medication misuse.

Our SBIRT Medical Residency program includes the modules of prescription opioids for pain management and opioid misuse. Over 6,000 medical residents and over 13,700 non-residents have been trained nationally. Our Physician Clinical Support System for Medication Assisted Treatment training is available via live in- person, live online and recorded modules accessible at anytime.

SAMHSA funds the Prescriber's Clinical Support System for opioids therapist in collaborative project led by the American Academy of Addictions Psychiatry with six other leading medical societies. We will be funding a Provider's Clinical Support System on the appropriate use of opioids in the treatment of pain in opioid related addiction this fiscal year.

Last week's article in the New England Journal of Medicine authored by HHS leadership, including Dr. Volkow and SAMHSA's administrator, describes the underutilization of vital medications and addiction treatment services, and discusses ongoing efforts by major public health agencies to encourage their use.

Medication-assisted treatment includes three strategies. Agonist therapy which includes methadone maintenance. Partial agonist therapy which includes buprenorphine. And antagonist therapy which uses an extended release injectable nalterxone or vivitrol.

SAMHSA is responsible for overseeing the regulatory compliance of certified Opioid Treatment Programs which use methadone and or buprenorphine for treatment of opioid addiction.

We estimate that there are approximately 300,000 people receiving methadone maintenance. There are currently 26,000 physicians with a waiver prescribe buprenorphine of this 7,700 unauthorized to prescribe up to a hundred patients.

We estimate that there are 1.2 million people receiving buprenorphine. SAMHSA also issued an advisory encouraging drug cohorts to utilize vivitrol in their treatment programs.

In August of 2013, we published the Opioid Overdose Toolkit to educate families and first respondents, individuals, prescribing providers and community members about steps to take, to prevent and treat opioid overdose including the use of naloxone. When administered quickly and effectively, naloxone restores breathing to a victim in the throes of an opioid overdose. This can be use as a teachable moment to asses treatment need and refer the person to the appropriate resources.

We inform states and jurisdictions that the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant primary prevention set-aside funds maybe utilized to support overdose prevention education and training.

In addition, we notified jurisdiction, the block grants other than the primary prevention set-aside funds maybe used to purchase naloxone. And then necessary materials to assemble overdose kits to cover the cost associated with the dissemination of such kits.

SAMHSA continues to focus on our mission of reducing the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities. We thank the Subcommittee Chairman and members for conveying this important hearing, and providing SAMHSA with the opportunity to address these very critical issues.

BURGESS: The gentleman yields back. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Rannazzisi five minutes for purposes of summarizing your test testimony, please sir.

RANNAZZISI: Thank you Chairman Burgess, distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of DE Administrator Michelle Leonhart, the men and women of the Drug Enforcement Administration, I want to thank you for the opportunity to discuss today the relationship between prescription opioids and heroin and how DEA is addressing the public health problem.

First, let me say that the President State of Affairs is not a surprise. DEA has been concerned about the connection between the rising prescription, opioid diversion and abuse problem in rising heroin trafficking use for several years. The DEA believes that increased heroin use is driven by many factors including the increase in the misuse and abuse of prescription opioids. The science had been there for sometime now.

Law enforcement agencies across the country have been reporting an increase in heroin use by teens and young adults who began their cycle of abuse with prescription opioids. Treatment providers report that opioid addicted individuals switched between prescription opioids and heroin depending on price and availability. Non-medical prescription opioid is used particularly by teens and young adults who can easily lead to heroin use, heroin traffickers know all this. And a relocating to areas with prescription drug abuse is on the rise.

To give you an example, we know that many teens and young adults first get their prescription opioids for free from medicine cabinets or friends. But assume that a teenager gets hydrocodone schedule III prescription opioid. And also most -- the most prescribed drug in the United States from a family medicine cabinet or a friend. Once that free source runs out, it could cost just a little between $5 and $7 a tablet on the street. But then the teen will eventually need more opioid to get the same effect that he's trying to achieve.

Black market sales for prescription drugs are typically five to ten times the retail value. On the street, a schedule II prescription opioid can cost anywhere from $40 to $80 per tablet depending on the relative strike of the drug. These increasing costs make it difficult to continue purchasing especially for teens and young adults who don't have steady sources of income.

Given the high cost to maintain this high, the teenager turns to heroin at a street cost of generally $10 a bag. The teenager gets a high similar the one he got when he abused prescription drugs. It's just that easy. Any long-term solution or reduced opioid abuse must include actions to address prescription drug diversion and misuse, while also educating the public about the dangerous of non-medical use of pharmaceuticals educating prescribers and pharmacists in treating those individuals who have moved from misuse and abuse to addiction.

The DEA currently operates 66 Tactical Diversion Squads in 41 states, the Districts of Columbia and the Caribbean. These groups capitalized or combined law enforcement authorities of task force officers and DEA agents to conduct criminal investigations in the diversion of pharmaceutical drugs. The DEA regulates more than 1.5 million registrants. DEA diversion groups concentrate on the regulatory aspects of enforcing the Controlled Substances Act, utilizing the increase compliance inspections.

This oversight enables DEA to proactively educate registrants and ensure that DEA registrants understand and comply with the law. The Tactical Diversion Squads and the diversion groups have brought their skills to barren (ph) what was previously known as ground zero for prescription drug use, Florida based internet pharmacies and pain clinics.

As the current pill mill threat is driven out of Florida and moves North and Northwest, DEA will continue to target the threat with the tactical diversion groups proven law enforcement skills, the diversion groups regulatory expertise and by educating registrants.

DEA and our law enforcement partners have aggressively targeted both prescription drug diversion and heroin trafficking. From 2001 to 2012, there's been a staggering increase in drug analysis of opioid pain medications, 275 percent for oxycodone, 197 percent for hydrocodone, and 334 percent for morphine.

This has also been a significant increase in heroin cases. From 2008 to 2012, there's a 35 percent increase. If the data for the first half of 2013 remains constant, the increase from 2008 to 2013 would be approximately 51 percent.

The increase in heroin abuse and trafficking is a symptom of our countries appetite for prescription opioids, that'll eventually lead to abuse and addiction. It's a natural progression from the abuse of prescription opioids. There's a dangerous misperception that abusing prescription drugs is safer than abusing heroin. Both abuse of prescription opioids and heroin can lead to addiction and death.

Preventing the availability of pharmaceutical controlled substances to non-medical users and educating practitioners, pharmacist, and public about pharmaceutical diversion, trafficking and abuse of priorities at DEA. As such, DEA will continue to work as a -- with a cooperative effort with

other federal state and local officials, law enforcement, professional organizations and community groups to address this epidemic.

Thank you for your invitation to appear today. And I look forward to answering any questions that you may have. Thank you.

BURGESS: The gentleman yields back, and thanks the gentlemen for his testimony.

Now, hear from the -- from the members for questions. Five minutes for each member. I'll begin -- well, Mr. Rannazzisi, you just gave some rather startling statistics, (inaudible) Mr. Botticelli. You said at your testimony, we can't rest our way out of this problem. So let me just ask you from a federal perspective, we put a lot of money, a lot of effort on behalf of taxpayers into this, what is it that is -- what is it about this that is not working?

Mr. Botticelli, we'll start with you. And maybe we can just go down the line and just answer the question. How has this become the problem that it is?

BOTTICELLI: You know, I think in number of my federal panelist have articulated some of the problems and I think, you know, first and foremost, a lot of this issue is driven by the vast overprescribing of prescription pain medication. You know, a recent report by the GAO showed that the vast majority of physicians get little to no training in substance use disorders and little to no training in safe opioid prescribing. And a part of our ...

BURGESS: Let me stop you there, because this is not a new problem. I mean, this was a problem 40 years ago when I was in medical school. And I would disagree with the statement that we got no training, but OK the training may not be adequate to the scope of the problem. But honestly, can we say that this is something that just happened to us as if we were completely unaware that this was an issue? I mean, how can you possibly make a statement like that?

BOTTICELLI: I think, you know, part of what the balance has been and I think it's been out of kilter is, you know, that physicians quite honestly were pushed in terms of making sure that we adequately treated pain in the United States. And we absolutely need to make sure that we do that. I think we need to have a balance strategy that understand the tremendous addiction potential of these drugs.

The risky patients that we have before is in terms of who should be prescribed with prescription medication, as well as monitoring those who are developing our problem. So I do think that this is a balance approach in terms of both making sure that we are adequately treating pain. But we're also not inadvertently creating a problem by overprescribing these medications to people who are developing our problem or who are at risk.

BURGESS: Well, I don't want to words as rough (ph), Mr. Rannazzisi seemed to imply that we are overprescribing, is that a fair assessment of your testimony?

RANNAZZISI: I think that if you're talking about 99.5 percent of the prescribers, no, they're not overprescribing. But, we're dealing -- our focus is in both pain clinics and road doctors, who are overprescribing. Actually, they're prescribing illegally, they're not overprescribing, they're illegally prescribing. So, yes, concerning that overprescribing, yes.

BURGESS: Well, that's your job, your law enforcement so you need to close them down, right?

RANNAZZISI: And we're trying, they're overwhelming us with numbers.

BURGESS: All right, I do want everyone response of that because the interest of time and wanted to keep to the five minute. Therefore, I'm going to submit that in writing to each of you.

I want to bring up something for each -- several of you have brought it up and that's the issue of making naloxone much more available, maybe we should also be talking about making imovax (ph) available for people who are going to overdose. I mean, it's hard to know who's going to overdose.

But -- Mr. Botticelli, you brought it up, I think Mr. Sosin, you brought it up as well. But, what is the issue here with making this available? BOTTICELLI: You know, I think that we've tremendously hard in both at the federal level as Dr. Volkow talked about in terms of the approval of new delivery devices for doing that. One of the main areas that ONDCP has been working with our state partners is the passage of state legislation to look at naloxone distribution. And so, I think we have now 17 states had been acted, naloxone distribution legislation which I think has really been helpful here. We've also been in quite honestly working with many law enforcement agencies across the state.

BURGESS: Pardon me for a moment, but it is a federally controlled substance, is it not? Naloxone?

BOTTICELLI: It's not a controlled substance, if I remember it correctly ...

BURGESS: OK, is there a cost issue?

BOTTICELLI: There is a cost issue. And one of things, Chairman, that you asked is what are the opportunities that we have in terms of looking at this. And again, I think, you know, the -- and, you know, again, we're really helpful that SAMHSA looked at existing -- how we might use existing federal funds.

But I think if there's an area that we can continue to explore together is how we might enhance resources for many overdose prevention efforts. One of the things that I've heard as I've traveled around the country is that having state legislation and having these devices is a great start. But that many states and local areas are under resource in terms of implementing ...

BURGESS: Yeah. And again, I may submit that in -- for answer in writing as well. Ms. Volkow, let me just ask you, you mentioned in your testimony to address this problem. We have to recognize special character of this phenomenon and part of which is the -- that opioids play a key role in relieving suffering. So, as providers and policy makers, are we doing a good job of walking this line?

VOLKOW: I -- based on the numbers, I don't think we can say we are. And the reality that in this country, we have both under treatment of pain and overprescription of medications, these are not exclusive.

And one of the issues that we have in face and Mr. Botticelli has been discussing it. In 2000, when I joined the Committee for accreditation of hospital demanded that you'll treat pain if you see a steep increase in the number of prescriptions. So what you are doing in parallel, there has not been an increase in education in medical schools.

So, it's seven hours outreaching the United States, there's a diversity of opioid medications that are currently available. And there are many indications where actually patients are being given the opioids when it's not severe or pain. And this, for example, this is the case in many case for drunk people with dentist that are prescribing the opioid mediation. So there is a room for improvement on the education of providers.

The other issue too that we have not understood very much when we were -- I mean, certainly, when I was in medical school, they'll tell you if you prescribe an opioid medication with someone that is suffering from pain, they are not going to become addicted. Now, we can come to recognize that it's not the case that there are patients that are taking the medication as prescribed and they can become addicted. So the issue is who are they, how do we recognize them so we can prevent that transition. And ...

BURGESS: Yeah, and my time has expired. I would just offer the observation 40 years ago, I was given the admonition by a professor in anesthesiology, "This stuff is so good, don't even try at once." So, clearly it was known 40 years ago.

Recognize Mr. Welch five minutes for questions, please.

WELCH: OK, I want to thank the panel and the Chairman as well, you know, and for mine, as I mentioned in my opening statement, we're just trying to face this directly which is, I think, a much better approach than denial. And it's engaged the community in some very effective ways and it's developed, I think -- it's helped our providers develop what they call, I haven't spoke (ph) system, where there's an emphasis on medication which really does seem to be helping some folks who are willing to help.

And then some wrap around treatment services for people who can benefit by that. And a lot of our ability to do that is because we're getting some federal health. We get about $6 million out of the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant, that's been level funded.

And my question, really, to Mr. Clark, can you explain the decision -- I guess, this is administration decision not to propose an increase in that program given the intensity of the crisis. And I think with this discussion occurring all around the country, obviously, you're going to have many more states that are willing to roll up their sleeves and try to get engaged which would suggest the resource need is there in order to help make thid successful. Dr. Clark?

CLARK: Mr. Welch, we are working very closely with state authorities with organizations like NASDAD and NASBED (ph) to address these issues. But we also, as Mr. Botticelli pointed out, approaching this from a comprehensive approach rather than simply using a single funding mechanism to address the issue. We need to keep in mind that we need multiple strategies to address this problem.

And with those multiple strategies, we believe that we can make an impact. So, relying indeed on the Affordable Care Act and other strategies we can leverage the block grant funding to target this.

We're also allowing jurisdictions to prioritize using our prevention efforts as well as our treatment efforts the problems that they experience in their respective jurisdiction ...

WELCH: All right, thank you, but no more money. Money is tight, I get it.

And Botticelli, your predecessor came up and had a great visit with us in Vermont, it's tremendous to have him there. And we've expanded the use of naloxone, and how do you say that?

BOTTICELLI: Naloxone.

WELCH: Naloxone, yeah. And we've have some success with that, we've had a number of instances of it being, you know, successfully just recently about 15 times. But do you think that the FDA should consider making that an over-the-counter medication?

BOTTICELLI: So, first of all, like, I really want to applaud you and Governor Shumlin in terms of calling significant attention to this issue. I spent a better part of career at Massachusetts and very familiar with heroin issue that we've had in New England for a long, long time.

You know, our office as part of our prescription drug abuse plan and overdose had looking for a continued ways to expand the use of naloxone. Again, I think, you know, we are hardened by this delivery device.

Our partners at NIDA are looking at and researching the expansion of -- and use of other way. So we're having conversations with both federal partners and quite honestly, some external stakeholders who are really, really, really interested in terms of looking at how do we increase the -- not only the availability of naloxone, but continue to promote easier to use and quite honestly, if we have some cheaper versions of naloxone.

WELCH: I got one time for one more question. Dr. Volkow, I want to ask you about this issue with doctors and with patients, you know, I've known close friends who've had serious medical issues and have been in a lot of pain. And once that line is crossed where they're getting the prescription medication, it almost it seems like there's an undertow where the answer to the paying question always is essentially to get more medication and more powerful medication.

And a patient in that moment is pretty vulnerable. And how does the -- and the doctor gets really persistent advocacy by the patient and sometimes the patients family. You've got to do something.

So, how do we help the doctors deal with what, you know, Dr. (inaudible), of course, yeah, another doctor here, how do they -- you know, there's a lot of doctors around here. So how the doctors really have to be in the frontline and it's very tough, because they've got a patient who's in pain, they've got a family who's saying we do something. But there's something that is getting done in many cases is resulting in long-term problems.

VOLKOW: Yeah, and they're torching on one of the hardest -- the issues to deal with clinically, how do you manage severe chronic pain. What many people don't know is that the risk of suicide for patients with chronic pain is double that of the general population. So it takes extraordinary rehabilitating. And the strongest medication we have are opioids, the problem with opioids apart from addictiveness is that you become tolerant very rapidly. And so that requires that you increase the dose. So chronically and then you have to shift to something more potent. And that's exactly where the whole problem lies around, they are not ideal. But it's what we have and it can relieve the patients in a moment that they need them.

The strategies, what other alternatives we can use just -- other than just relying us in opioids as the only alternative. And that's where researches ongoing to see -- that's what I was mentioning in the whole area of (plain) neuroscience. The feasibility of devices that can actually be used potentially to handle unmanaged pain will be a break through, you will rely less on medications.

And I also think that aspect of we, as a society, have created the expectation that anything that's wrong with you should be treated with a medication. So, zero tolerance for pain and I think that as a culture, we need to revision that also.

WELCH: Thank you, I yield back. Thank you very much.

BURGESS: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Welch. And I'm sitting in an obvious little board, Dr. Burgess. Let me just make up a brief statement and then I'll ask my question. You know, as physician of many years, I don't think that even back in the day, we were given the proper training in regard to pain medication.

You know, also, I'll say this, there's been a lot of emphasis over the past 10 years or so, about advance directives and the necessity (inaudible) across the hospice programs that have developed in that sort of thing. But I don't hear hardly any discussion about patients given their wishes in regard to how they want their pain control in a thermal situation, where there's no chance for recovery. I don't know that people really understand in many instances pain medication has started because the family members don't want their loved one to suffer. That's quite natural and appropriate.

But before you know what the patient has gone beyond the stage where they can say, "Oh, look, I don't want to be totally zoomed (ph) out at the time of my demas (ph)."

So that's just, I guess, food for thought in a way.

I'm going to ask my specific question, Mr. Rannazzisi. You said earlier in your testimony that you're just get -- the DEA just get overwhelmed about all this road pain clinics that are popping out everywhere. How was that happening? How do these places just pop up, as you put it, and why is it happening, why are you getting overwhelmed?

RANNAZZISI: Well, that's a great question, sir. It's not just DEA that's overwhelmed. Our state and local counterparts are overwhelmed. Think about this, prior to Ryan Haight Act, the internet drug bill that was passed. There was, we'll say, seven clinics, pain clinics in Broward County. In 2010, there was 142 clinics in Broward County. Now, if you look, when we moved our enforcement groups down there and we move 10 tactical diversion squats to work with our state and local counterparts and we started knocking of these road pain clinics.

They moved up in New Georgia, if you look at the 75 corner (ph), there was over a hundred pain clinics going at 75 corner (ph). Some of them are right off the inner state and we just get off and get back on. Then they moved in the Tennessee, Tennessee now has approximately 300 clinics.

Now, if you think that the state and local law enforcement and DEA doesn't have the capacity to go after everyone of these clinics quickly because these are illegal drugs that they're peddling, and we have to establish that that doctor is prescribing outside the usual course professional practice and not for legitimate medical purpose that takes time.

These cases take time. So what they're doing is they're just counting on the fact that they're going to run the clinic that's not being hit by DEA. So, we're all overwhelmed, everyone in law enforcements.

BURGESS: And what percentage would use lie (ph) of these clinics are fraudulent?

RANNAZZISI: In Florida, the vast majority of them. In Georgia, I believe that the vast majority of those clinics had popped out were (ph), they were good pain clinics. No, don't get me wrong, every pain clinic is not bad.

BURGESS: Yeah.

RANNAZZISI: But the pain clinics that we're looking at are absolutely atrocious, there is no medical care.

BURGESS: Yeah.

RANNAZZISI: It's modern day crack outs.

BURGESS: Let me -- and thank you for that answer. And any of you could answer this. About last year, GAO, the Government Accountability Office found an overlap in 59 of the 76 programs it identified in the drug abuse and prevention area. What steps or any of your agencies taken to minimize overlap and more efficiently spend our taxpayer dollars? I mean, you would think that we could get some efficiency here. Anybody?

(UNKNOWN): Sure Chairman. You know our office has looked at that report and has been working with our federal partners to look at the breath (ph) of our prevention programs and to make sure that we are not quite honestly duplicating programs. You know, I do think that however, if you talk to many, many people at the local level, they will tell you however that we don't have enough prevention. And I think you heard from many, many folks up here that while we may have programs that are addressing the same issue, they're reaching not the entirety of the population. So we really want to make sure that one, that we are not kind of duplicating the programs that we have already.

BURGESS: Well, very important. I would think that you guys are talking to each other, of course. Others, I've got a little time left, two seconds, one second. Well, wait a minute. I'm the Chair now, aren't I? I've got five minutes left. Mr. Clark.

CLARK: Well ...

BURGESS: Dr. Clark, excuse me.

CLARK: One of the things we are concerned about in the administration is the issue of fragmentation overlap and duplication. And then we do -- we're very closely with our federal partners to make sure that we minimize fragmentation overlap and duplication and working under the persistence of ONDCP, we are able to address that. As was pointed out, communities need multiple resources and you find it -- sometimes, you cannot completely eliminate some overlap because indeed the unique issues of individual communities require that there'd be some overlap. But we are very sensitive to both the PDAO (ph) concerns and OMB's concerns about fragmentation overlap and duplication and insidiously try to avoid that.

BURGESS: Thank you all. I thank the panel. My time has expired. And your five minutes now to Mr. **Lujan.**

LUJAN: Mr. Chairman, doctor thank you so very much for the time today. And I'm glad to see that we're having this hearing. This is important. By the Chairman and the Committee staff acknowledging that this hearing needed to take place, we're acknowledging there's a problem across the country. The question after this hearing today though is, are we going to sweep this under the rug again or are we going to do something significant with recommendations that are going to come from experts? This is a problem plaguing America. The case in New York brought more attention to what was happening with heroin abuse and overdoses. But we've been losing lives across the country for years. And what are we going to do?

There's recommendations that have been put on the table by many experts that's been studied over and over and over. There's a program from 2011 to -- on the prescription drug side to reduce abuse significantly over five years. I'll be asking the question where are we with that. But every life that's lost as a result of this is one life too many. There's only so many parts of the world that are growing poppies. Do we not know as United States of America where poppies are being grown and where there -- how they're migrating into the United States in the form of heroin and illegal substances? It seems to me we should. And what are doing to stop that flow? That's very troubling.

Now going back to the prescription drug side, there's been presentations that we've seen in New Mexico that have been together by some people that I respect very much that show a correlation with drug overdoses with increased prescriptions that are coming up, not just pain medication facilities that are popping up. And so, one of the questions that I have is, is there data that's reported to any of you that you do analysis on where there is a core -- where there -- at least with the data that I've seen, there's -- showing that there's a correlation between overdoses and increased prescriptions that are being administered. And what do we do with that data? Are we able to go in or is that an area where we don't have enough support now between the federal and the state partners. And I'd asked anyone that like to tackle that.

(UNKNOWN): Thank you Congressman **Lujan.** You mentioned the New Mexico report. Dr. Pelosi (ph) from CDC worked with scientist in New Mexico, health department staff there, to analyze and demonstrate those relationships. And absolutely, there's a very tight relationship between the volume of opioid prescribing and opioid overdose deaths. That information does get used at a national level. I'm thinking about the areas to intervene. But also, at the state and local level, where it has to be to better understand how the problems in each individual jurisdiction and the factors that are influencing the prescribing practices are being addressed there.

One of the ways that CDC in particular works is by trying to liberate data by working with state and local health departments to understand the context of prescribing of health system data and of mortality data to put a better picture and understand the context within which overdose deaths are occurring and abuses occurring, and then be able to target programs like through their PDMP's, like restriction programs, et cetera that address those problems.

VOLKOW: If I may, but first of all, I want to thank you for bringing up the issue because the void (ph) that I view that this is an urgent issue and we cannot put it under the rule (ph) under no conditions. And I feel passionate because I do get the parents coming to me says "When we went to wake up our child, it was dead." And they wouldn't even know that they were abusing opioids. The other issue is that we do have the tools to actually address the problem of opioid prescription abuse and opioid deaths. We need to implement them.

We have treatments that work for drug addiction that can decrease the number of overdoses. But also, we need to address the problem that we have with chronic pain in this country. How many people suffer chronic pain in this country? Estimated IOM, a hundred million, a hundred million. There is a notion on that one hand that there is an increase in chronic pain and that needs to be addressed. So, from the healthcare perspective we need to address it.

LUJAN: And Dr. Volkow, as my time expires, there is some questions that I'll be submitting into the record, but I would welcome your response as well. And Mr. Chairman I just wanted to share with you

that there is a program in New Mexico that appears to be working with the distribution of Narcan where there's been a reversal of more than 250 overdoses last year where they're getting it to the hands of first responders and nurses. So it's not necessarily on the street, but it's with those that are responding to these accidents. And there maybe a way for us to work on that with some ideas down the road.

Mr. Chairman, again, I share before you a return to that hearing how much we appreciate that you're doing this and you brought this hearing. But I certainly hope that there's more that will be done and this hearing won't be the last of hearings and conversations and an approach that we can take as a Congress to work with our state partners to do something. This is a bad problem across the country but it's also plaguing New Mexico. Thank you for your attention to this Mr. Chairman.

BURGESS: The Chair thanks the gentleman and does also observe that further hearings are likely to be necessary and as Mr. Welch put it up to hear from governors. And I'd like to hear from some of our mayors because they are on the -- they are on the first lines of this battle. The Chair now recognizes the gentlelady from North Carolina. Ms. Ellmers, five minutes for questions please.

ELLMERS: Thank you Mr. Chairman. And thank you to our panel for being here today addressing this very important issue. I'd like to start by asking a question of Mr. Botticelli and Dr. Volkow. Understanding the path of addiction, there is, and I think you have both identified a genetic basis for that. One of the things I would like to know is again the progression. Is there something that starts with tobacco use, smoking, use of alcohol drinking? And then how does it progress and how do you feel not (ph). I'll just start with Mr. Botticelli and then have Dr. Volkow comment.

BOTTICELLI: Just about everything that this field knows about this has come from the work of Dr. Volkow. You know, clearly, we know that there's a genetic predisposition for many people in terms of family history of substance abuse. But we also know that there's like many diseases. There are environmental factors that go into that issue. You know, we know that substance use disorder is a disease that have early onset, so that many people who do develop, left untreated, left undiagnosed developed a substance use disorder largely because of starting alcohol, tobacco and or marijuana use at a very young age.

Clearly, there are some particular issues as it relates to the addiction potential of prescription drug medication. But the vast majority of people that at least I have talked to in the data show that those folks who do have a significant opioid use disorder have started from a very young age and, you know, if you saw Philip Seymour Hoffman story, he actually started with alcohol abuse at a very young age. So we know that there are prevention and intervention opportunities that we can have along the way to really make sure that we're identifying people early in their disease progression. And then we're intervening in this issue.

You know, the other piece that you talked about, and again, I think it still warrants further work is what about the progression from prescription drug use to a heroin addiction. Clearly, we know that it is a progressive disease and people left untreated will often progress to more significantly harmful used patterns. But we also know that price plays a role as the DEA mentioned in terms of the progression. So, we know that there is multiple factors that really affect people's progression not only in terms of overall development of a substance use disorder but from prescription medication to heroin.

ELLMERS: Dr. Volkow. VOLKOW: Yes. And the questions you asked has intrigued many scientists and it's called -- had lead to the term of gateway hypothesis because all of the epidemiological stories have repeatedly corroborate that most individuals that become addicted to illicit substances started with nicotine or alcohol then transitioning to marijuana and then the other drugs. So the question is that just because it's more accessible that you start with nicotine or alcohol or could it be that these drugs including nicotine and alcohol and marijuana are changing your brain in such a way that it makes it more receptive to the addictiveness of drugs.

And there is data now from genetic studies and from studies in animals that suggest at least for the case of nicotine and alcohol and also marijuana that it is changing the sensitivity of the brain rewash (ph) sequence in a way that primes you to the addictiveness of these other drugs. And in the case of

prescription opioids, that's also what they are observing that most of the individual that end up addicted to prescription opioids had a history of nicotine addiction earlier or has started abusing alcohol.

ELLMERS: Thank you. My last question is for Mr. Rannazzisi. You know, obviously, your agency is working with many other agencies on this issue. And I'm going to ask you a question that really falls under the FDA. But from your opinion in the work that your are doing, do you believe that some of the prescription drugs, the deterrent formulas such as, you know, for OxyContin, some of the deterrent formulas -- will that make a difference and is it feasible that if we take this approach that that is going to help on the wide and broad scope that you have outlined if we're using these deterrent forms.

RANNAZZISI: Absolutely. The abuse-deterrent formulations will make a difference. Those drugs will still be abused orally with a potentiator like a muscle relaxant or a benzo. But in the end, it's going to stop them from crushing and snorting or crushing and injecting. And we know that when you crush and inject or crush and snort, you're raising the risk of overdosing death just in that method of delivery. So yes. Do I think it's important? Absolutely, it's important.

Look at what happened with the OxyContin product. When it went from the OC to OP, you could bang that tablet with the hammer and it's not going to break. It balls up in your noise when you try and snort it. It's crazy that, you know, if you try to abuse that drug. But what did we see everybody doing? Immediately, they started moving to the oxymorphone product or the immediate release Oxy Thirties. OK. So they're adapting. If we could figure a way to get an abuse- deterrent formulation across the board, then we're going to see some significant results. Absolutely.

ELLMERS: Thank you so much for your answers and your insight on this issue. And Mr. Chairman, I yield back the remainder of my time.

BURGESS: Gentlelady yields back. The gentleman from Kentucky, Mr. Yarmuth, recognize five minutes for your questions please.

YARMUTH: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. And I thank the panel as well for the testimony and for what is obviously a very committed effort across the spectrum of government to deal with this problem.

I'm glad to know that in a sense -- I shouldn't say glad, but it's somewhat reassuring to know that this is not just a Kentucky problem. Certainly, in my travels in my district and around the state and talking about law enforcement and with mental health professionals and everyone who's involved in this area, we have a huge problem in Kentucky.

During the first three quarters of 2013, there were at least 170 Kentuckians who died from heroin overdoses. And that was 41 more people have died the entire previous year. And it's actually 200 plus percent increase since 2011. So, we have problem that was there and growing.

And one of the young people who died was the nephew of a Kentucky State Representative Joni Jenkins, a good friend of mine, and a great representative. Her nephew Wes was -- they suspected began with prescription drugs and then moved to heroin because of expense. He died in May of 2013. And she told her story in the Courier-Journal and Op-Ed and the local Courier-Journal, and I'd like to read one of the things she said because it's -- prompts a question.

She said, "For an entire year, our family kept the addiction private. They were well aware that she had been in and out of treatment and they were working with him. But they kept it private so Wes would not suffer the social stigma of being a drug addict. I know -- now know that there is a terrible shame attached to this illness, but we have to break through the silence to find a cure." And she says "I also know that I will search for answers the rest of my life for that."

Is this is a problem that you've seen -- you're just nodding your head Mr. Botticelli? So respond to that that much of that -- or the access to treatment or the willingness to treatment is deterred because of a social stigma?

BOTTICELLI: You know -- and many of us have heard that story countless times from parents. Many of us were just in Atlanta with a conference sponsored by Chairman Rogers. And, you know, we hear that story repeatedly. And I think our collective efforts have really been to raise the visibility of ensuring that people know that addiction is disease. And this is not about chain, this is not about guilt. We know that one of the reasons why people don't seek treatment and why parents don't ask for help is because of the shame and embarrassment that's related to that. And so, part of what I think all of our federal partners are doing, is how do we raise the understanding and visibility, and quite honestly, the compassionate treatment of people with addiction -- of addictive disorders into this work.

And I think that we're seeing quite honestly a movement in terms of like we did with other disorders that were shameful and stigmatized that we have to kind of elevate the voice of parents and people in recovery so that we do know that hope is possible and that it would be easier for them to come forward and ask for help. But, you know, unfortunately, we've heard that story way too many times from parents and people who are affected.

YARMUTH: What -- have you come up with any great answers? I mean, what can we do to help that just as individual members? We do stand (ph) the country anyway.

BOTTICELLI: I mean, I think there are a couple of things that we're doing. A lot of our work -- at the Office of National Drug Control Policy, we actually established an office of recovery to really promote the fact -- we are looking at the development of recovery support services so that people in the community can see that recovery is possible. I think we have been promoting those of us who are in recovery talking very publicly about the fact that we're in recovery because it shows to other people that this is not just about death and destruction that there really is hope on the other side of this.

So, I think all of us play a role in terms of destigmatizing that. You know, just having these hearings, really show the fact that we have leadership in this country who are concerned about this. And it's not a shame. This is not a moral choice. This is not a moral failing. This is about a disease and that we have to deal with it from a public health perspective. So, I really appreciate your acknowledgment of that -- those challenges.

YARMUTH: Well, it seems to me that much of this problem involves education. I mean, I assume that when these young people or whether it's young or not, but predominantly young people began on prescription drugs. They have no idea that this is the course that they could likely be on. And I don't know whether that's a school issue, PTA issue, or what it is. But, it seems to me like information is the -- one of the greatest avenues for combatting this problem.

Anyway, Mr. Chairman, I would request unanimous consent that this Op-Ed that I mentioned from Joni Jenkins be -- made a part of the record.

BURGESS: So objections orders (ph).

YARMUTH: Thank you and I yield back.

BURGESS: Gentleman yields back his time. The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Ohio. Mr. Johnson, five minutes for your questions please.

JOHNSON: Thank you Mr. Chairman. And I really appreciate the opportunity to hear from the panel today on this very, very important issue. You know, prescription drug and heroin abuse are very serious -- is a very serious epidemic in Ohio. And parts of my district in Eastern and South Eastern Ohio are some of the worse hit.

In 2012, five Ohioans died everyday from unintentional drug overdose with opioids both prescription and heroin as the driving factor. Attorney General Mike DeWine identified heroin as contributing to as many as 11 fatal overdoses a week. It's a major public health crisis. However, prescription opioids continue to be the lead contributor to fatal overdoses in the state. In 2012, for example, an average of 67 doses of opioids were dispensed for every Ohio resident. Lawmakers, nonprofit organizations, medical industry leaders, communities and parents across the state have been working to coordinate

their response to this epidemic. But in the corner of Ohio that shares borders with three other states, communities are struggling to get drug abuse under control. Individuals identified as abusing in one state may cross state lines to escape detection and abuse in another. A non- integrated system also makes it harder to identify prescribing providers and pill mills.

So, for all of you on the panel, anyone that wants to try and respond to this, I realized that states are largely in charge of implementing their own prescription drug monitoring programs. But, in multistate areas, like I serve, the importance of working together to curb abuse cannot be emphasized enough. So, what's being done at the federal level to encourage states to share information compiled by their respective PDMP's?

BOTTICELLI: Thank you Congressman. And as you articulated, both the establishment of vibrant prescription drug monitoring programs, and quite honestly, the interstate interoperability of those programs has been key for much of the work that we've been doing on federal level. So, you know, we're happy that in 2006, we only had about 20 operable prescription drug monitoring programs in the United States. And now, we have 48. They are operable, one, in the process and unfortunately, one state that doesn't have a prescription drug monitoring program.

And as part of the strategy, we've been working with the Bureau of Justice Assistance and the Boards of Pharmacy to really look at interstate operability so that those states that share a border can make sure that they're sharing data. So now, we have 20 states that are able to share information across borders. And clearly, we have a goal of making sure that all of these programs are shared data among particularly neighboring state.

JOHNSON: I will share with you that, you know, as a 30-year I.T. professional myself, I can tell you that architecture and data standardization, interface standards, those are very, very critical components. If you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there. And it's one thing to have a monitoring system. It's quite something else to have a monitoring system that adheres to standards so that it can be effectively used. How do we make the nationwide PDMP system more effective? And what still needs to be done to fully achieve a fully integrated network?

(UNKNOWN): Congressman Johnson, thank you for your question. Clearly, the PDMP in the ability to achieve successful, effective PDMP's is critical to the law enforcement side, the public health side as well, the clinical side as well. And as Mr. Botticelli commented, we're making progress, meaning that we are better understanding the components of these PDMP's and what it is that needs to be shared and how to share them. The work that you all are doing in bracing disability, that governors and mayors are doing, saying that this is an issue that they're going to address also allows this opportunity to set the standards for what we need to share and how we will share that information across borders.

The CDC working with the FDA and the Bureau of Justice Assistance has been funding at -- randomize (ph) the prescription behavioral surveillance system which takes from 20 states, the PDMP data. They have to better understand what these factors are that increase the success of PDMPs.

JOHNSON: Let me get to one more quick question. I've got to move quickly. How can we shift drug abuse prevention efforts from the collection of silo data like we're talking about to a system in which this information isn't lost every time an individual realizes that they're being tracked and takes evasive measures like leaving a health plan for example, because not only do you have working across state lines, but an abuser that goes from one health plan to another can also hide. So, how do we solve that problem?

(UNKNOWN): And some of my colleagues can add on to this. But, you know, part of what we've been really trying to focus on is make sure that we're treating an integrating substance use issues as part of mainstream healthcare. Have really looking at things like making sure that people are getting screened and intervened as part of their over all health plan.

So that, you know, for very, very long time we had two systems of care in the United States. We've had medical care over here and behavioral healthcare over here. And that we haven't necessarily really looked at how we make sure that we are treating substance use disorders as a medical

condition. So part of our goal is how, you know, more theory integration of mental health and substance use services within our primary care of settings.

JOHNSON: Sure.

(UNKNOWN): Because it's really important that we not see this as two separate issues.

JOHNSON: Mr. Chairman, I have many, many more questions obviously. This is a complex and sensitive issue for many Americans, but I ran out of time. So I yield back.

BURGESS: Thanks. The gentleman yields at this time. The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from Florida. Ms. Castor, five minutes for your questions please.

CASTOR: Thank you Mr. Chairman. And thank you to the panel very much. Just as this hearing is really heading home for me today because yesterday, I learned that the death of our friend last month was tied to her long-term opioid addiction. Her sister sent me an e- mail. I got it just yesterday. And she committed suicide. And she -- her sister said, because of her long-term addiction. So she left a daughter and a husband and an entire family. And the sister is asking, "Please, do more."

So, I hope we can all come together to tackle this. It is causing so much pain for so many families. And the State of Florida has really been at the heart of the problem. And instilling Florida, they say that every 78, every -- I can't believe it. 78 minutes, someone overdoses in the State of Florida. I'm also hearing from my local hospitals. They've had to add rooms in the NICU units of hospitals because of babies being born addicted. And these babies typically will cost a million dollars to take care of and they're in the hospital for months. So, we better invest in prevention or else, we're going to be spending a lot on the outside.

So, Mr. Rannazzisi, you know, Florida -- the general talking points are, well, Florida has improved, we -- there was huge law enforcement crack down. We have adapted a prescription drug tracking systems, the PDMP. The problem is that doctors are not using it. The last statistics that I saw, only 3.5 percent of all prescriptions being written are being checked on that database. What's your view right now in Florida? Have we made progress? What's left to do?

RANNAZZISI: I think under the leash of Attorney General Bondi and law enforcement leaders down in Florida, yes, we've made progress. Absolutely. The problem is the -- again, we're overwhelmed by the numbers. There's so many people down there in Florida. We actually have cases where Florida -- rogue pain clinic operators were funding clinics in Northern states. So when the heat is on, then they going to move up into another state. I think that we're making progress. But again, it's going to take time.

Now, the PDMP issue -- I would love to see mandated PDMP use. At any BPs (ph), the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy had gone out of their way to ensure that there's interoperability and interconnectivity between the PDMPs. I think they have 25 states that are already connected. And they've done a phenomenal job. But if no one is looking at that PDMP or very few are looking at that PDMP, it's not going to help.

CASTOR: The -- and so, do you agree that the local law enforcement efforts, I mean, what I see on the ground in my community in the Tampa Bay Area, we used to have these long lines with cars from out of state, people waiting outside in the ally for these pill mills to open up. You don't really see that anymore. But with the statistics on the rate of deaths from overdose, if something else is happening, we're not really making attempt there as it -- is it shifted to the internet, are they going out of state, is it at fault (ph), what's going on?

RANNAZZISI: I think they're moving to more rural areas where there's less law enforcement presence. I think the operators understand. I have a great video that I love to show on you -- of a clinic, and what happens as soon as the clinic opens. I think that they're adapting. The clinic owners are adapting very well. And we just -- they're one step ahead of us right now. But in the end, local law enforcement's doing a phenomenal job. And they are moving people out of the Tampa Bay Area

and out of the three -- county south -- three county area. But, it's still there. It's just moving to more rural areas where they can't address the problem as quickly.

CASTOR: So in this very sad e-mail from my friend that I got yesterday, she said she has read now about the FDA approval of Zohydro, a pure hydrocodone, non-tamper resistant, 10 times stronger than Vicodin -- the Vicodin prescription opiate. I know that the advisory committee to FDA had some very serious concerns with this, yet, it has been approved. Dr. Volkow, could you give me your opinion on whether this drug should be readily available?

VOLKOW: Well, I mean, I think we clearly have an -- a very large number of opioid medications and we are over prescribing them. I wouldn't point my finger one or the other. I do think that the feasibility of getting formulations that are -- that cannot be diverted is something that is very powerful and the FDA should be commended because it came up pharmaceuticals can come up with an indication for a medication that is deterrent proof. And that is incentivizing to the development of these types of medications.

So, his role (ph) is a hydrocodone, slow delivery over 12 hours, and it actually does not have acetaminophen. And because the way that you have hydro -- currently which is Vicodin, the white (ph) that (inaudible) combined with acetaminophen which causes liver toxicity which lead the FDA to consider. If someone needs hydrocodone, do you need to give them acetaminophen? I need work in (ph) that context that they approved it. But ...

CASTOR: And could I ask, since my time is short. Mr. Botticelli, do you agree with FDA's approval or have -- do you have concerns?

BOTTICELLI: I think the important point and, you know, again, I don't think, you know, the FDA has their own process in terms of what they -- how they approve medications. I only agree that how we continue to make sure that we have abuse-deterrent formulation is really important. And I also think that this really underscores the importance of prescribing and training on prescribing because I think the point is that we have many medications that are open for potential to abuse. And we want to make sure that physicians and other prescribers really understand the risk associated with these drugs.

CASTOR: And Mr. Rannazzisi, local law enforcement has expressed concern about this new drug on the street because it is so potent. And because of -- it's likely if a child takes it, it could cause death. What's your view?

RANNAZZISI: Local law enforcement and DEA and our federal partners have all expressed. We all live through the OxyContin problem back in, you know, the '90s and into the 2000s. And we just don't want history to repeat it. So, too many people passed from circumventing that delivery system.

BURGESS: The gentlelady's time expired. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia. Mr. Griffith, five minutes for your questions please.

GRIFFITH: Well, let me pick up there. You're concern about this newer drug. And so, my question is, how -- what do you all do, and I would ask it to all of you, but I'll start with you Mr. Rannazzisi. Thank you. And that would be, how do we do a better job of predicting where we're going to see spikes and abuse on drugs as they come forward because some people say that we should have probably seen the increase in the prescription drug abuse of opioids and heroin.

RANNAZZISI: Well, we monitor the amount of drug going into a particular state where through our host (ph) system. But in the end, what we generally see is the drug being abused in the Minneapolis (ph) area of the country and then it spreads out from there. So when we were looking at OxyContin for instance, the OxyContin abuse epidemic started in that area, Kentucky, Tennessee, Southern Ohio.

GRIFFITH: Southwest Virginia.

RANNAZZISI: Yes, Southwest Virginia. Well, yes, absolutely. And then, spread out. And that's -- and we believe that patterns going to happen again with this new drug. It's just a matter of time. We know that product is now on the pharmacies and being dispensed, so.

GRIFFITH: And now, for the people that we -- that you've identified, I think that one of the other speakers said abuse- deterrent formulations. Once we know somebody's abusing, I have always like the lock-in where you lock-in to a pharmacy and you lock- in to the doctor, because one of the problems in Southwest Virginia that you mentioned a minute ago is that you can be in West Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and North Carolina all within -- no matter where you are in Southwest Virginia, within an hour or two hours, you can be in anyone of those states, because the way of the geography is, and you can go from one rural area to another.

So what do we do no matter we're looking at that as a possible means? Dr. Clark, if you want to answer, that's fine. Just trying to find the answers.

CLARK: Apparently, there is no simple answer in your questions. A very important one in this committee is trying to address it. We are working with the Association of State and Territorial Health Officers, in the Federation of State Medical Boards, and the Boards of Pharmacy. We do collect surveillance data from our household survey and working with our colleagues in the CDC.

So, part of the issue is monitoring the movement of individuals. Getting practitioners whether they're pharmacist, nurse practitioners, or physicians to monitor what is it that they're doing. Getting people to access and actually use the PDMPs and having interoperability as was pointed out. So -- and then involving community coalitions because -- it was just pointed out from the Representative from Florida. People know where the places are and what we need to do ...

GRIFFITH: Sure.

CLARK: ... is to get community coalitions (inaudible) ...

GRIFFITH: Well, that's why -- that kind of why I like that lock- in because then you lock them into a doctor and to a pharmacy if you know -- and I don't want to do that to the folks who haven't been identified as having a problem. But once you know they have a problem, then that gives you a better handle on what they're doing if you lock them in and that's the only place they can go. Wouldn't you agree then -- I need to hurry because I've got other things I want to ask.

CLARK: That is one strategy that can be employed. So you want to make sure that if you do that that they have access to the resources necessary to be a measure.

GRIFFITH: Sure. And here's the dilemma that we have because one of the things the DEAs has done -- and we talked about this the last time you were here, is that they are asking the distributors to, you know, say "OK, don't sell so much to a pharmacy if that pharmacy looks like they're above the average or if you see some sign that they maybe abusing." And I have told the story about what happened when I went to my local pharmacy. And there were two people in there who were both being told you have to come back next month which is not -- but a few days away because we use the (inaudible) intuitive that maybe they only had one supplier. And that supplier said, "Oh, he's above average for other people who may have more than one supplier." I went back and check and that's exactly what's going on. He didn't know that was the problem, but I said, "You only have one supplier, don't you?" He said, "Yes, I use one distributor." And I think that's the problem.

Is there -- so down on the one hand, we want to lock out people who are abusing it. On the other hand, we'll make sure people who've need it, get it. So, I guess what I'm saying in that second regard -- second matter is, for the rural areas, it maybe a problem because that's -- it's less law enforcement and we recognized that. And one of -- a lot of my region has different haida (ph) designations. At the same time, you want to make sure people are getting the drugs they need. And if you're in a rural area and you may only -- you have smaller pharmacy, you may only be using one distributor, while the DEA doesn't have a quota, the distributor then just put the quota (ph) because based on other pharmacies, that particular pharmacist or drugstore is ordering more drugs. But it's because they're

only using one supplier supposed of using two or three. How do we solve that problem? And I think Volkow wants answer (ph) on this.

VOLKOW: Then I was smiling because the notion is we have situations where a patient cannot get their medication. And yet, at the same time, the DEA has to collect this massive amount of pills that people are not using, which tells you we are over prescribing the number of pills that are necessary. So, coming back to the point that has been discussing, we really need to educate the healthcare system on the optimal way of prescribing them. Not just when they need them. But the number of tablets that you need -- that you are given, I mean, all of us have the idea of going to the dentist, two weeks of opioid prescriptions. I mean, you need one day. So, it is the cold (ph) notion of educating the healthcare system and educating the late public. And making the responsibility tools are we not -- why do we need to provide so many pills and the insurer's can get involved to this type of solutions.

(UNKNOWN): And the lack in approach works as part of a treatment plan.

GRIFFITH: That's right. (UNKNOWN): That the -- with someone who suffers from chronic pain, the practitioner develops treatment plan, the patient agrees and that actually benefits everyone.

GRIFFITH: Oh, very good.

BURGESS: The given time has expired. And we will give an perhaps for second round. But, I wanted to go to Mr. Scalise because he's been waiting so long.

GRIFFITH: Absolutely.

SCALISE: Thank you for that Mr. Chairman and for our panelists for this important discussion. I know in my home parish of Jefferson, Louisiana where you've seen spikes and increase of drug related deaths over the last few years and each year just seem to be going up higher. When I talk to my coroner in Jefferson (inaudible) who works very closely in trying to, you know, of course, they see the end result of it, but they also try to work on a front end in doing some of the education that Dr. Clark has talked about.

In others, they've seen that that heroin is the one that seems to be popping out the most. I think last year, our heroin deaths accounted for a majority of all the drug-related deaths, over a hundred of those in my home parish. So Jefferson, like it's overseen as (ph) across the board. One of the things I do work on is just trying to educate people in the community. And I knew Dr. Clark, you've talked about this. In your testimony in alluding to work with, but not just pharmacist, but others, what is the, you know, what is the different things that you've been doing and then you've had success on the education front, especially not just within the medical community, but then the targeted populations of those folks that might have the highest likelihood of being exposed to heroin.

CLARK: Again, one of the things -- a comprehensive strategy becomes critical and that's when I talk with a prevention working with community coalitions so that we would got that message. We've already heard about the issue of chronic pain management. And people moving from the use of a prescription opioids to drugs like heroin. So having good strategies for pain treatment, working with state health -- the territorial health officers, federation of state medical boards, nursing organizations, dental organizations, and even veterinarians, because they too have access to prescription opioids, that we can address that end of the agenda. And then ...

(INAUDIBLE)

SCALISE: Mr. Rannazzisi ...

CLARK: ... like probably for the DEA.

SCALISE: ... answer this too because you, I know you talked about this in your testimony as well. So, if you can touch on your experiences there.

RANNAZZISI: We never turned down the opportunity to go out and speak to professional organizations. We have a very good relationship with -- a fine relationship in the associates and boards of pharmacy, the individual pharmacy associations, in the medical associations, when they ask us, we will come out. The Pharmacies Diversion Awareness Conference, we go out and we've been to 14 states and trained over 6,000 pharmacists in their corresponding responsibility. There have been trends (ph) in trafficking for pharmaceuticals to make them aware of what's going on so they know how to deal with this when a bad prescription comes in and what they're supposed to do.

We have industry conferences. We bring industry in. October of last year, we brought the distributors in to talk about what we're seeing trend wise and what they need to do as far as their legal obligations under the act. We bring the manufactures and importers in April or May of last year. We brought them in and we do this on a regular basis to show the trends in (ph) trafficking. We are out there educating as much as possible because it is one of the pillars in the pharmaceutical initiative that the White House is pushing for.

SCALISE: One of the things when you talk to the people on the ground or local and whether to its corners of law enforcement. There are lot of different federal programs out there and I do want to touch on that GAO report because there are some concerning issues that they raise that have been touched on a little bit but I want to get in to a little bit more. But, on that front, when you look at all the grants that are out there, I know in Louisiana, I think grants come in from five different departments through 30 different programs for some of these treatment programs. So there's lot of overlapping duplication.

But, is there a better way maybe to block grantees to put them together in a way that would be more flexible, and maybe Dr. Clark you can answer, are we giving states enough flexibility today? And with the duplication, can we do a better job and maybe consolidating those grants in a way that allow the states to do what they do best without having to go through so many different processes to so many different agencies where you have this duplication.

CLARK: Clearly, we have to work with the states in their exercises (ph), their discretion, and how to prioritize what it is that they've view as important epidemiologically in their jurisdiction. And so, we have supported the use of block grant funds to the discretion of the states and work with both the individual state authorities and the national organizations associated with that. We're also working with recovery-oriented organizations so that we've got peers, people who are recovering for substance use disorders to help speak up and carry out the message working with community coalitions and others, because indeed, they can tell a better story than professionals or regulators, et cetera. So the comprehensive ...

SCALISE: Let me apologize my time's about to go. I do want to at least ask for the record if I can get this information on the GAO report because it then identified you got the 115 different federal agencies, 76 different federal programs that all have abuse (ph) for prevention to treatment programs. And they also identified overlap of 59 of the 76 programs.

And so, I think Dr. Gingrey earlier asked Mr. Botticelli and Dr. Clark to talk about what your agencies are doing to address that overlap -- those problems that were identified in the GAO report if Mr. Sosin or Dr. Sosin, I'm sorry, Dr. Volkow, and Mr. Rannazzisi can also get me their information to just show what you all are doing to try to address the overlap problems that were raised in the GAO report. And with that all ...

BURGESS: Well, the gentleman's time has expired. I think that information will be generally interesting to the Committee. So, I hope the Committee staff will provide that information to ...

SCALISE: Would that be OK with getting that to the Committee. Thank you.

BURGESS: And the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas. Mr. Green, five minutes for your questions please.

GREEN: Thank you Mr. Chairman. And thank you all in the (ph) Committee for having this hearing. Prescription drug abuse is real growing and public threat that must be addressed. The consequence

and reviews and addictions to opioids such as prescription pain relievers and heroin has a devastating effect on our communities. We comprehend a solution that protects public health, reserves patient access to the needed therapies and improved access to treatment.

Last week, an article was published in the New England Journal of Medicine discussing the Department of Health and Human Services efforts to address the prescription opioid overdose epidemic including improving access to the addiction treatment services.

Dr. Volkow, you are one of the authors of this article and Dr. Clark and Dr. Sosin, the heads of your respective agencies also are -- authored this article. The article makes it clear that the treatment addiction to prescription drugs and other opioids with proven approaches like Methadone and other medication assisted therapy is of crucial importance. It describes the importance of the Affordable Care Act in increasing access to care for many Americans including those who are struggling with addiction disorders.

Dr. Volkow, can you elaborate on how the ACA builds on the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act to improve on insurance coverage for people who are addicted to prescription drugs, heroin or other substance?

VOLKOW: Yes. The problem is that, as I mentioned in my testimony, is that less than one-third of patients that require that could benefit from opioid medications are getting them for the treatment of their addiction. And this reflects among other things the fact that many of the people that are addicted to drugs do not have an insurance and rely on the state funding to get their treatment.

And as a result of that, we have removed the healthcare system for a position where they could not just act in preventing substance use disorders but on treating them. The healthcare act by providing insurance to those that currently don't have it, will give them the opportunity in to be treated in the healthcare system for substance use disorders as well as in those instances where the addiction has not to cure for the healthcare system to intervene in prevention. So that's why it's so important.

GREEN: Dr. Clark, do you agree with that?

CLARK: Indeed. One of the -- when people who are -- who present for treatment can't get treatment or asked why they couldn't get treatment, of the largest reason is cost and access to treatment.

GREEN: Thank you. I understand the ACA provision creates an optional Medicaid state plan benefits for states to establish health homes for the coordination of beneficiaries with chronic conditions has also supported some states in their effort to address the drug abuse. Dr. Clark, can you elaborate on how the health home program has been official in tackling the problem of abuse?

CLARK: We've actually -- with regards to opioids, we've got several jurisdictions that are looking at health homes as a way of dealing with opioids. So, for months, one jurisdiction I think ruled out and I'll have to clarify that is also taking that approach. Comprehensive services being offered where persons care is adequately monitored offers us an opportunity to reduce some of the complexities associated with opioid misuse.

GREEN: Thank you. It's clear from the counter (ph), it's the Affordable Care Act makes it possible for many people with substance abuse disorders whether it's addiction to prescription drugs, heroin, and other substance access to treatment they so desperately need (ph).

Mr. Chairman, I know we've had our differences over the Affordable Care. I hope we all share the goal of writing more robust treatments to those who are working to overcome these addictions. And I'll yield back my time.

BURGESS: Gentlemen yields back. Our discussion with the Affordable Care Act will continue at a later date.

GREEN: I'm sure it will.

BURGESS: We have now I think heard from all members who wanted to ask a question. I would ask unanimous consent that a follow up question be allowed for those of us who remain.

(UNKNOWN): I don't have any problem with that. I can't stay but ...

BURGESS: Very well. But I wanted to get that unanimous consent agreed to before you left. So it's not just on my shoulders.

(UNKNOWN): I trust you Chairman.

BURGESS: Mr. Griffith, I interrupted you before. Do you have -- would you like to follow up on your line of questioning?

GRIFFITH: Well, I would just like to give an opportunity Mr. ...

RANNAZZISI: Rannazzisi.

GRIFFITH: Rannazzisi. Thank you. I'm sorry. I have such a hard time with it this morning. But Mr. Rannazzisi was about to comment on the dilemma that we have with the small rule pharmacist or pharmacy that has one distributor.

RANNAZZISI: Yes. And I want to thank you for clarifying that DEA has not set a quota downstream from the distributors. The distributors are working through their issues regarding due diligence to determine, you know, what -- if there's a problem pharmacy or it's not a problem pharmacy. I think that the rural of pharmacy present a specific problem because they do need to get medication to their patients. And they need that downstream supply. We're hoping that the distributors are on site looking at their operations before they completely cut off the distributor or limit -- pharmacy or limit the pharmacy. But again, it's a business practice and unfortunately, you know, I have no control over that business practices.

GRIFFITH: Well, I would just say, it's because of the concerns and the -- I'm sure some memos have been put out by the DEA trying to do -- we're all trying to do the right thing that has caused the distributor be concerned. And maybe, if there could be some acknowledgment from the DEA to the distributors, hey, you know, keeping an eye out of its rogue (ph). But if it's just you're looking at, you know, this pharmacy is more than another pharmacy, find out if they have just one distributor because that makes a huge difference in whether or not they're truly distributing more of the opioid than somebody else. And if you all could do that, that would greatly appreciated.

BURGESS: The gentleman yields back. I thank the gentleman for his follow up. Dr. Volkow, you made a statement that was really fairly provocative a few moments ago. And I just wanted to follow up on just a little bit with you with -- when you were discussing the effect of nicotine, alcohol on developing, but I guess you were talking about developing brains or. And then you added the liquidation (ph) of marijuana.

And as you not to say anything about the rightness or wrongness of the public policy, but as you know, this nation is right now engaged in a significant experiment where some states have legalized marijuana. Are you all studying that in the affect of this decriminalization in some states? Are we prepared for what might happen next?

VOLKOW: Yes. I mean, definitively and unfortunately, it's one of those experimental situations that is happening whether we like it or not. So, what we have done is provided, identify the grantees, our researchers in those communities where there has been legalization for recreational or medical purposes to actually give them a supplement money so that they can look at the consequences of these changes in policy in the educational systems, in accidents, in emergency room admissions, in productivity in the workforce.

We need to have evidence that can then hopefully can guide policy as suppose to doing policy in darkness on the beliefs of people. And what -- since you brought up the issue to one of the things

that is also concerned as -- discussing the prescription, people are using prescriptions because they feel that are prescribed by physicians they cannot be so harmful. The notion that marijuana has so called medical purposes is also changing the perception of this broken (ph) not to be so harmful if it has medicinal properties. And the whole perception of risk is changing which again is open. The -- I mean, the willingness of drunk people to take marijuana and to consume it regularly.

BURGESS: Well, I do hope that you are monitoring the situation since society has provided you the experimental situation. I also hope that you're preparing to deal with what the downstream effects are from this rather bold social experiment to some of the states are undertaking right now. And I hope that's more than just sending more money to those states. I hope that is something that you are -- that oversight is happening at your level that there will be a national monitoring of this.

VOLKOW: We -- I mean, the way that we oversee research protocol is very, very rigorous. If the scientist is not producing or the methodology is not adequate, we do not fund them.

BURGESS: Let me -- I'm just speaking of downstream effects. There's also the issue and it was been brought up several times this morning. And if you feel free to comment on this, the issue of course the device by which the drug is administered and the possibility for exposure to hepatitis B or C or HIV are from a public health perspective, are we preparing ourselves for any differences in the incidents of these illnesses as a consequence of the delivery device?

(UNKNOWN): I'll start in that. You know, one of the main concerns of HHS has been obviously the increase of viral hepatitis and hepatitis C among the very young cohort of injection drug users. So, we're even working in concert with the Health and Human Services whereas to put forth actually an action plan to diminish viral hepatitis. And clearly, there's a lot of overlap in terms of the issues that we're talking about here. So, this is obviously a significant public health concern. So we want to make sure that we're dealing with this in a concerted way.

BURGESS: Yeah. And then of course the good news right now is hepatitis C is one of those things that -- make looks (ph) very well like there maybe a cure. It's not just on the horizon, but it's here. One problem is it's very expensive. And my differences -- Mr. Green over the Affordable Care Act to side (ph), they ultimately, there's someone is got to pay for that. So I hope we're doing the necessary -- I hope for monitoring and doing the necessary preventive things to keep that in check and to prevent the disease rather than just simply now being able to cure it with a very expensive therapy that thankfully is available.

Mr. Botticelli, did you have some additional observations on the issue of the states that are legalizing marijuana?

BOTTICELLI: I do. And what I wanted you to know is that in addition to that -- additional meta (ph) grants out there. Our office has actually convened a group of federal partners to look at that each criteria that the Department of Justice has laid out for Colorado and Washington and are really committed to gathering data on the Federal State and local level looking at what is the impact in terms of legalization in Colorado and Washington have on both the public health and public safety consequences that we have.

So in addition to some of the public health related work that Dr. Volkow has funded, we're also looking at what are the public safety consequences things like increase in drug driving, interstate transportation of marijuana from Colorado to other states. So our office has really been committed in terms of ensuring that we have good public health and public safety data to monitor what's happening in Colorado and Washington.

BURGESS: And Mr. Rannazzisi, I would assume that your agency is participating in that as well?

RANNAZZISI: It still has a schedule on control substance. We're still doing investigations concerning marijuana downstream.

BURGESS: And are you monitoring the downstream effects in neighboring states in the incidents as Mr. Botticelli talked about. The incidents who drive you all impaired (ph), the incidents of even just

crime. Are you compiling those statistics so they will be available to policy makers in subsequent hearings?

RANNAZZISI: We are talking to our state and local counterparts in all the surrounding states. And we are gathering information. I don't know how -- all inclusive that information is because quite frankly the reporting, some of the state and locals are not keeping that type of information. But we are keeping tamps (ph) with our state, locals on what's going on within their states.

BURGESS: Very well ...

GRIFFITH: Mr. Chairman.

BURGESS: Yeah. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GRIFFITH: I'd be reminiscing (ph) -- since we've taking on marijuana, not to mention that I've just introduced the bill to legalize the use of marijuana in medicinal circumstances that came (ph) to the Virginia plan that was passed in 1979. That requires a doctor's prescription thus changing the scheduling. The bill actually cost was changing in the scheduling. DEA is in a tough spot. Some of the states are doing it, but it's still scheduled one which means that the DEA has a hard time collecting the data that you just asked for without stumbling across felons that they're not prosecuting.

So they're in a catch 22 (ph). I think it's much better to have doctors and pharmacists and the regular system working, because then you get real data for your scientist to look at and see if it isn't effective as they designed it to be. So the bill doesn't go as far as Colorado or Washington might want it or the crazy California plan as I often call it. But it allows real doctors with real pharmacist and real distributors controlled that in under the laws of the United States to use true marijuana if it can be used in a real way medicinally.

BURGESS: Very good. The gentleman yields back. I'm all for (ph) giving doctors more power. That actually concludes all of the questions that we have from members. I've neglected to mention at the start of the hearing asking (inaudible) consented members written opening statements be introduced into the record without objection. The documents will be entered into the record.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all of our witnesses. I thank the members that have participated in today's hearing. I'll remind members they have 10 business days to submit questions for the record. And I'll ask the witnesses that all agreed to respond promptly to the question submitted in writing. That the subcommittee is adjourned, thank you for your attendance today.

END

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 66535

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

JOURNAL-CODE: PTTW

Copyright 2014 ProQuest Information and Learning
All Rights Reserved
Copyright 2014 Roll Call, Inc.

US State News

May 1, 2014 Thursday 11:08 PM EST

SANTA FE ARTS COMMISSION COMMUNITY GALLERY SHOWCASES WORK OF NEW MEXICO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ON MAY 2-3

LENGTH: 438 words

SANTA FE, N.M., May 1 -- The city of Santa Fe issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that entries in this year's Congressional Art Competition will be displayed in an exhibit open to the public at the Santa Fe Arts Commission Community Gallery on Friday, May 2 and Saturday, May 3. **Lujan** will announce the winners of the competition during a reception on Saturday.

"Every year, I am impressed with the quality and creativity of the high school students who participate in this competition, and I am sure this year will be no different," Congressman **Lujan** said. "I am excited that we will have the opportunity to show off their fine work in the Santa Fe Arts Commission Community Gallery for all to see."

This annual competition allows members of Congress to display the talent and creativity of their high school constituents. The first-place entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year. The winner will travel to Washington, D.C. for a reception honoring the national winners. Artwork that places second through seventh will be displayed in **Lujan's** district offices across northern New Mexico.

Students interested in entering the competition can still do so. Entries must be submitted to the Santa Fe district office by Friday, April 25 at 5 p.m. For more information regarding the contest guidelines are available on **Lujan's** website, www.**lujan**.house.gov.

All entries submitted to **Lujan's** office by high school students in the Third District will be on display on Friday, May 2 from 5 to 7 p.m. and again during a reception at the Gallery on Saturday May 3 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., at which time the winners will be announced. The Community Gallery supports local artists, promotes artistic excellence, and strengthens the local arts economy through diverse exhibits, educational and professional development opportunities for local artists, and engaging activities for the public. Through thoughtful and creative programming, the Community Gallery is a hub for viewing quality New Mexico art and the presentation of dynamic educational opportunities.

WHO: Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan**

Congressional Art Competition Contestants

WHAT: Reception and announcement of contest winners

WHEN: Saturday, May 3, 2014

11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

WHERE: Santa Fe Arts Commission Community Gallery

Inside the Santa Fe Community Convention Center

201 West Marcy Street

Santa Fe, NM 87501 For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

LOAD-DATE: May 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

166 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

May 1, 2014 Thursday

New Mexico: Santa Fe Arts Commission Community Gallery Showcases Work

LENGTH: 465 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

City of Santa Fe has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** to Announce Winners of Congressional Art Competition on Saturday, May 3, 2014

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that entries in this year's Congressional Art Competition will be displayed in an exhibit open to the public at the Santa Fe Arts Commission Community Gallery on Friday, May 2 and Saturday, May 3. **Luján** will announce the winners of the competition during a reception on Saturday.

"Every year, I am impressed with the quality and creativity of the high school students who participate in this competition, and I am sure this year will be no different," Congressman **Luján** said. "I am excited that we will have the opportunity to show off their fine work in the Santa Fe Arts Commission Community Gallery for all to see."

This annual competition allows members of Congress to display the talent and creativity of their high school constituents. The first-place entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year. The winner will travel to Washington, D.C. for a reception honoring the national winners. Artwork that places second through seventh will be displayed in **Luján**'s district offices across northern New Mexico.

Students interested in entering the competition can still do so. Entries must be submitted to the Santa Fe district office by Friday, April 25 at 5 p.m. For more information regarding the contest guidelines are available on **Luján**'s website, www.**lujan**.house.gov.

All entries submitted to **Luján**'s office by high school students in the Third District will be on display on Friday, May 2 from 5 to 7 p.m. and again during a reception at the Gallery on Saturday May 3 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., at which time the winners will be announced. The Community Gallery supports local artists, promotes artistic excellence, and strengthens the local arts economy through diverse exhibits, educational and professional development opportunities for local artists, and engaging activities for the public. Through thoughtful and creative programming, the Community Gallery is a hub for viewing quality New Mexico art and the presentation of dynamic educational opportunities.

WHO: Congressman **Ben Ray Luján**

Congressional Art Competition Contestants

WHAT: Reception and announcement of contest winners

WHEN: Saturday, May 3, 2014

11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

WHERE: Santa Fe Arts Commission Community Gallery

Inside the Santa Fe Community Convention Center

201 West Marcy Street

Santa Fe, NM 87501

For further information please visit: http://www.santafenm.gov/

LOAD-DATE: May 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

April 30, 2014 Wednesday

White Sands' needs trump SunZia's wants

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. A6

LENGTH: 454 words

On the national-security-prevails side of the debate, you have the U.S. Department of Defense, former White Sands Commander Brig. Gen. Gwen Bing-ham, U.S. Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M, and Gov. Susana Martinez.

On the green-energy-trumps-all side, you have SunZia, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., and a mysterious late entry - Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev.

On the fence are Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M, and Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham.

It's fair to say all acknowledge the importance of national security and green energy. At issue is whether there is a reasonable compromise to stringing 45 of SunZia's proposed 515 miles of electrical transmission lines across White Sands' call-up zone .

But at the end of the day, national security and the future of White Sands Missile Range and its 9,000-orso employees should not be up for compromise. Especially on a speculative private sector endeavor that would enrich private investors and a few high plains ranchers who lease their land for solar and wind farms.

SunZia would transport renewable energy from central New Mexico to Arizona, and the Land of Enchantment is uniquely situated to provide sun and wind power. But White Sands is a unique post, with ground-to-infinity unrestricted air space, top-notch infrastructure, thousands of trained workers and the experience and ability to test forward-looking military systems to defend the nation.

As Martinez points out in a letter to President Obama and Interior Secretary Sally Jewell, "the planned route for the project poses an unacceptable national security risk" and the lines should either be moved or buried.

According to Pearce, move or bury is also the conclusion of a still-classified report commissioned at Heinrich's request from MIT Lincoln Laboratory. Heinrich and SunZia maintain it says just the opposite, but since it has yet to be released, it's another he-said/he-said situation.

Then there's Reid, who might just be a real efficiency/green-energy guy. The first paragraphs of his letter supporting SunZia touts the Rapid Response Team for Transmission, created to help solve permitting and other problems with renewable energy projects. Then again, this is the same guy who has kept Yucca Mountain shuttered while WIPP takes government nuclear waste and public criticism. A cynic might wonder if Reid now could be trying to strengthen the positions of Nevada's four military bases should another Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission come along.

It is unfortunate the SunZia project has been couched as a choice between green energy and national security. But if the power line truly can't be moved or buried, national security should be the choice.

LOAD-DATE: April 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 29, 2014

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANT IMPACT OF PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE-BACK DAY;
Commends Santa Fe County for Collecting 600 Pounds of Medication;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 342 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted the impact that National Prescription Take-Back Day had in New Mexico, where more than 600 pounds of medication was collected in Santa Fe County. **Lujan** commended the county and all those who participated by bringing their unwanted medications to one of the many locations for safe disposal.

"By collecting more than 600 pounds of prescription drugs, in Santa Fe County alone, and much more throughout the state, New Mexicans who participated in National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day have played an important role the fight against prescription drug abuse," Congressman **Lujan** said. "While Prescription Drug Take-Back Day is only a small part of what must be a larger effort to combat drug abuse, it is encouraging to see its success in Santa Fe County, and know that a significant amount of prescription drugs have been properly disposed of."

Last week, Rep. **Lujan** encouraged New Mexicans to take the opportunity on Saturday to dispose of unneeded or expired medicine in an effort to ensure these prescription drugs don't end up in the wrong hands. In 2012, over 60 percent of people who used prescription drugs for non-medical purposes obtained them from family or a friend - which highlights the importance of disposing of unneeded medication.

"As we continue to come together as a community and encourage our family, friends, and neighbors to live a healthy lifestyle, it is critical that we recognize the role prescription drugs have in people's lives. Every year we see an increasing number of lives claimed by prescription drug abuse," added **Lujan**. "Prescription Drug Take-Back events not only reduce the amount of unwanted drugs, but draw attention to the fact that we all have a role to play in this effort. Every step we take to safely dispose of prescription drugs has the potential to save lives in our communities."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-highlights-important-impact-of-prescription-drug-takeback-day/

LOAD-DATE: April 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Copyright 2014 CQ Transcriptions, LLC
All Rights Reserved
CQ Transcriptions

All materials herein are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of CQ Transcriptions. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.

REP. TIM MURPHY HOLDS A HEARING ON PRESCRIPTION DRUG AND HEROIN ABUSE

April 29, 2014 Tuesday

EVENT DATE: **April 29, 2014**

TYPE: COMMITTEE HEARING

LOCATION: WASHINGTON, D.C.

COMMITTEE: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

SPEAKER: REP. TIM MURPHY, CHAIRMAN

WITNESSES:
REP. MICHAEL C. BURGESS, R-TEXAS
REP. DIANA DEGETTE, D-COLO. RANKING MEMBER
REP. MARSHA BLACKBURN, R-TENN.
REP. HENRY A. WAXMAN, D-CALIF. EX OFFICIO
REP. PETER WELCH, D-VT.
MR. MICHAEL BOTTICELLI, ACTING DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY, EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
DR. DANIEL M. SOSIN, ACTING DIRECTOR, NATIONAL CENTER FOR INJURY PREVENTION AND CONTROL, CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION
DR. NORA D. VOLKOW, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DRUG ABUSE, NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
DR. H. WESTLEY CLARK, DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT, SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
WITNESSES: MR. JOSEPH T. RANNAZZISI, DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF DIVERSION CONTROL, DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M.
REP. RENEE ELLMERS, R-N.C.
REP. BILL JOHNSON, R-OHIO
REP. KATHY CASTOR, D-FLA.
REP. MORGAN GRIFFITH, R-VA.
REP. STEVE SCALISE, R-LA.
REP. GENE GREEN, D-TEXAS

TEXT:

BURGESS: Good morning. I now convene the hearing of the Subcommittee of Oversight Investigations entitled "Examining the Growing Problems of Prescriptions Drug and Heroine Abuse."

Just a brief housekeeping detail for those of you who are expecting to see Dr. Murphy here in the Chair, he was called away back to his district for a family issue, so you're stuck me as the saying goes, but we will get through this together.

On the issue of prescription drug and heroine abuse, these separate and distinct problems, but unfortunately they do share a common endpoint addiction abuse, overdose and death.

As we know the abuse of prescription drugs and illegal drugs such heroine have plagued our nation for decades. However, over the last several months, there have been increasing reports that prescription drug and heroine abuse in communities around the country continues to grow. Sadly, those reports indicate that overdose deaths as a result of prescription drug and heroine are also on the rise. Families have lost sons and daughters, mothers and fathers to this addiction.

Data from the Federal agencies charged with addressing drug abuse paint a startling picture of the severity of the public health crisis. Prescription drug abuse kills more than 16,000 people a year. From 2007 to 2012, heroine use rose by almost 80 percent in this country and 3,000 people died each year from heroine overdoses.

The United States Attorney General Eric Holder declared recently that heroine abuse constitutes "An urgent and growing public health crisis". Certainly, there is a law enforcement aspect to solving this problem and stopping the bad actors who illegally distribute prescription drugs or traffic heroine. But the other part of the equation is treating the addiction, the addiction to prescription drug and heroine and preventing deaths. The answer to a burgeoning heroine epidemic, as the administration has called it, is not to wage war on all opioids. To address a complex to solution cannot be simple.

The purpose of today's hearing is to examine the federal response, including the public health response to prescription drug and heroine abuse. Our oversight has revealed that this is a complex problem. Those who abuse drugs also have often an underlying mental illness. Treating their addiction means that the underlying mental illness must be successfully diagnosed and treated.

As testimony of Mr. Botticelli states, the substance abuse is a "progressive disease." Those who suffer from addiction often started at young age with alcohol, maybe marijuana move on to other drugs like opioids. In examining opioid abuse, we must also consider the factors that lead people to abuse and what we are doing to address those factors.

Many Americans also suffer from chronic and debilitating pain. It's important to remember that the millions of individuals who safely use opioid narcotics under the guidance of their physicians, pain and we that a loved one would never have to suffer is involved.

As Dr. Volkow of NIH recognizes in her testimony, we need to recognize the special character of prescription drug abuse. On the one hand, we have a growing prescription drug and opiate addiction. On the other, we have a very real need for these drugs to treat chronic pain, treat acute pain and alleviate suffering where it exists, especially in patients with chronic conditions who are suffering from illnesses like cancer. These drugs are safe when used as directed. It is their improper use that leads to abuse, overdose and death.

Over recent years, we've heard a great deal about doctor shopping, about pill mills, and about the efforts of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Plans to address these problems. We need to ensure that doctors and pharmacists have the tools at their disposal to adequately fill their role in ensuring appropriate prescribing. But addicts also get these drugs through illegal channels, such as rogue Internet pharmacies, off the street and obtaining them through family members who may have out dated prescription. Although some question whether federal efforts to crackdown and prevent prescription drug abuse have contributed to the recent rise in heroine abuse and whether this should have been anticipated, there's no question that both are on the rise. And as a consequence we have a responsibility to recognize and solve that problem.

While most prescription drug abusers do not go on to abuse heroine there is data from the Whitehouse Office of National Drug Control Policy and the Substance Abuse in Mental Health Services

Administration that indicates over 80 percent of people who started using heroine in 2008 to 2010 had previously abused prescription drugs.

The federal government is devoting resources to drug control programs. Some would say significant--some would say significant resources over $25 billion annually, of which about $10 billion goes towards drug abuse, prevention and treatment programs across 19 different federal agencies. We will ask today's witnesses to identify the specific policies to programs, the initiatives that have the most effective in combating prescription drug and heroine abuse and which have not. With 19 agencies having a hand in over 70 drug controlled programs we need to know what is working and what is not. What can we do better? Is oversight by the federal agencies also an important issue as a significant funding a block granted to the states for their treatment programs.

Testifying before us today are representatives of five the agencies with lead roles in addressing opiate abuse. Mr. Michael Botticelli, the Acting Director of the White House Office national Drug Control Policy, Mr. Daniel Sosin of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Nora Volkow of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, Dr. Westley Clark of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and Mr. Joseph Rannazzisi of the Drug Enforcement Agency. This is a prestigious panel, and we are very grateful for you presence here today. We certainly look forward to your testimony. I would now like to recognize for five minutes for the purposes of opening statement the Ranking Member Ms. DeGette of Colorado.

DEGETTE: Thank you so much Mr. Burgess and we're glad to have you presiding today.

Prescription drug and heroine abuse is a public health crisis, and its growing everyday. In many communities across the country, we're seeing an epidemic of opioid overdose deaths. I'm interested in learning from the panel about what more we can do to prevent the abuse of these drugs and also to save lives. The non-medical use of opiates has escalated in recent years. In 2011, hospitals tallied nearly half a million emergency room visits related to these medications, the number of these visits nearly tripled over a seven-year period. The link between prescription opioid use and heroine abuse is also deeply troubling. And as the chairman noted, only a small percentage of people who used pain relievers go on to abuse heroine but the opposite is not true. The vast majority of those who abuse heroine previous abused prescription drugs.

While far more people can continue to abuse prescription drugs, the number of individuals who reported using heroine nearly doubled between 2007 and 2012. There's also evidence to suggest the people who abuse prescription drugs move on to heroine as pain relievers become less available or too costly. At 2012 study in the New England Journal of Medicine found heroine use rose dramatically after the introduction of an abused deterrent form of Oxycotin. The use of drugs that ultimately lead to addiction and abuse often begins innocently.

The majority of people who illegally use a prescription drug get that drug from a friend or a family member often and sometimes the drug has been stolen. But in other times, a parent may even give the drug to a child unaware of the risks. We must educate patients on the dangers of abuse of these drugs as well as the need to properly store and dispose of them. If we could reduce inappropriate access to drugs, we can also reduce the incidence of their abuse. We must change the public perception of the prescription opioids. We face the inaccurate perception that just because the drug legal, it is somehow less harmless, less addictive and less risky.

Providers should also be better educated on the use and potential abuse of these drugs, so they can be more effective in recognizing problems of abuse and in turn more effective in educating and treating the patients. Study show that even brief interventions by health care providers can be successful in reducing or eliminating substance abuse by patients who began abusing prescription opioids but have not yet become addicted to them.

When prescribed appropriately, these medicines provide much needed relief and many patients have had their suffering reduced by opiate pain killers. However, a patient with an acute short-term pain may be able to find relief from a less addictive pain killer. Prescription drug abuse is a public health problem and it's not just law enforcement problem. Reducing this abuse will require a multi- faceted

approach and partnership among federal state and local agencies. Every state should effectively use prescription drug monitoring programs.

These databases help states identify and address drug diversion so they should be as robust and effective as possible. State should be able to share information with due regard for privacy expectations. Information should be added to the databases regularly including by encouraging prescribers and pharmacist to use the databases. When used, they can help doctors and public health authorities to prevent and respond to the potential devastating effects of prescription drug abuse.

I'm interested in learning from our witnesses today about the effects of this medication assisted treatment that we're hearing about, and also whether we have the resources to meet the demand for these treatment programs. I'm also interested in learning about the state of research into new medications with lower abuse potential and how we can expand access to over doors interventions like Nexium.

Prescription opioid and heroine abuse as you said Mr. Chairman is a serious public health treat. I look forward to hearing from all of the witnesses and to working with all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to ensure that Congress plays a vital role in protecting families from the growing danger of these drugs and yield back the bouncing my time.

BURGESS: The young lady yields back. The Chair now recognizes gentlelady from Tennessee. Five minutes for purposes of opening statement, please.

BLACKBURN: Thank you Mr. Chairman. And I know we are all cheering for Congressman Murphy and his daughter as they are about to welcome that new baby into their family. What an exciting, exciting time. I can only tell you the joys of being a grandparent are marvelous. It is a big part of my day.

Well, I thank you for the attention that we are putting on this issue. Prescription drug and heroine abuse are epidemic in our country. And I think you can tell by what is being said in this room this morning. It is an issue that our Committee is concerned about. And I applaud the efforts of the committee to take a very thoughtful approach in process as how we move forward. It is clear that we need to understand the factors that have contributed to the rise and prescription drug and heroin abuse.

We need to understand which prevention treatment and law enforcement efforts are the most effective in reducing the abuse of prescription drug and heroin. Another side of this issue are the millions of Americans who have legitimate need for prescription medication for the control of pain. Reduction of anxiety began the overall improvement of their lives. These medications must be available to them. HR 4069 the Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act to the 2013 that is a bill by Representative Marino and I. It will establish a combating prescription drug abuse working group.

This group will include members from the DEA, FDA, ONDCP, state Attorney Generals, patient groups, pharmacies industry, healthcare providers and others. Within one year of enactment, the working group shall provide. They must do this provide recommendation is a congress on initiatives to reduce prescription drug diversion and abuse. We think this is the right approach. We welcome each about were witnesses we look forward to hearing your testimony and to the discussion. And with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back my time or to anyone who is seeking time.

BURGESS: Seem no one seeking time. Gentlelady yields back. The Chair now recognizes the Ranking Member of the Full Committee, Mr. Maxman, five minutes for opening statement, please.

WAXMAN: Thank you Mr. Chairman for holding this important hearing today.

We're here to discuss the epidemic of opioid abuse. The numbers of stark each year approximately 17,000 people die from prescription opioid overdoses, and 3,000 died from heroin overdoses.

For far too long, prescription opioid pain relievers were prescribed too easily, without enough attention paid to the potential risks, and a large number people became addicted. Some of those who became addicted to prescription opioid eventually moved on to heroin, because that's a cheaper alternative offering the same high.

Fortunately, there are steps that we can take to fight this problem. I appreciate our witnesses being here today to discuss their efforts to educate the public and providers about the dangerous of abusing these drugs. We'll also hear how we can change prescribing practices monitor the use opioids, effectively treat those who are addicted, and investigate and prosecute those involve in diverting and trafficking these drugs.

Our five witnesses Mr. Rannazzisi from DEA, Mr. Botticelli from ONDCP, Mr. Sosin from CDC, Mr. Volkow from NIH, and Dr. Clark from SAMHSA represent an all-star panel of experts. We're delighted that you're here.

There are many reasons that be thankful for the launch of the Affordable Care act. Let me repeat that, there are many reasons to be thankful for the launch of the Affordable Care Act. One that is often overlooked is the help the law offers to individuals addicted to prescription opioids and heroin. The lack of insurance and the high cost of treatment can presented an insurmountable barrier to receiving the health they need.

The Affordable Care Act addresses this problem by expanding insurance coverage and requiring all policies to cover the concepts substance abuse services. This will mean that millions of individuals with addiction disorders will have access to the tools they need to have break their addictions.

We need to build upon this hopeful step and increase our efforts to comeback this epidemic.

And Mr. Chairman at this point, I wish to yield the balance of my time to Welch from Vermont.

WELCH: I thank the member from California for yielding. And I thank the Committee for having this hearing. But I want to give some credit to Governor Peter Shumlin of Vermont. He just something extremely unusual. He dedicated his entire stay to the state address to the single problem. And that was of all his decision for two reasons. One, most of the times the state to the state is a under lists objectives and hopes. This got very specific about one topic.

But second, in taking this on, he made public what people new was real but didn't want to acknowledge. And what we seen in Vermont as a result in that, was that we're facing what is the terrible problem but it creates enormous anxiety for the folks that are in the grip of this addiction. But their families -- and before we begin talking about this, it was restricted to our law enforcement folks and our mental health folks who are dealing with these isolated individuals, as though, they were the only ones in the world that face this incredible challenge.

And what Governor Shumlin did is he brought out in the open and that was enlarged part because he's travels around and governors do get around. Just talking to our law enforcement people like Chief Taylor in St. Albans, like Chief Baker in Rutland. And they were dealing on the street with kids that they knew and with adults that they knew who had jobs. But have this horrible addiction and they have to deal with it.

And what our police kept saying who have front line responsibilities, you can not arrest your way out of this. And there is a distinction that they make between the dealers who came from out of state and starts deflecting our kids and other with this opioid addiction, you know, throw to book at them and forget about them.

But a lot of the kids who are in the grip, they are kids. They got a future. They got a challenge. And what has happen in our communities with the leadership of our police and our mental health people, and our Mayor like Liz Gamache in Saint Albans and like Chris Louras in Rutland is that by bringing this out into the open, it helped us talk about this in concrete ways so that there's not only the treatment program the (inaudible) program which I hope you might talk about. But it also is allowing parents in the community to see this is something where we all have to be engage to provide some

basis to support for these kids and adults who want not to be in the grip of this horrible opioid addiction. So, I thank you the committee for having this hearing and making it a collective effort to try to bring our resources together to help people get hold. Thank you.

BURGESS: The gentleman yields back. I would now like to introduce the witnesses on the panel for today's hearing. Mr. Michael Botticelli is the Acting Director of the Office Of National Drug Control Policy in the Executive Office of the President, Dr. Daniel Sosin, he is the Acting Director of the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control at the Center For Disease Prevention, Dr. Nora Volkow is the Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse at the National Institute of Health, Dr, Wesley Clark is the Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment within the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and Mr. Joseph Rannazzisi is the Deputy Assistant Administrator in the Office Diversion Control within the Drug Enforcement Agency at the United States Department of Justice.

I will swear in the witnesses as you're aware to committee is holding -- this committee is holding an investigative hearing, and when doing so has have the practice of taking testimony under oath. Do you have any objections to testifying under oath this morning?

Seeing a negative response from the witnesses, the Chair then advises that under the rules to the House or the rules to the Committee, you are entitled to be advised by council. Do any of our witnesses desired to be advised by council during testimony today? And negative response was received from the panel witnesses. In that case, if you would please rise and raise your right hand I will swear you in.

Do you swear that the testimony you are about to give this the truth the whole truth and nothing by the truth.

Let it be noted that the witnesses answer affirmatively. You're now under oath. In subject to penalty set forward in Title 18, Section 1001 of the United States Code. We would now welcome a five-minute summary of your written statements. We will start with Mr. Botticelli and moved down the table.

BOTTICELLI: Chairman Burgess, Ranking Member DeGette, and members of the Subcommittee. I want to thank you for the opportunity to appear today to discuss the tremendous public health and safety issues surrounding the diversion and abuse of opioid drug, including many prescription pain killers and heroin in the United States.

I know that given reason media attention to overdose test. There was high in public interest in the threat of opioid drug use. But this is something many communities have been dealing with her very long time and it's a matter of great concern for this administration.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drug overdose deaths primarily driven by prescription opioids, now surpass homicides and traffic crashes and the number of injury deaths in America.

In 2010 the latest here (ph) for which nationwide data are available. Approximately, 100 Americans died on average from overdose everyday. Prescription analgesics were involved, you know, most 17,000 of those deaths that year and heroin was involved in about 3,000.

In more recent data posted by several states indicates that death from heroin continue to increase. While heroin use remains relatively low in the United States as compared to other drugs, there has been a troubling increase in the number of people using heroin in recent years, from 373,000 past year users in 2007 to 669,000 in 2012.

It is clear that we cannot arrest our way out of the drug problem. Science has shown us that drug addiction is the disease of the brain, a disease that can be prevented, treated and from which one, can recover.

We know that substance use disorders include those driven by opioids are progressive disease. Many people who develop a substance use disorder begin using at a young age and often start with alcohol, tobacco, and or marijuana. We know that as an individual's abuse of prescription opioids becomes more frequent or chronic, that person is more inclined to purchase the drugs from dealers or obtain prescriptions from multiple doctors rather than simply getting it from a friend or relative for free or without asking.

This progression of an opioid use disorder may lead an individual to pursue a lower cost alternatives such as heroin. With these circumstances in mind, we release the Obama administration's inaugural National Drug Control Strategy in 2010 in which we set out a wide array of actions to expand public health interventions and criminal justice reforms to reduce drug use and its consequences in the United States. That strategy noted opioid overdose as a growing national crisis and set specificals for reducing drug use including heroin.

Three years ago, the Administration released the first comprehensive action plan to combat the prescription drug abuse epidemic. The Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Plan strikes a balance between the need to prevent diversion and abuse and the need to ensure legitimate access to prescription pain medications.

The plan expands on the National Drug Control Strategy and brings together a variety of federal state, local and tribal partners to support one, the expansion of state based prescription drug monitoring programs, two, more convenient and environmentally responsible disposal methods for removing expired or unneeded medication from the home, three, education for patients and training of healthcare providers in the proper prescribing practices and treatment of substance use disorders, and four, reducing the prevalence of pill mills and doctor shopping through enforcement efforts.

This work has been paralleled by efforts to address heroin trafficking and use. The Administration is also focusing on several key areas to reduce and prevent opioid overdoses including educating the public about overdose risk and interventions, increasing access to naloxone and emergency overdose reversal medication. And working with states to promote Good Samaritan laws and other measures that can help save lives, because police are often the first on seen of an overdose, the Administration strongly encourages local law enforcement agencies to train and equip their personnel with this life-saving drug.

It is not enough, however, to save a life from an overdose. A smart public health approach requires us to catch the signs and symptoms of substances early before it develops into a chronic disorder. We have been encouraging the use of screening and brief intervention to catch risky substance use before it becomes an addiction.

And since only 11 percent of those who need substance use disorder treatment in 2012 actually received it, the Administration has dramatically expanding access to treatment. The Affordable Care Act and Federal parity law are extending access to substance use disorders and mental health benefits for an estimated 62 million Americans helping to close the treatment gap and integrate substance use treatment into mainstream healthcare. This represents the largest expansion of treatment access in the generation and can help guide millions into successful recovery.

The standard of care for treating substance use disorder is driven by heroin or prescription opioids involves the use of medication-assisted treatment, and approach to treating opioid addiction that utilizes behavioral therapy along with FDA approved medications either methadone, buprenorphine or nalterxone.

Medication-assisted treatment has already helped thousands of people in long-term recovery. And I applaud the recent comment carried by my HHS colleagues and the New England Journal of Medicine to expand the use of medications to treat opioid addiction and reduce overdose deaths.

There are sometimes that our national efforts are working. The number of Americans 12 and older initiating the nonmedical use of prescription opioids in the past year has decreased significantly since 2009. Additionally, according to the latest Monitoring the Future survey, the rate of past year use of OxyContin or Vicodin among high school seniors in 2013 is at its lowest since 2002.

And recent studies have shown that implementation of robust naloxone distribution programs and the expansion of medication- assisted treatment can reduce mortality and also be cost effective.

However, continuing challenges with prescription opioids and the reemergence of heroin use underscore the need for leadership at all levels of government. We will, therefore, continue to work with our federal state tribal and community partners to continue to reduce and prevent the health and safety consequences of prescription opioids and heroin.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee today.

BURGESS: The gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes Dr. Sosin for purposes of five-minute opening statement, please.

SOSIN: Good morning, Chairman Burgess and members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify about the public health issues related to prescription drug overdoses and the Centers for Disease Control and Preventions role in preventing them.

It is an honor to be with you today to talk about CDC's approach to prescription drug overdoses and the prevention of them.

Drug overdose death rates are higher than they have ever been. With prescription opioids being a key driver of this trend, more than 125,000 Americans have died from prescription opioid overdoses in the last decade. CDC has played an important role in raising the visibility of the health impact of prescription opioid overdoses in helping to identify the role of increased opioid prescribing and fueling this epidemic.

Research also suggests that the growth in heroin use maybe due impart to the increase addiction cost by the rise in prescribing of opioid pain relievers.

The doubling in heroin use in the past six years is worrisome trend and undoubtedly has a relationship to prescription opioids, reducing inappropriate opioid prescribing as one of the approaches needed to keep people from becoming addicted to opioids and preventing them from later transitioning to heroin. Because of the complexity of these issues, the response demands engagement from a diverse group of federal state and local partners. The partners at this table are all critical in the overall goal to reduce abuse and overdose of opioids while ensuring that patients with pain are safely and effectively treated.

As the nation's health protection agency, CDC is focused on upstream drivers of this epidemic and this instance, the prescribing behaviors that created and continued to fuel this crisis. Our approach fits into three pillars that leverage CDC's unique expertise. One, improving data quality and use to monitor the trends and causes of the epidemic, timely drug specific information on prescribing and the health of facts of prescription drugs is critical. We generate, use and improve data to identify threats, assess local trends and evaluate the impact of prevention measures.

Two, strengthening state prevention efforts. States maintain Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs or PDMPs. They regulate healthcare professionals and institutions. They monitor the problem through their health departments and they run large public insurance programs including Medicaid. CDC provides resources and technical assistance to states to implement interventions and evaluate and adapt their approach to have the most impact.

And three, improving patient safety by supporting healthcare providers and systems with tools and data needed to respond effectively. For example, CDC is working to promote responsible opioid prescribing through guidelines and decision support tools. While CDC has ongoing work in each of these areas, we are focusing this year on accelerating state prevention efforts. We will be funding 45 state health departments for up to a total of $2 million per year to implement and evaluate the strategies I just outlined.

The 2015 President's Budget includes a request for $15.6 million in new funds to expand CDC's Core Violence and Injury Prevention Program, which is a state based program addressing injury and violence prevention. This will allow us to include additional states with a high burden of prescription drug overdose to prevent injuries and violence and expand the investments of these programs on reducing prescription drug overdose.

In conclusion, prescription drug abuse and overdose is a serious public health problem in United States. The burden of prescription drug abuse and overdose affects people of all walks of life and many sectors of our economy. Addressing this complex problem requires a multi-faceted approach and collaboration.

CDC is committed to tracking and understanding the epidemic, supporting states working on the frontlines of this crisis, and rigorously evaluating what works to improve patient safety, prevent overdoses and save lives.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be here today.

BURGESS: Thank you, the gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes Dr. Volkow for five minutes for an opening statement. Thank you.

VOLKOW: These are component of the NIH to speak about the value of science in helping address the problem from the diversion and abuse of prescription opioid pain killers and the related rising abuse of heroin.

Opioid medications are the most effective intervention we currently have for management severe pain. Unfortunately, these drugs, not only inhibit pain centers in the brain, but they are also potently activate brain reward regions which is why they are abuse and they can cause addiction.

So we face the unique challenge of preventing their abuse while safeguarding their value for managing severe pain which, if untreated, is terribly debilitating.

It is estimated that 2.1 million Americans are addicted to opioid pain killers which reflects in part the wide spread availability of these drugs.

Indeed, the number of yearly prescriptions for opioids has more than double over the past 20 years from 76 million to 207 million prescriptions per year. During that period, that in parallel, so a fourfold increase in overdoses -- death overdoses from prescription opioids.

Pain killers like OxyContin and Vicodin affect the brain similarly to heroin. They interact with exactly the same opioid receptors. Their difference depends on their potency, that is how strongly they activate those receptors and how rapidly they do so. So as for heroin, they can produce euphoria which some abusers of prescription medications intensify by taking higher doses, crushing the pills so that they can snort them or inject them, or taking them in combination with other drugs like alcohol and benzodiazepines.

These practices make opioids far more dangerous, not only because they are more addictive, but also because they increase the risk for respiratory depression which is the main cause of death from overdoses.

Recent trends, as the other witnesses have mentioned, also indicate the rising heroin abuse which currently affects more than half million Americans and this rise is possibly driven in part by people switching from prescription opioids to heroin because it is cheaper and some instances more available.

Heroin is dangerous, not just because of its high addictiveness and overdose risk that it posses, but also because it is frequently injected which increases the risk of diseased like HIV and hepatitis C predominantly from the use of contaminated injection material.

So what is NIDA doing about the problem? We're funding research in three major areas. One, research that will allow us to manage pain more effectively, research that will allow us to in -- prevent deaths from overdoses, from opioids, and our research will allow us to treat substance use disorders more effectively including prescription medications.

As it relates to the safe management of pain, we still don't know enough about the risk for addiction among chronic pain patients or about how pain mechanisms in the brain interrupt with prescriptions opioid to influence their addictive potential, but ongoing research will help us clarify some of these issues.

So with respect to treatment, we're funding research to develop non-opioid based analgesics that are nonaddictive. Opioid medications that have less risk for diversion and abuse as -- given by different formulations or different ways of administering them. And finally, non-medication strategies for such as transcranial magnetic stimulation or electrical brain stimulation for the management of pain.

Research related to preventing overdoses making the effective opioid overdose antidote naloxone, which is very safe, more available, will help prevent many deaths. The FDA recently approved the hand- held auto-injector of naloxone that patients and others can use easily.

NIDA is supporting the development of user-friendly naloxones in the form of nasal spray to be used by non-medical personnel or the overdose victim.

Also, since many overdoses of when no one is around or during sleep, NIDA is supporting the development of self-activated systems that initiate an emergency response when wireless ends or signal than of an overdose is abhorring (ph).

As it relates to opioid addiction, methadone, buprenorphine or nalterxone have been shown to be effective in treating opioid addiction and in preventing overdoses. But these medications are not dangerous widely. NIDA is working to overcome the barriers that interfere with their adoption.

In parallel, research of new interventions such as vaccines for heroin will allow us to treat this problem in a different way and to prevent it.

Additionally, we work with our partner, CDC, SAMHSA, ONDCP and ONC in implementing and evaluating evidence based interventions.

Again, I want to thank you for recognizing the urgency of the problem post by the abuse of prescription opioids and for inviting NIDA to this (inaudible) science and help address this problem.

BURGESS: The Chair thanks the doctor, gentlelady yields back. The Chair recognizes Dr. Clark five minutes for the purposes of summarizing your opening statement, please.

Your microphone, sir.

CLARK: Thank you for inviting Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to participate in this panel. I echoed (ph) the testimony of my colleagues regarding the importance of the topics of this hearing. I'll focus on census, programs and activities, but I want to point out that we've worked with our federal partners with states, tribes and local communities.

According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health which SAMHSA conducts 4.9 million people reported non-medical use of pain relievers during the past month in 2012. 335,000 reported past month use of heroin, it figured that has more than doubled in six years.

In 2012, more than 1.89 million people reported initiating non- medical use of pain relievers. And 156,000 reported initiating the use of heroin. One challenge in combating the misuse of pain relievers is educating the public on dangerous of sharing medications.

According to our national survey, 54 percent of those who obtained pain relievers or non-medical use in the past year received them from a friend or relative for free. Another 14.9 percent either bought them or took them from a friend or relative. Thus, we have both a public health problem intertwined with the cultural problem. SAMHSA has several programs focused on educating the public including the not worth the risk even if it's legal campaign which encourages parents to talk to their teens about preventing prescription drug abuse.

Our prevention of prescription abuse in the workplace effort supports programs who are employers, employees and their families. Our partnership for success grant includes prescription drug abuse prevention as one of the capacity building activities in communities of high need. Our Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment program include screening for illicit drugs including heroin and other opioids. We've developed programs to help physicians maintain a balance between providing appropriate pain management and minimizing the risk of pain medication misuse.

Our SBIRT Medical Residency program includes the modules of prescription opioids for pain management and opioid misuse. Over 6,000 medical residents and over 13,700 non-residents have been trained nationally. Our Physician Clinical Support System for Medication Assisted Treatment training is available via live in- person, live online and recorded modules accessible at anytime.

SAMHSA funds the Prescriber's Clinical Support System for opioids therapist in collaborative project led by the American Academy of Addictions Psychiatry with six other leading medical societies. We will be funding a Provider's Clinical Support System on the appropriate use of opioids in the treatment of pain in opioid related addiction this fiscal year.

Last week's article in the New England Journal of Medicine authored by HHS leadership, including Dr. Volkow and SAMHSA's administrator, describes the underutilization of vital medications and addiction treatment services, and discusses ongoing efforts by major public health agencies to encourage their use.

Medication-assisted treatment includes three strategies. Agonist therapy which includes methadone maintenance. Partial agonist therapy which includes buprenorphine. And antagonist therapy which uses an extended release injectable nalterxone or vivitrol.

SAMHSA is responsible for overseeing the regulatory compliance of certified Opioid Treatment Programs which use methadone and or buprenorphine for treatment of opioid addiction.

We estimate that there are approximately 300,000 people receiving methadone maintenance. There are currently 26,000 physicians with a waiver prescribe buprenorphine of this 7,700 unauthorized to prescribe up to a hundred patients.

We estimate that there are 1.2 million people receiving buprenorphine. SAMHSA also issued an advisory encouraging drug cohorts to utilize vivitrol in their treatment programs.

In August of 2013, we published the Opioid Overdose Toolkit to educate families and first respondents, individuals, prescribing providers and community members about steps to take, to prevent and treat opioid overdose including the use of naloxone. When administered quickly and effectively, naloxone restores breathing to a victim in the throes of an opioid overdose. This can be use as a teachable moment to asses treatment need and refer the person to the appropriate resources.

We inform states and jurisdictions that the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant primary prevention set-aside funds maybe utilized to support overdose prevention education and training.

In addition, we notified jurisdiction, the block grants other than the primary prevention set-aside funds maybe used to purchase naloxone. And then necessary materials to assemble overdose kits to cover the cost associated with the dissemination of such kits.

SAMHSA continues to focus on our mission of reducing the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities. We thank the Subcommittee Chairman and members for conveying this important hearing, and providing SAMHSA with the opportunity to address these very critical issues.

BURGESS: The gentleman yields back. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Rannazzisi five minutes for purposes of summarizing your test testimony, please sir.

RANNAZZISI: Thank you Chairman Burgess, distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of DE Administrator Michelle Leonhart, the men and women of the Drug Enforcement Administration, I want to thank you for the opportunity to discuss today the relationship between prescription opioids and heroin and how DEA is addressing the public health problem.

First, let me say that the President State of Affairs is not a surprise. DEA has been concerned about the connection between the rising prescription, opioid diversion and abuse problem in rising heroin trafficking use for several years. The DEA believes that increased heroin use is driven by many factors including the increase in the misuse and abuse of prescription opioids. The science had been there for sometime now.

Law enforcement agencies across the country have been reporting an increase in heroin use by teens and young adults who began their cycle of abuse with prescription opioids. Treatment providers report that opioid addicted individuals switched between prescription opioids and heroin depending on price and availability. Non-medical prescription opioid is used particularly by teens and young adults who can easily lead to heroin use, heroin traffickers know all this. And a relocating to areas with prescription drug abuse is on the rise.

To give you an example, we know that many teens and young adults first get their prescription opioids for free from medicine cabinets or friends. But assume that a teenager gets hydrocodone schedule III prescription opioid. And also most -- the most prescribed drug in the United States from a family medicine cabinet or a friend. Once that free source runs out, it could cost just a little between $5 and $7 a tablet on the street. But then the teen will eventually need more opioid to get the same effect that he's trying to achieve.

Black market sales for prescription drugs are typically five to ten times the retail value. On the street, a schedule II prescription opioid can cost anywhere from $40 to $80 per tablet depending on the relative strike of the drug. These increasing costs make it difficult to continue purchasing especially for teens and young adults who don't have steady sources of income.

Given the high cost to maintain this high, the teenager turns to heroin at a street cost of generally $10 a bag. The teenager gets a high similar the one he got when he abused prescription drugs. It's just that easy. Any long-term solution or reduced opioid abuse must include actions to address prescription drug diversion and misuse, while also educating the public about the dangerous of non-medical use of pharmaceuticals educating prescribers and pharmacists in treating those individuals who have moved from misuse and abuse to addiction.

The DEA currently operates 66 Tactical Diversion Squads in 41 states, the Districts of Columbia and the Caribbean. These groups capitalized or combined law enforcement authorities of task force officers and DEA agents to conduct criminal investigations in the diversion of pharmaceutical drugs. The DEA regulates more than 1.5 million registrants. DEA diversion groups concentrate on the regulatory aspects of enforcing the Controlled Substances Act, utilizing the increase compliance inspections.

This oversight enables DEA to proactively educate registrants and ensure that DEA registrants understand and comply with the law. The Tactical Diversion Squads and the diversion groups have brought their skills to barren (ph) what was previously known as ground zero for prescription drug use, Florida based internet pharmacies and pain clinics.

As the current pill mill threat is driven out of Florida and moves North and Northwest, DEA will continue to target the threat with the tactical diversion groups proven law enforcement skills, the diversion groups regulatory expertise and by educating registrants.

DEA and our law enforcement partners have aggressively targeted both prescription drug diversion and heroin trafficking. From 2001 to 2012, there's been a staggering increase in drug analysis of opioid pain medications, 275 percent for oxycodone, 197 percent for hydrocodone, and 334 percent for morphine.

This has also been a significant increase in heroin cases. From 2008 to 2012, there's a 35 percent increase. If the data for the first half of 2013 remains constant, the increase from 2008 to 2013 would be approximately 51 percent.

The increase in heroin abuse and trafficking is a symptom of our countries appetite for prescription opioids, that'll eventually lead to abuse and addiction. It's a natural progression from the abuse of prescription opioids. There's a dangerous misperception that abusing prescription drugs is safer than abusing heroin. Both abuse of prescription opioids and heroin can lead to addiction and death.

Preventing the availability of pharmaceutical controlled substances to non-medical users and educating practitioners, pharmacist, and public about pharmaceutical diversion, trafficking and abuse of priorities at DEA. As such, DEA will continue to work as a -- with a cooperative effort with other federal state and local officials, law enforcement, professional organizations and community groups to address this epidemic.

Thank you for your invitation to appear today. And I look forward to answering any questions that you may have. Thank you.

BURGESS: The gentleman yields back, and thanks the gentlemen for his testimony.

Now, hear from the -- from the members for questions. Five minutes for each member. I'll begin -- well, Mr. Rannazzisi, you just gave some rather startling statistics, (inaudible) Mr. Botticelli. You said at your testimony, we can't rest our way out of this problem. So let me just ask you from a federal perspective, we put a lot of money, a lot of effort on behalf of taxpayers into this, what is it that is -- what is it about this that is not working?

Mr. Botticelli, we'll start with you. And maybe we can just go down the line and just answer the question. How has this become the problem that it is?

BOTTICELLI: You know, I think in number of my federal panelist have articulated some of the problems and I think, you know, first and foremost, a lot of this issue is driven by the vast overprescribing of prescription pain medication. You know, a recent report by the GAO showed that the vast majority of physicians get little to no training in substance use disorders and little to no training in safe opioid prescribing. And a part of our ...

BURGESS: Let me stop you there, because this is not a new problem. I mean, this was a problem 40 years ago when I was in medical school. And I would disagree with the statement that we got no training, but OK the training may not be adequate to the scope of the problem. But honestly, can we say that this is something that just happened to us as if we were completely unaware that this was an issue? I mean, how can you possibly make a statement like that?

BOTTICELLI: I think, you know, part of what the balance has been and I think it's been out of kilter is, you know, that physicians quite honestly were pushed in terms of making sure that we adequately treated pain in the United States. And we absolutely need to make sure that we do that. I think we need to have a balance strategy that understand the tremendous addiction potential of these drugs.

The risky patients that we have before is in terms of who should be prescribed with prescription medication, as well as monitoring those who are developing our problem. So I do think that this is a balance approach in terms of both making sure that we are adequately treating pain. But we're also

not inadvertently creating a problem by overprescribing these medications to people who are developing our problem or who are at risk.

BURGESS: Well, I don't want to words as rough (ph), Mr. Rannazzisi seemed to imply that we are overprescribing, is that a fair assessment of your testimony?

RANNAZZISI: I think that if you're talking about 99.5 percent of the prescribers, no, they're not overprescribing. But, we're dealing -- our focus is in both pain clinics and road doctors, who are overprescribing. Actually, they're prescribing illegally, they're not overprescribing, they're illegally prescribing. So, yes, concerning that overprescribing, yes.

BURGESS: Well, that's your job, your law enforcement so you need to close them down, right?

RANNAZZISI: And we're trying, they're overwhelming us with numbers.

BURGESS: All right, I do want everyone response of that because the interest of time and wanted to keep to the five minute. Therefore, I'm going to submit that in writing to each of you.

I want to bring up something for each -- several of you have brought it up and that's the issue of making naloxone much more available, maybe we should also be talking about making imovax (ph) available for people who are going to overdose. I mean, it's hard to know who's going to overdose. But -- Mr. Botticelli, you brought it up, I think Mr. Sosin, you brought it up as well. But, what is the issue here with making this available?

BOTTICELLI: You know, I think that we've tremendously hard in both at the federal level as Dr. Volkow talked about in terms of the approval of new delivery devices for doing that. One of the main areas that ONDCP has been working with our state partners is the passage of state legislation to look at naloxone distribution. And so, I think we have now 17 states had been acted, naloxone distribution legislation which I think has really been helpful here. We've also been in quite honestly working with many law enforcement agencies across the state.

BURGESS: Pardon me for a moment, but it is a federally controlled substance, is it not? Naloxone?

BOTTICELLI: It's not a controlled substance, if I remember it correctly ...

BURGESS: OK, is there a cost issue?

BOTTICELLI: There is a cost issue. And one of things, Chairman, that you asked is what are the opportunities that we have in terms of looking at this. And again, I think, you know, the -- and, you know, again, we're really helpful that SAMHSA looked at existing -- how we might use existing federal funds.

But I think if there's an area that we can continue to explore together is how we might enhance resources for many overdose prevention efforts. One of the things that I've heard as I've traveled around the country is that having state legislation and having these devices is a great start. But that many states and local areas are under resource in terms of implementing ...

BURGESS: Yeah. And again, I may submit that in -- for answer in writing as well. Ms. Volkow, let me just ask you, you mentioned in your testimony to address this problem. We have to recognize special character of this phenomenon and part of which is the -- that opioids play a key role in relieving suffering. So, as providers and policy makers, are we doing a good job of walking this line?

VOLKOW: I -- based on the numbers, I don't think we can say we are. And the reality that in this country, we have both under treatment of pain and overprescription of medications, these are not exclusive.

And one of the issues that we have in face and Mr. Botticelli has been discussing it. In 2000, when I joined the Committee for accreditation of hospital demanded that you'll treat pain if you see a steep

increase in the number of prescriptions. So what you are doing in parallel, there has not been an increase in education in medical schools.

So, it's seven hours outreaching the United States, there's a diversity of opioid medications that are currently available. And there are many indications where actually patients are being given the opioids when it's not severe or pain. And this, for example, this is the case in many case for drunk people with dentist that are prescribing the opioid mediation. So there is a room for improvement on the education of providers.

The other issue too that we have not understood very much when we were -- I mean, certainly, when I was in medical school, they'll tell you if you prescribe an opioid medication with someone that is suffering from pain, they are not going to become addicted. Now, we can come to recognize that it's not the case that there are patients that are taking the medication as prescribed and they can become addicted. So the issue is who are they, how do we recognize them so we can prevent that transition. And ...

BURGESS: Yeah, and my time has expired. I would just offer the observation 40 years ago, I was given the admonition by a professor in anesthesiology, "This stuff is so good, don't even try at once." So, clearly it was known 40 years ago.

Recognize Mr. Welch five minutes for questions, please.

WELCH: OK, I want to thank the panel and the Chairman as well, you know, and for mine, as I mentioned in my opening statement, we're just trying to face this directly which is, I think, a much better approach than denial. And it's engaged the community in some very effective ways and it's developed, I think -- it's helped our providers develop what they call, I haven't spoke (ph) system, where there's an emphasis on medication which really does seem to be helping some folks who are willing to help.

And then some wrap around treatment services for people who can benefit by that. And a lot of our ability to do that is because we're getting some federal health. We get about $6 million out of the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant, that's been level funded.

And my question, really, to Mr. Clark, can you explain the decision -- I guess, this is administration decision not to propose an increase in that program given the intensity of the crisis. And I think with this discussion occurring all around the country, obviously, you're going to have many more states that are willing to roll up their sleeves and try to get engaged which would suggest the resource need is there in order to help make thid successful. Dr. Clark?

CLARK: Mr. Welch, we are working very closely with state authorities with organizations like NASDAD and NASBED (ph) to address these issues. But we also, as Mr. Botticelli pointed out, approaching this from a comprehensive approach rather than simply using a single funding mechanism to address the issue. We need to keep in mind that we need multiple strategies to address this problem.

And with those multiple strategies, we believe that we can make an impact. So, relying indeed on the Affordable Care Act and other strategies we can leverage the block grant funding to target this.

We're also allowing jurisdictions to prioritize using our prevention efforts as well as our treatment efforts the problems that they experience in their respective jurisdiction ...

WELCH: All right, thank you, but no more money. Money is tight, I get it.

And Botticelli, your predecessor came up and had a great visit with us in Vermont, it's tremendous to have him there. And we've expanded the use of naloxone, and how do you say that?

BOTTICELLI: Naloxone.

WELCH: Naloxone, yeah. And we've have some success with that, we've had a number of instances of it being, you know, successfully just recently about 15 times. But do you think that the FDA should consider making that an over-the-counter medication?

BOTTICELLI: So, first of all, like, I really want to applaud you and Governor Shumlin in terms of calling significant attention to this issue. I spent a better part of career at Massachusetts and very familiar with heroin issue that we've had in New England for a long, long time.

You know, our office as part of our prescription drug abuse plan and overdose had looking for a continued ways to expand the use of naloxone. Again, I think, you know, we are hardened by this delivery device.

Our partners at NIDA are looking at and researching the expansion of -- and use of other way. So we're having conversations with both federal partners and quite honestly, some external stakeholders who are really, really, really interested in terms of looking at how do we increase the -- not only the availability of naloxone, but continue to promote easier to use and quite honestly, if we have some cheaper versions of naloxone.

WELCH: I got one time for one more question. Dr. Volkow, I want to ask you about this issue with doctors and with patients, you know, I've known close friends who've had serious medical issues and have been in a lot of pain. And once that line is crossed where they're getting the prescription medication, it almost it seems like there's an undertow where the answer to the paying question always is essentially to get more medication and more powerful medication.

And a patient in that moment is pretty vulnerable. And how does the -- and the doctor gets really persistent advocacy by the patient and sometimes the patients family. You've got to do something.

So, how do we help the doctors deal with what, you know, Dr. (inaudible), of course, yeah, another doctor here, how do they -- you know, there's a lot of doctors around here. So how the doctors really have to be in the frontline and it's very tough, because they've got a patient who's in pain, they've got a family who's saying we do something. But there's something that is getting done in many cases is resulting in long-term problems.

VOLKOW: Yeah, and they're torching on one of the hardest -- the issues to deal with clinically, how do you manage severe chronic pain. What many people don't know is that the risk of suicide for patients with chronic pain is double that of the general population. So it takes extraordinary rehabilitating.

And the strongest medication we have are opioids, the problem with opioids apart from addictiveness is that you become tolerant very rapidly. And so that requires that you increase the dose. So chronically and then you have to shift to something more potent. And that's exactly where the whole problem lies around, they are not ideal. But it's what we have and it can relieve the patients in a moment that they need them.

The strategies, what other alternatives we can use just -- other than just relying us in opioids as the only alternative. And that's where researches ongoing to see -- that's what I was mentioning in the whole area of (plain) neuroscience. The feasibility of devices that can actually be used potentially to handle unmanaged pain will be a break through, you will rely less on medications.

And I also think that aspect of we, as a society, have created the expectation that anything that's wrong with you should be treated with a medication. So, zero tolerance for pain and I think that as a culture, we need to revision that also.

WELCH: Thank you, I yield back. Thank you very much.

BURGESS: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Welch. And I'm sitting in an obvious little board, Dr. Burgess. Let me just make up a brief statement and then I'll ask my question. You know, as physician of many

years, I don't think that even back in the day, we were given the proper training in regard to pain medication.

You know, also, I'll say this, there's been a lot of emphasis over the past 10 years or so, about advance directives and the necessity (inaudible) across the hospice programs that have developed in that sort of thing. But I don't hear hardly any discussion about patients given their wishes in regard to how they want their pain control in a thermal situation, where there's no chance for recovery. I don't know that people really understand in many instances pain medication has started because the family members don't want their loved one to suffer. That's quite natural and appropriate.

But before you know what the patient has gone beyond the stage where they can say, "Oh, look, I don't want to be totally zoomed (ph) out at the time of my demas (ph)."

So that's just, I guess, food for thought in a way.

I'm going to ask my specific question, Mr. Rannazzisi. You said earlier in your testimony that you're just get -- the DEA just get overwhelmed about all this road pain clinics that are popping out everywhere. How was that happening? How do these places just pop up, as you put it, and why is it happening, why are you getting overwhelmed?

RANNAZZISI: Well, that's a great question, sir. It's not just DEA that's overwhelmed. Our state and local counterparts are overwhelmed. Think about this, prior to Ryan Haight Act, the internet drug bill that was passed. There was, we'll say, seven clinics, pain clinics in Broward County. In 2010, there was 142 clinics in Broward County. Now, if you look, when we moved our enforcement groups down there and we move 10 tactical diversion squats to work with our state and local counterparts and we started knocking of these road pain clinics.

They moved up in New Georgia, if you look at the 75 corner (ph), there was over a hundred pain clinics going at 75 corner (ph). Some of them are right off the inner state and we just get off and get back on. Then they moved in the Tennessee, Tennessee now has approximately 300 clinics.

Now, if you think that the state and local law enforcement and DEA doesn't have the capacity to go after everyone of these clinics quickly because these are illegal drugs that they're peddling, and we have to establish that that doctor is prescribing outside the usual course professional practice and not for legitimate medical purpose that takes time.

These cases take time. So what they're doing is they're just counting on the fact that they're going to run the clinic that's not being hit by DEA. So, we're all overwhelmed, everyone in law enforcements.

BURGESS: And what percentage would use lie (ph) of these clinics are fraudulent?

RANNAZZISI: In Florida, the vast majority of them. In Georgia, I believe that the vast majority of those clinics had popped out were (ph), they were good pain clinics. No, don't get me wrong, every pain clinic is not bad.

BURGESS: Yeah.

RANNAZZISI: But the pain clinics that we're looking at are absolutely atrocious, there is no medical care.

BURGESS: Yeah.

RANNAZZISI: It's modern day crack outs.

BURGESS: Let me -- and thank you for that answer. And any of you could answer this. About last year, GAO, the Government Accountability Office found an overlap in 59 of the 76 programs it identified in the drug abuse and prevention area. What steps or any of your agencies taken to

minimize overlap and more efficiently spend our taxpayer dollars? I mean, you would think that we could get some efficiency here. Anybody?

(UNKNOWN): Sure Chairman. You know our office has looked at that report and has been working with our federal partners to look at the breath (ph) of our prevention programs and to make sure that we are not quite honestly duplicating programs. You know, I do think that however, if you talk to many, many people at the local level, they will tell you however that we don't have enough prevention. And I think you heard from many, many folks up here that while we may have programs that are addressing the same issue, they're reaching not the entirety of the population. So we really want to make sure that one, that we are not kind of duplicating the programs that we have already.

BURGESS: Well, very important. I would think that you guys are talking to each other, of course. Others, I've got a little time left, two seconds, one second. Well, wait a minute. I'm the Chair now, aren't I? I've got five minutes left. Mr. Clark.

CLARK: Well ...

BURGESS: Dr. Clark, excuse me.

CLARK: One of the things we are concerned about in the administration is the issue of fragmentation overlap and duplication. And then we do -- we're very closely with our federal partners to make sure that we minimize fragmentation overlap and duplication and working under the persistence of ONDCP, we are able to address that. As was pointed out, communities need multiple resources and you find it -- sometimes, you cannot completely eliminate some overlap because indeed the unique issues of individual communities require that there'd be some overlap. But we are very sensitive to both the PDAO (ph) concerns and OMB's concerns about fragmentation overlap and duplication and insidiously try to avoid that.

BURGESS: Thank you all. I thank the panel. My time has expired. And your five minutes now to Mr. **Lujan.**

LUJAN: Mr. Chairman, doctor thank you so very much for the time today. And I'm glad to see that we're having this hearing. This is important. By the Chairman and the Committee staff acknowledging that this hearing needed to take place, we're acknowledging there's a problem across the country. The question after this hearing today though is, are we going to sweep this under the rug again or are we going to do something significant with recommendations that are going to come from experts? This is a problem plaguing America. The case in New York brought more attention to what was happening with heroin abuse and overdoses. But we've been losing lives across the country for years. And what are we going to do?

There's recommendations that have been put on the table by many experts that's been studied over and over and over. There's a program from 2011 to -- on the prescription drug side to reduce abuse significantly over five years. I'll be asking the question where are we with that. But every life that's lost as a result of this is one life too many. There's only so many parts of the world that are growing poppies. Do we not know as United States of America where poppies are being grown and where there -- how they're migrating into the United States in the form of heroin and illegal substances? It seems to me we should. And what are doing to stop that flow? That's very troubling.

Now going back to the prescription drug side, there's been presentations that we've seen in New Mexico that have been together by some people that I respect very much that show a correlation with drug overdoses with increased prescriptions that are coming up, not just pain medication facilities that are popping up. And so, one of the questions that I have is, is there data that's reported to any of you that you do analysis on where there is a core -- where there -- at least with the data that I've seen, there's -- showing that there's a correlation between overdoses and increased prescriptions that are being administered. And what do we do with that data? Are we able to go in or is that an area where we don't have enough support now between the federal and the state partners. And I'd asked anyone that like to tackle that.

(UNKNOWN): Thank you Congressman **Lujan.** You mentioned the New Mexico report. Dr. Pelosi (ph) from CDC worked with scientist in New Mexico, health department staff there, to analyze and demonstrate those relationships. And absolutely, there's a very tight relationship between the volume of opioid prescribing and opioid overdose deaths. That information does get used at a national level. I'm thinking about the areas to intervene. But also, at the state and local level, where it has to be to better understand how the problems in each individual jurisdiction and the factors that are influencing the prescribing practices are being addressed there.

One of the ways that CDC in particular works is by trying to liberate data by working with state and local health departments to understand the context of prescribing of health system data and of mortality data to put a better picture and understand the context within which overdose deaths are occurring and abuses occurring, and then be able to target programs like through their PDMP's, like restriction programs, et cetera that address those problems.

VOLKOW: If I may, but first of all, I want to thank you for bringing up the issue because the void (ph) that I view that this is an urgent issue and we cannot put it under the rule (ph) under no conditions. And I feel passionate because I do get the parents coming to me says "When we went to wake up our child, it was dead." And they wouldn't even know that they were abusing opioids. The other issue is that we do have the tools to actually address the problem of opioid prescription abuse and opioid deaths. We need to implement them.

We have treatments that work for drug addiction that can decrease the number of overdoses. But also, we need to address the problem that we have with chronic pain in this country. How many people suffer chronic pain in this country? Estimated IOM, a hundred million, a hundred million. There is a notion on that one hand that there is an increase in chronic pain and that needs to be addressed. So, from the healthcare perspective we need to address it.

LUJAN: And Dr. Volkow, as my time expires, there is some questions that I'll be submitting into the record, but I would welcome your response as well. And Mr. Chairman I just wanted to share with you that there is a program in New Mexico that appears to be working with the distribution of Narcan where there's been a reversal of more than 250 overdoses last year where they're getting it to the hands of first responders and nurses. So it's not necessarily on the street, but it's with those that are responding to these accidents. And there maybe a way for us to work on that with some ideas down the road.

Mr. Chairman, again, I share before you a return to that hearing how much we appreciate that you're doing this and you brought this hearing. But I certainly hope that there's more that will be done and this hearing won't be the last of hearings and conversations and an approach that we can take as a Congress to work with our state partners to do something. This is a bad problem across the country but it's also plaguing New Mexico. Thank you for your attention to this Mr. Chairman.

BURGESS: The Chair thanks the gentleman and does also observe that further hearings are likely to be necessary and as Mr. Welch put it up to hear from governors. And I'd like to hear from some of our mayors because they are on the -- they are on the first lines of this battle. The Chair now recognizes the gentlelady from North Carolina. Ms. Ellmers, five minutes for questions please.

ELLMERS: Thank you Mr. Chairman. And thank you to our panel for being here today addressing this very important issue. I'd like to start by asking a question of Mr. Botticelli and Dr. Volkow. Understanding the path of addiction, there is, and I think you have both identified a genetic basis for that. One of the things I would like to know is again the progression. Is there something that starts with tobacco use, smoking, use of alcohol drinking? And then how does it progress and how do you feel not (ph). I'll just start with Mr. Botticelli and then have Dr. Volkow comment.

BOTTICELLI: Just about everything that this field knows about this has come from the work of Dr. Volkow. You know, clearly, we know that there's a genetic predisposition for many people in terms of family history of substance abuse. But we also know that there's like many diseases. There are environmental factors that go into that issue. You know, we know that substance use disorder is a disease that have early onset, so that many people who do develop, left untreated, left undiagnosed

developed a substance use disorder largely because of starting alcohol, tobacco and or marijuana use at a very young age.

Clearly, there are some particular issues as it relates to the addiction potential of prescription drug medication. But the vast majority of people that at least I have talked to in the data show that those folks who do have a significant opioid use disorder have started from a very young age and, you know, if you saw Philip Seymour Hoffman story, he actually started with alcohol abuse at a very young age. So we know that there are prevention and intervention opportunities that we can have along the way to really make sure that we're identifying people early in their disease progression. And then we're intervening in this issue.

You know, the other piece that you talked about, and again, I think it still warrants further work is what about the progression from prescription drug use to a heroin addiction. Clearly, we know that it is a progressive disease and people left untreated will often progress to more significantly harmful used patterns. But we also know that price plays a role as the DEA mentioned in terms of the progression. So, we know that there is multiple factors that really affect people's progression not only in terms of overall development of a substance use disorder but from prescription medication to heroin.

ELLMERS: Dr. Volkow.

VOLKOW: Yes. And the questions you asked has intrigued many scientists and it's called -- had lead to the term of gateway hypothesis because all of the epidemiological stories have repeatedly corroborate that most individuals that become addicted to illicit substances started with nicotine or alcohol then transitioning to marijuana and then the other drugs. So the question is that just because it's more accessible that you start with nicotine or alcohol or could it be that these drugs including nicotine and alcohol and marijuana are changing your brain in such a way that it makes it more receptive to the addictiveness of drugs.

And there is data now from genetic studies and from studies in animals that suggest at least for the case of nicotine and alcohol and also marijuana that it is changing the sensitivity of the brain rewash (ph) sequence in a way that primes you to the addictiveness of these other drugs. And in the case of prescription opioids, that's also what they are observing that most of the individual that end up addicted to prescription opioids had a history of nicotine addiction earlier or has started abusing alcohol.

ELLMERS: Thank you. My last question is for Mr. Rannazzisi. You know, obviously, your agency is working with many other agencies on this issue. And I'm going to ask you a question that really falls under the FDA. But from your opinion in the work that your are doing, do you believe that some of the prescription drugs, the deterrent formulas such as, you know, for OxyContin, some of the deterrent formulas -- will that make a difference and is it feasible that if we take this approach that that is going to help on the wide and broad scope that you have outlined if we're using these deterrent forms.

RANNAZZISI: Absolutely. The abuse-deterrent formulations will make a difference. Those drugs will still be abused orally with a potentiator like a muscle relaxant or a benzo. But in the end, it's going to stop them from crushing and snorting or crushing and injecting. And we know that when you crush and inject or crush and snort, you're raising the risk of overdosing death just in that method of delivery. So yes. Do I think it's important? Absolutely, it's important.

Look at what happened with the OxyContin product. When it went from the OC to OP, you could bang that tablet with the hammer and it's not going to break. It balls up in your noise when you try and snort it. It's crazy that, you know, if you try to abuse that drug. But what did we see everybody doing? Immediately, they started moving to the oxymorphone product or the immediate release Oxy Thirties. OK. So they're adapting. If we could figure a way to get an abuse- deterrent formulation across the board, then we're going to see some significant results. Absolutely.

ELLMERS: Thank you so much for your answers and your insight on this issue. And Mr. Chairman, I yield back the remainder of my time.

BURGESS: Gentlelady yields back. The gentleman from Kentucky, Mr. Yarmuth, recognize five minutes for your questions please.

YARMUTH: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. And I thank the panel as well for the testimony and for what is obviously a very committed effort across the spectrum of government to deal with this problem.

I'm glad to know that in a sense -- I shouldn't say glad, but it's somewhat reassuring to know that this is not just a Kentucky problem. Certainly, in my travels in my district and around the state and talking about law enforcement and with mental health professionals and everyone who's involved in this area, we have a huge problem in Kentucky.

During the first three quarters of 2013, there were at least 170 Kentuckians who died from heroin overdoses. And that was 41 more people have died the entire previous year. And it's actually 200 plus percent increase since 2011. So, we have problem that was there and growing.

And one of the young people who died was the nephew of a Kentucky State Representative Joni Jenkins, a good friend of mine, and a great representative. Her nephew Wes was -- they suspected began with prescription drugs and then moved to heroin because of expense. He died in May of 2013. And she told her story in the Courier-Journal and Op-Ed and the local Courier-Journal, and I'd like to read one of the things she said because it's -- prompts a question.

She said, "For an entire year, our family kept the addiction private. They were well aware that she had been in and out of treatment and they were working with him. But they kept it private so Wes would not suffer the social stigma of being a drug addict. I know -- now know that there is a terrible shame attached to this illness, but we have to break through the silence to find a cure." And she says "I also know that I will search for answers the rest of my life for that."

Is this is a problem that you've seen -- you're just nodding your head Mr. Botticelli? So respond to that that much of that -- or the access to treatment or the willingness to treatment is deterred because of a social stigma?

BOTTICELLI: You know -- and many of us have heard that story countless times from parents. Many of us were just in Atlanta with a conference sponsored by Chairman Rogers. And, you know, we hear that story repeatedly. And I think our collective efforts have really been to raise the visibility of ensuring that people know that addiction is disease. And this is not about chain, this is not about guilt. We know that one of the reasons why people don't seek treatment and why parents don't ask for help is because of the shame and embarrassment that's related to that. And so, part of what I think all of our federal partners are doing, is how do we raise the understanding and visibility, and quite honestly, the compassionate treatment of people with addiction -- of addictive disorders into this work.

And I think that we're seeing quite honestly a movement in terms of like we did with other disorders that were shameful and stigmatized that we have to kind of elevate the voice of parents and people in recovery so that we do know that hope is possible and that it would be easier for them to come forward and ask for help. But, you know, unfortunately, we've heard that story way too many times from parents and people who are affected.

YARMUTH: What -- have you come up with any great answers? I mean, what can we do to help that just as individual members? We do stand (ph) the country anyway.

BOTTICELLI: I mean, I think there are a couple of things that we're doing. A lot of our work -- at the Office of National Drug Control Policy, we actually established an office of recovery to really promote the fact -- we are looking at the development of recovery support services so that people in the community can see that recovery is possible. I think we have been promoting those of us who are in recovery talking very publicly about the fact that we're in recovery because it shows to other people that this is not just about death and destruction that there really is hope on the other side of this.

So, I think all of us play a role in terms of destigmatizing that. You know, just having these hearings, really show the fact that we have leadership in this country who are concerned about this. And it's not a shame. This is not a moral choice. This is not a moral failing. This is about a disease and that we have to deal with it from a public health perspective. So, I really appreciate your acknowledgment of that -- those challenges.

YARMUTH: Well, it seems to me that much of this problem involves education. I mean, I assume that when these young people or whether it's young or not, but predominantly young people began on prescription drugs. They have no idea that this is the course that they could likely be on. And I don't know whether that's a school issue, PTA issue, or what it is. But, it seems to me like information is the -- one of the greatest avenues for combatting this problem.

Anyway, Mr. Chairman, I would request unanimous consent that this Op-Ed that I mentioned from Joni Jenkins be -- made a part of the record.

BURGESS: So objections orders (ph).

YARMUTH: Thank you and I yield back.

BURGESS: Gentleman yields back his time. The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Ohio. Mr. Johnson, five minutes for your questions please.

JOHNSON: Thank you Mr. Chairman. And I really appreciate the opportunity to hear from the panel today on this very, very important issue. You know, prescription drug and heroin abuse are very serious -- is a very serious epidemic in Ohio. And parts of my district in Eastern and South Eastern Ohio are some of the worse hit.

In 2012, five Ohioans died everyday from unintentional drug overdose with opioids both prescription and heroin as the driving factor. Attorney General Mike DeWine identified heroin as contributing to as many as 11 fatal overdoses a week. It's a major public health crisis. However, prescription opioids continue to be the lead contributor to fatal overdoses in the state.

In 2012, for example, an average of 67 doses of opioids were dispensed for every Ohio resident. Lawmakers, nonprofit organizations, medical industry leaders, communities and parents across the state have been working to coordinate their response to this epidemic. But in the corner of Ohio that shares borders with three other states, communities are struggling to get drug abuse under control. Individuals identified as abusing in one state may cross state lines to escape detection and abuse in another. A non- integrated system also makes it harder to identify prescribing providers and pill mills.

So, for all of you on the panel, anyone that wants to try and respond to this, I realized that states are largely in charge of implementing their own prescription drug monitoring programs. But, in multistate areas, like I serve, the importance of working together to curb abuse cannot be emphasized enough. So, what's being done at the federal level to encourage states to share information compiled by their respective PDMP's?

BOTTICELLI: Thank you Congressman. And as you articulated, both the establishment of vibrant prescription drug monitoring programs, and quite honestly, the interstate interoperability of those programs has been key for much of the work that we've been doing on federal level. So, you know, we're happy that in 2006, we only had about 20 operable prescription drug monitoring programs in the United States. And now, we have 48. They are operable, one, in the process and unfortunately, one state that doesn't have a prescription drug monitoring program.

And as part of the strategy, we've been working with the Bureau of Justice Assistance and the Boards of Pharmacy to really look at interstate operability so that those states that share a border can make sure that they're sharing data. So now, we have 20 states that are able to share information across borders. And clearly, we have a goal of making sure that all of these programs are shared data among particularly neighboring state.

JOHNSON: I will share with you that, you know, as a 30-year I.T. professional myself, I can tell you that architecture and data standardization, interface standards, those are very, very critical components. If you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there. And it's one thing to have a monitoring system. It's quite something else to have a monitoring system that adheres to standards so that it can be effectively used. How do we make the nationwide PDMP system more effective? And what still needs to be done to fully achieve a fully integrated network?

(UNKNOWN): Congressman Johnson, thank you for your question. Clearly, the PDMP in the ability to achieve successful, effective PDMP's is critical to the law enforcement side, the public health side as well, the clinical side as well. And as Mr. Botticelli commented, we're making progress, meaning that we are better understanding the components of these PDMP's and what it is that needs to be shared and how to share them. The work that you all are doing in bracing disability, that governors and mayors are doing, saying that this is an issue that they're going to address also allows this opportunity to set the standards for what we need to share and how we will share that information across borders.

The CDC working with the FDA and the Bureau of Justice Assistance has been funding at -- randomize (ph) the prescription behavioral surveillance system which takes from 20 states, the PDMP data. They have to better understand what these factors are that increase the success of PDMPs.

JOHNSON: Let me get to one more quick question. I've got to move quickly. How can we shift drug abuse prevention efforts from the collection of silo data like we're talking about to a system in which this information isn't lost every time an individual realizes that they're being tracked and takes evasive measures like leaving a health plan for example, because not only do you have working across state lines, but an abuser that goes from one health plan to another can also hide. So, how do we solve that problem?

(UNKNOWN): And some of my colleagues can add on to this. But, you know, part of what we've been really trying to focus on is make sure that we're treating an integrating substance use issues as part of mainstream healthcare. Have really looking at things like making sure that people are getting screened and intervened as part of their over all health plan.

So that, you know, for very, very long time we had two systems of care in the United States. We've had medical care over here and behavioral healthcare over here. And that we haven't necessarily really looked at how we make sure that we are treating substance use disorders as a medical condition. So part of our goal is how, you know, more theory integration of mental health and substance use services within our primary care of settings.

JOHNSON: Sure.

(UNKNOWN): Because it's really important that we not see this as two separate issues.

JOHNSON: Mr. Chairman, I have many, many more questions obviously. This is a complex and sensitive issue for many Americans, but I ran out of time. So I yield back.

BURGESS: Thanks. The gentleman yields at this time. The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from Florida. Ms. Castor, five minutes for your questions please.

CASTOR: Thank you Mr. Chairman. And thank you to the panel very much. Just as this hearing is really heading home for me today because yesterday, I learned that the death of our friend last month was tied to her long-term opioid addiction. Her sister sent me an e- mail. I got it just yesterday. And she committed suicide. And she -- her sister said, because of her long-term addiction. So she left a daughter and a husband and an entire family. And the sister is asking, "Please, do more."

So, I hope we can all come together to tackle this. It is causing so much pain for so many families. And the State of Florida has really been at the heart of the problem. And instilling Florida, they say that every 78, every -- I can't believe it. 78 minutes, someone overdoses in the State of Florida. I'm also hearing from my local hospitals. They've had to add rooms in the NICU units of hospitals

because of babies being born addicted. And these babies typically will cost a million dollars to take care of and they're in the hospital for months. So, we better invest in prevention or else, we're going to be spending a lot on the outside.

So, Mr. Rannazzisi, you know, Florida -- the general talking points are, well, Florida has improved, we -- there was huge law enforcement crack down. We have adapted a prescription drug tracking systems, the PDMP. The problem is that doctors are not using it. The last statistics that I saw, only 3.5 percent of all prescriptions being written are being checked on that database. What's your view right now in Florida? Have we made progress? What's left to do?

RANNAZZISI: I think under the leash of Attorney General Bondi and law enforcement leaders down in Florida, yes, we've made progress. Absolutely. The problem is the -- again, we're overwhelmed by the numbers. There's so many people down there in Florida. We actually have cases where Florida -- rogue pain clinic operators were funding clinics in Northern states. So when the heat is on, then they going to move up into another state. I think that we're making progress. But again, it's going to take time.

Now, the PDMP issue -- I would love to see mandated PDMP use. At any BPs (ph), the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy had gone out of their way to ensure that there's interoperability and interconnectivity between the PDMPs. I think they have 25 states that are already connected. And they've done a phenomenal job. But if no one is looking at that PDMP or very few are looking at that PDMP, it's not going to help.

CASTOR: The -- and so, do you agree that the local law enforcement efforts, I mean, what I see on the ground in my community in the Tampa Bay Area, we used to have these long lines with cars from out of state, people waiting outside in the ally for these pill mills to open up. You don't really see that anymore. But with the statistics on the rate of deaths from overdose, if something else is happening, we're not really making attempt there as it -- is it shifted to the internet, are they going out of state, is it at fault (ph), what's going on?

RANNAZZISI: I think they're moving to more rural areas where there's less law enforcement presence. I think the operators understand. I have a great video that I love to show on you -- of a clinic, and what happens as soon as the clinic opens. I think that they're adapting. The clinic owners are adapting very well. And we just -- they're one step ahead of us right now. But in the end, local law enforcement's doing a phenomenal job. And they are moving people out of the Tampa Bay Area and out of the three -- county south -- three county area. But, it's still there. It's just moving to more rural areas where they can't address the problem as quickly.

CASTOR: So in this very sad e-mail from my friend that I got yesterday, she said she has read now about the FDA approval of Zohydro, a pure hydrocodone, non-tamper resistant, 10 times stronger than Vicodin -- the Vicodin prescription opiate. I know that the advisory committee to FDA had some very serious concerns with this, yet, it has been approved. Dr. Volkow, could you give me your opinion on whether this drug should be readily available?

VOLKOW: Well, I mean, I think we clearly have an -- a very large number of opioid medications and we are over prescribing them. I wouldn't point my finger one or the other. I do think that the feasibility of getting formulations that are -- that cannot be diverted is something that is very powerful and the FDA should be commended because it came up pharmaceuticals can come up with an indication for a medication that is deterrent proof. And that is incentivizing to the development of these types of medications.

So, his role (ph) is a hydrocodone, slow delivery over 12 hours, and it actually does not have acetaminophen. And because the way that you have hydro -- currently which is Vicodin, the white (ph) that (inaudible) combined with acetaminophen which causes liver toxicity which lead the FDA to consider. If someone needs hydrocodone, do you need to give them acetaminophen? I need work in (ph) that context that they approved it. But ...

CASTOR: And could I ask, since my time is short. Mr. Botticelli, do you agree with FDA's approval or have -- do you have concerns?

BOTTICELLI: I think the important point and, you know, again, I don't think, you know, the FDA has their own process in terms of what they -- how they approve medications. I only agree that how we continue to make sure that we have abuse-deterrent formulation is really important. And I also think that this really underscores the importance of prescribing and training on prescribing because I think the point is that we have many medications that are open for potential to abuse. And we want to make sure that physicians and other prescribers really understand the risk associated with these drugs.

CASTOR: And Mr. Rannazzisi, local law enforcement has expressed concern about this new drug on the street because it is so potent. And because of -- it's likely if a child takes it, it could cause death. What's your view?

RANNAZZISI: Local law enforcement and DEA and our federal partners have all expressed. We all live through the OxyContin problem back in, you know, the '90s and into the 2000s. And we just don't want history to repeat it. So, too many people passed from circumventing that delivery system.

BURGESS: The gentlelady's time expired. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia. Mr. Griffith, five minutes for your questions please.

GRIFFITH: Well, let me pick up there. You're concern about this newer drug. And so, my question is, how -- what do you all do, and I would ask it to all of you, but I'll start with you Mr. Rannazzisi. Thank you. And that would be, how do we do a better job of predicting where we're going to see spikes and abuse on drugs as they come forward because some people say that we should have probably seen the increase in the prescription drug abuse of opioids and heroin.

RANNAZZISI: Well, we monitor the amount of drug going into a particular state where through our host (ph) system. But in the end, what we generally see is the drug being abused in the Minneapolis (ph) area of the country and then it spreads out from there. So when we were looking at OxyContin for instance, the OxyContin abuse epidemic started in that area, Kentucky, Tennessee, Southern Ohio.

GRIFFITH: Southwest Virginia.

RANNAZZISI: Yes, Southwest Virginia. Well, yes, absolutely. And then, spread out. And that's -- and we believe that patterns going to happen again with this new drug. It's just a matter of time. We know that product is now on the pharmacies and being dispensed, so.

GRIFFITH: And now, for the people that we -- that you've identified, I think that one of the other speakers said abuse- deterrent formulations. Once we know somebody's abusing, I have always like the lock-in where you lock-in to a pharmacy and you lock- in to the doctor, because one of the problems in Southwest Virginia that you mentioned a minute ago is that you can be in West Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and North Carolina all within -- no matter where you are in Southwest Virginia, within an hour or two hours, you can be in anyone of those states, because the way of the geography is, and you can go from one rural area to another.

So what do we do no matter we're looking at that as a possible means? Dr. Clark, if you want to answer, that's fine. Just trying to find the answers.

CLARK: Apparently, there is no simple answer in your questions. A very important one in this committee is trying to address it. We are working with the Association of State and Territorial Health Officers, in the Federation of State Medical Boards, and the Boards of Pharmacy. We do collect surveillance data from our household survey and working with our colleagues in the CDC.

So, part of the issue is monitoring the movement of individuals. Getting practitioners whether they're pharmacist, nurse practitioners, or physicians to monitor what is it that they're doing. Getting people to access and actually use the PDMPs and having interoperability as was pointed out. So -- and then involving community coalitions because -- it was just pointed out from the Representative from Florida. People know where the places are and what we need to do ...

GRIFFITH: Sure.

CLARK: ... is to get community coalitions (inaudible) ...

GRIFFITH: Well, that's why -- that kind of why I like that lock- in because then you lock them into a doctor and to a pharmacy if you know -- and I don't want to do that to the folks who haven't been identified as having a problem. But once you know they have a problem, then that gives you a better handle on what they're doing if you lock them in and that's the only place they can go. Wouldn't you agree then -- I need to hurry because I've got other things I want to ask.

CLARK: That is one strategy that can be employed. So you want to make sure that if you do that that they have access to the resources necessary to be a measure.

GRIFFITH: Sure. And here's the dilemma that we have because one of the things the DEAs has done -- and we talked about this the last time you were here, is that they are asking the distributors to, you know, say "OK, don't sell so much to a pharmacy if that pharmacy looks like they're above the average or if you see some sign that they maybe abusing." And I have told the story about what happened when I went to my local pharmacy. And there were two people in there who were both being told you have to come back next month which is not -- but a few days away because we use the (inaudible) intuitive that maybe they only had one supplier. And that supplier said, "Oh, he's above average for other people who may have more than one supplier." I went back and check and that's exactly what's going on. He didn't know that was the problem, but I said, "You only have one supplier, don't you?" He said, "Yes, I use one distributor." And I think that's the problem.

Is there -- so down on the one hand, we want to lock out people who are abusing it. On the other hand, we'll make sure people who've need it, get it. So, I guess what I'm saying in that second regard -- second matter is, for the rural areas, it maybe a problem because that's -- it's less law enforcement and we recognized that. And one of -- a lot of my region has different haida (ph) designations. At the same time, you want to make sure people are getting the drugs they need. And if you're in a rural area and you may only -- you have smaller pharmacy, you may only be using one distributor, while the DEA doesn't have a quota, the distributor then just put the quota (ph) because based on other pharmacies, that particular pharmacist or drugstore is ordering more drugs. But it's because they're only using one supplier supposed of using two or three. How do we solve that problem? And I think Volkow wants answer (ph) on this.

VOLKOW: Then I was smiling because the notion is we have situations where a patient cannot get their medication. And yet, at the same time, the DEA has to collect this massive amount of pills that people are not using, which tells you we are over prescribing the number of pills that are necessary. So, coming back to the point that has been discussing, we really need to educate the healthcare system on the optimal way of prescribing them. Not just when they need them. But the number of tablets that you need -- that you are given, I mean, all of us have the idea of going to the dentist, two weeks of opioid prescriptions. I mean, you need one day. So, it is the cold (ph) notion of educating the healthcare system and educating the late public. And making the responsibility tools are we not -- why do we need to provide so many pills and the insurer's can get involved to this type of solutions.

(UNKNOWN): And the lack in approach works as part of a treatment plan.

GRIFFITH: That's right.

(UNKNOWN): That the -- with someone who suffers from chronic pain, the practitioner develops treatment plan, the patient agrees and that actually benefits everyone.

GRIFFITH: Oh, very good.

BURGESS: The given time has expired. And we will give an perhaps for second round. But, I wanted to go to Mr. Scalise because he's been waiting so long.

GRIFFITH: Absolutely.

SCALISE: Thank you for that Mr. Chairman and for our panelists for this important discussion. I know in my home parish of Jefferson, Louisiana where you've seen spikes and increase of drug related deaths over the last few years and each year just seem to be going up higher. When I talk to my coroner in Jefferson (inaudible) who works very closely in trying to, you know, of course, they see the end result of it, but they also try to work on a front end in doing some of the education that Dr. Clark has talked about.

In others, they've seen that that heroin is the one that seems to be popping out the most. I think last year, our heroin deaths accounted for a majority of all the drug-related deaths, over a hundred of those in my home parish. So Jefferson, like it's overseen as (ph) across the board. One of the things I do work on is just trying to educate people in the community. And I knew Dr. Clark, you've talked about this. In your testimony in alluding to work with, but not just pharmacist, but others, what is the, you know, what is the different things that you've been doing and then you've had success on the education front, especially not just within the medical community, but then the targeted populations of those folks that might have the highest likelihood of being exposed to heroin.

CLARK: Again, one of the things -- a comprehensive strategy becomes critical and that's when I talk with a prevention working with community coalitions so that we would got that message. We've already heard about the issue of chronic pain management. And people moving from the use of a prescription opioids to drugs like heroin. So having good strategies for pain treatment, working with state health -- the territorial health officers, federation of state medical boards, nursing organizations, dental organizations, and even veterinarians, because they too have access to prescription opioids, that we can address that end of the agenda. And then ...

(INAUDIBLE)

SCALISE: Mr. Rannazzisi ...

CLARK: ... like probably for the DEA.

SCALISE: ... answer this too because you, I know you talked about this in your testimony as well. So, if you can touch on your experiences there.

RANNAZZISI: We never turned down the opportunity to go out and speak to professional organizations. We have a very good relationship with -- a fine relationship in the associates and boards of pharmacy, the individual pharmacy associations, in the medical associations, when they ask us, we will come out. The Pharmacies Diversion Awareness Conference, we go out and we've been to 14 states and trained over 6,000 pharmacists in their corresponding responsibility. There have been trends (ph) in trafficking for pharmaceuticals to make them aware of what's going on so they know how to deal with this when a bad prescription comes in and what they're supposed to do.

We have industry conferences. We bring industry in. October of last year, we brought the distributors in to talk about what we're seeing trend wise and what they need to do as far as their legal obligations under the act. We bring the manufactures and importers in April or May of last year. We brought them in and we do this on a regular basis to show the trends in (ph) trafficking. We are out there educating as much as possible because it is one of the pillars in the pharmaceutical initiative that the White House is pushing for.

SCALISE: One of the things when you talk to the people on the ground or local and whether to its corners of law enforcement. There are lot of different federal programs out there and I do want to touch on that GAO report because there are some concerning issues that they raise that have been touched on a little bit but I want to get in to a little bit more. But, on that front, when you look at all the grants that are out there, I know in Louisiana, I think grants come in from five different departments through 30 different programs for some of these treatment programs. So there's lot of overlapping duplication.

But, is there a better way maybe to block grantees to put them together in a way that would be more flexible, and maybe Dr. Clark you can answer, are we giving states enough flexibility today? And with the duplication, can we do a better job and maybe consolidating those grants in a way that allow the states to do what they do best without having to go through so many different processes to so many different agencies where you have this duplication.

CLARK: Clearly, we have to work with the states in their exercises (ph), their discretion, and how to prioritize what it is that they've view as important epidemiologically in their jurisdiction. And so, we have supported the use of block grant funds to the discretion of the states and work with both the individual state authorities and the national organizations associated with that. We're also working with recovery-oriented organizations so that we've got peers, people who are recovering for substance use disorders to help speak up and carry out the message working with community coalitions and others, because indeed, they can tell a better story than professionals or regulators, et cetera. So the comprehensive ...

SCALISE: Let me apologize my time's about to go. I do want to at least ask for the record if I can get this information on the GAO report because it then identified you got the 115 different federal agencies, 76 different federal programs that all have abuse (ph) for prevention to treatment programs. And they also identified overlap of 59 of the 76 programs.

And so, I think Dr. Gingrey earlier asked Mr. Botticelli and Dr. Clark to talk about what your agencies are doing to address that overlap -- those problems that were identified in the GAO report if Mr. Sosin or Dr. Sosin, I'm sorry, Dr. Volkow, and Mr. Rannazzisi can also get me their information to just show what you all are doing to try to address the overlap problems that were raised in the GAO report. And with that all ...

BURGESS: Well, the gentleman's time has expired. I think that information will be generally interesting to the Committee. So, I hope the Committee staff will provide that information to ...

SCALISE: Would that be OK with getting that to the Committee. Thank you.

BURGESS: And the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas. Mr. Green, five minutes for your questions please.

GREEN: Thank you Mr. Chairman. And thank you all in the (ph) Committee for having this hearing. Prescription drug abuse is real growing and public threat that must be addressed. The consequence and reviews and addictions to opioids such as prescription pain relievers and heroin has a devastating effect on our communities. We comprehend a solution that protects public health, reserves patient access to the needed therapies and improved access to treatment.

Last week, an article was published in the New England Journal of Medicine discussing the Department of Health and Human Services efforts to address the prescription opioid overdose epidemic including improving access to the addiction treatment services.

Dr. Volkow, you are one of the authors of this article and Dr. Clark and Dr. Sosin, the heads of your respective agencies also are -- authored this article. The article makes it clear that the treatment addiction to prescription drugs and other opioids with proven approaches like Methadone and other medication assisted therapy is of crucial importance. It describes the importance of the Affordable Care Act in increasing access to care for many Americans including those who are struggling with addiction disorders.

Dr. Volkow, can you elaborate on how the ACA builds on the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act to improve on insurance coverage for people who are addicted to prescription drugs, heroin or other substance?

VOLKOW: Yes. The problem is that, as I mentioned in my testimony, is that less than one-third of patients that require that could benefit from opioid medications are getting them for the treatment of their addiction. And this reflects among other things the fact that many of the people that are addicted to drugs do not have an insurance and rely on the state funding to get their treatment.

And as a result of that, we have removed the healthcare system for a position where they could not just act in preventing substance use disorders but on treating them. The healthcare act by providing insurance to those that currently don't have it, will give them the opportunity in to be treated in the healthcare system for substance use disorders as well as in those instances where the addiction has not to cure for the healthcare system to intervene in prevention. So that's why it's so important.

GREEN: Dr. Clark, do you agree with that?

CLARK: Indeed. One of the -- when people who are -- who present for treatment can't get treatment or asked why they couldn't get treatment, of the largest reason is cost and access to treatment.

GREEN: Thank you. I understand the ACA provision creates an optional Medicaid state plan benefits for states to establish health homes for the coordination of beneficiaries with chronic conditions has also supported some states in their effort to address the drug abuse. Dr. Clark, can you elaborate on how the health home program has been official in tackling the problem of abuse?

CLARK: We've actually -- with regards to opioids, we've got several jurisdictions that are looking at health homes as a way of dealing with opioids. So, for months, one jurisdiction I think ruled out and I'll have to clarify that is also taking that approach. Comprehensive services being offered where persons care is adequately monitored offers us an opportunity to reduce some of the complexities associated with opioid misuse.

GREEN: Thank you. It's clear from the counter (ph), it's the Affordable Care Act makes it possible for many people with substance abuse disorders whether it's addiction to prescription drugs, heroin, and other substance access to treatment they so desperately need (ph).

Mr. Chairman, I know we've had our differences over the Affordable Care. I hope we all share the goal of writing more robust treatments to those who are working to overcome these addictions. And I'll yield back my time.

BURGESS: Gentlemen yields back. Our discussion with the Affordable Care Act will continue at a later date.

GREEN: I'm sure it will.

BURGESS: We have now I think heard from all members who wanted to ask a question. I would ask unanimous consent that a follow up question be allowed for those of us who remain.

(UNKNOWN): I don't have any problem with that. I can't stay but ...

BURGESS: Very well. But I wanted to get that unanimous consent agreed to before you left. So it's not just on my shoulders.

(UNKNOWN): I trust you Chairman.

BURGESS: Mr. Griffith, I interrupted you before. Do you have -- would you like to follow up on your line of questioning?

GRIFFITH: Well, I would just like to give an opportunity Mr. ...

RANNAZZISI: Rannazzisi.

GRIFFITH: Rannazzisi. Thank you. I'm sorry. I have such a hard time with it this morning. But Mr. Rannazzisi was about to comment on the dilemma that we have with the small rule pharmacist or pharmacy that has one distributor.

RANNAZZISI: Yes. And I want to thank you for clarifying that DEA has not set a quota downstream from the distributors. The distributors are working through their issues regarding due diligence to

determine, you know, what -- if there's a problem pharmacy or it's not a problem pharmacy. I think that the rural of pharmacy present a specific problem because they do need to get medication to their patients. And they need that downstream supply. We're hoping that the distributors are on site looking at their operations before they completely cut off the distributor or limit -- pharmacy or limit the pharmacy. But again, it's a business practice and unfortunately, you know, I have no control over that business practices.

GRIFFITH: Well, I would just say, it's because of the concerns and the -- I'm sure some memos have been put out by the DEA trying to do -- we're all trying to do the right thing that has caused the distributor be concerned. And maybe, if there could be some acknowledgment from the DEA to the distributors, hey, you know, keeping an eye out of its rogue (ph). But if it's just you're looking at, you know, this pharmacy is more than another pharmacy, find out if they have just one distributor because that makes a huge difference in whether or not they're truly distributing more of the opioid than somebody else. And if you all could do that, that would greatly appreciated.

BURGESS: The gentleman yields back. I thank the gentleman for his follow up. Dr. Volkow, you made a statement that was really fairly provocative a few moments ago. And I just wanted to follow up on just a little bit with you with -- when you were discussing the effect of nicotine, alcohol on developing, but I guess you were talking about developing brains or. And then you added the liquidation (ph) of marijuana.

And as you not to say anything about the rightness or wrongness of the public policy, but as you know, this nation is right now engaged in a significant experiment where some states have legalized marijuana. Are you all studying that in the affect of this decriminalization in some states? Are we prepared for what might happen next?

VOLKOW: Yes. I mean, definitively and unfortunately, it's one of those experimental situations that is happening whether we like it or not. So, what we have done is provided, identify the grantees, our researchers in those communities where there has been legalization for recreational or medical purposes to actually give them a supplement money so that they can look at the consequences of these changes in policy in the educational systems, in accidents, in emergency room admissions, in productivity in the workforce.

We need to have evidence that can then hopefully can guide policy as suppose to doing policy in darkness on the beliefs of people. And what -- since you brought up the issue to one of the things that is also concerned as -- discussing the prescription, people are using prescriptions because they feel that are prescribed by physicians they cannot be so harmful. The notion that marijuana has so called medical purposes is also changing the perception of this broken (ph) not to be so harmful if it has medicinal properties. And the whole perception of risk is changing which again is open. The -- I mean, the willingness of drunk people to take marijuana and to consume it regularly.

BURGESS: Well, I do hope that you are monitoring the situation since society has provided you the experimental situation. I also hope that you're preparing to deal with what the downstream effects are from this rather bold social experiment to some of the states are undertaking right now. And I hope that's more than just sending more money to those states. I hope that is something that you are -- that oversight is happening at your level that there will be a national monitoring of this.

VOLKOW: We -- I mean, the way that we oversee research protocol is very, very rigorous. If the scientist is not producing or the methodology is not adequate, we do not fund them.

BURGESS: Let me -- I'm just speaking of downstream effects. There's also the issue and it was been brought up several times this morning. And if you feel free to comment on this, the issue of course the device by which the drug is administered and the possibility for exposure to hepatitis B or C or HIV are from a public health perspective, are we preparing ourselves for any differences in the incidents of these illnesses as a consequence of the delivery device?

(UNKNOWN): I'll start in that. You know, one of the main concerns of HHS has been obviously the increase of viral hepatitis and hepatitis C among the very young cohort of injection drug users. So, we're even working in concert with the Health and Human Services whereas to put forth actually an

action plan to diminish viral hepatitis. And clearly, there's a lot of overlap in terms of the issues that we're talking about here. So, this is obviously a significant public health concern. So we want to make sure that we're dealing with this in a concerted way.

BURGESS: Yeah. And then of course the good news right now is hepatitis C is one of those things that -- make looks (ph) very well like there maybe a cure. It's not just on the horizon, but it's here. One problem is it's very expensive. And my differences -- Mr. Green over the Affordable Care Act to side (ph), they ultimately, there's someone is got to pay for that. So I hope we're doing the necessary -- I hope for monitoring and doing the necessary preventive things to keep that in check and to prevent the disease rather than just simply now being able to cure it with a very expensive therapy that thankfully is available.

Mr. Botticelli, did you have some additional observations on the issue of the states that are legalizing marijuana?

BOTTICELLI: I do. And what I wanted you to know is that in addition to that -- additional meta (ph) grants out there. Our office has actually convened a group of federal partners to look at that each criteria that the Department of Justice has laid out for Colorado and Washington and are really committed to gathering data on the Federal State and local level looking at what is the impact in terms of legalization in Colorado and Washington have on both the public health and public safety consequences that we have.

So in addition to some of the public health related work that Dr. Volkow has funded, we're also looking at what are the public safety consequences things like increase in drug driving, interstate transportation of marijuana from Colorado to other states. So our office has really been committed in terms of ensuring that we have good public health and public safety data to monitor what's happening in Colorado and Washington.

BURGESS: And Mr. Rannazzisi, I would assume that your agency is participating in that as well?

RANNAZZISI: It still has a schedule on control substance. We're still doing investigations concerning marijuana downstream.

BURGESS: And are you monitoring the downstream effects in neighboring states in the incidents as Mr. Botticelli talked about. The incidents who drive you all impaired (ph), the incidents of even just crime. Are you compiling those statistics so they will be available to policy makers in subsequent hearings?

RANNAZZISI: We are talking to our state and local counterparts in all the surrounding states. And we are gathering information. I don't know how -- all inclusive that information is because quite frankly the reporting, some of the state and locals are not keeping that type of information. But we are keeping tamps (ph) with our state, locals on what's going on within their states.

BURGESS: Very well ...

GRIFFITH: Mr. Chairman.

BURGESS: Yeah. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GRIFFITH: I'd be reminiscing (ph) -- since we've taking on marijuana, not to mention that I've just introduced the bill to legalize the use of marijuana in medicinal circumstances that came (ph) to the Virginia plan that was passed in 1979. That requires a doctor's prescription thus changing the scheduling. The bill actually cost was changing in the scheduling. DEA is in a tough spot. Some of the states are doing it, but it's still scheduled one which means that the DEA has a hard time collecting the data that you just asked for without stumbling across felons that they're not prosecuting.

So they're in a catch 22 (ph). I think it's much better to have doctors and pharmacists and the regular system working, because then you get real data for your scientist to look at and see if it isn't

effective as they designed it to be. So the bill doesn't go as far as Colorado or Washington might want it or the crazy California plan as I often call it. But it allows real doctors with real pharmacist and real distributors controlled that in under the laws of the United States to use true marijuana if it can be used in a real way medicinally.

BURGESS: Very good. The gentleman yields back. I'm all for (ph) giving doctors more power. That actually concludes all of the questions that we have from members. I've neglected to mention at the start of the hearing asking (inaudible) consented members written opening statements be introduced into the record without objection. The documents will be entered into the record.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all of our witnesses. I thank the members that have participated in today's hearing. I'll remind members they have 10 business days to submit questions for the record. And I'll ask the witnesses that all agreed to respond promptly to the question submitted in writing. That the subcommittee is adjourned, thank you for your attendance today.

END

LOAD-DATE: May 4, 2014

States News Service

April 29, 2014 Tuesday

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANT IMPACT OF PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE-BACK DAY

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 330 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted the impact that National Prescription Take-Back Day had in New Mexico, where more than 600 pounds of medication was collected in Santa Fe County. **Lujan** commended the county and all those who participated by bringing their unwanted medications to one of the many locations for safe disposal.

"By collecting more than 600 pounds of prescription drugs, in Santa Fe County alone, and much more throughout the state, New Mexicans who participated in National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day have played an important role the fight against prescription drug abuse," Congressman **Lujan** said. "While Prescription Drug Take-Back Day is only a small part of what must be a larger effort to combat drug abuse, it is encouraging to see its success in Santa Fe County, and know that a significant amount of prescription drugs have been properly disposed of."

Last week, Rep. **Lujan** encouraged New Mexicans to take the opportunity on Saturday to dispose of unneeded or expired medicine in an effort to ensure these prescription drugs don't end up in the wrong hands. In 2012, over 60 percent of people who used prescription drugs for non-medical purposes obtained them from family or a friend - which highlights the importance of disposing of unneeded medication.

"As we continue to come together as a community and encourage our family, friends, and neighbors to live a healthy lifestyle, it is critical that we recognize the role prescription drugs have in people's lives. Every year we see an increasing number of lives claimed by prescription drug abuse," added **Lujan**. "Prescription Drug Take-Back events not only reduce the amount of unwanted drugs, but draw attention to the fact that we all have a role to play in this effort. Every step we take to safely dispose of prescription drugs has the potential to save lives in our communities."

LOAD-DATE: April 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

April 29, 2014 Tuesday 2:37 AM EST

Lujan Highlights Important Impact of Prescription Drug Take-Back Day

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 339 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted the impact that National Prescription Take-Back Day had in New Mexico, where more than 600 pounds of medication was collected in Santa Fe County. **Lujan** commended the county and all those who participated by bringing their unwanted medications to one of the many locations for safe disposal.

"By collecting more than 600 pounds of prescription drugs, in Santa Fe County alone, and much more throughout the state, New Mexicans who participated in National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day have played an important role the fight against prescription drug abuse," Congressman **Lujan** said. "While Prescription Drug Take-Back Day is only a small part of what must be a larger effort to combat drug abuse, it is encouraging to see its success in Santa Fe County, and know that a significant amount of prescription drugs have been properly disposed of."

Last week, Rep. **Lujan** encouraged New Mexicans to take the opportunity on Saturday to dispose of unneeded or expired medicine in an effort to ensure these prescription drugs don't end up in the wrong hands. In 2012, over 60 percent of people who used prescription drugs for non-medical purposes obtained them from family or a friend - which highlights the importance of disposing of unneeded medication.

"As we continue to come together as a community and encourage our family, friends, and neighbors to live a healthy lifestyle, it is critical that we recognize the role prescription drugs have in people's

lives. Every year we see an increasing number of lives claimed by prescription drug abuse," added **Lujan**. "Prescription Drug Take-Back events not only reduce the amount of unwanted drugs, but draw attention to the fact that we all have a role to play in this effort. Every step we take to safely dispose of prescription drugs has the potential to save lives in our communities."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140430-4718762 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: April 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

172 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

April 25, 2014 Friday

Luj án encourages participation in prescription drug disposal

BYLINE: Richard Reyes Staff writer city@gallupindependent.com

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 348 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE

SANTA FE - U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, of New Mexico's 3rd District, is encouraging New Mexicans in communities across the state to participate in National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day Saturday, according to a news release.

Saturday is the eighth annual National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day. Communities across the state and nation will have the opportunity to dispose of expired, unwanted and potentially dangerous prescription drugs and other medications between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. at designated drop-off locations.

There are two drop-off locations in Gallup at Gallup Indian Medical Center, 516 E. Nizhoni Blvd., and the New Mexico State Police District 6 office, 4200 E. Historic Highway 66. There's one location in Window Rock, inside the front entrance of Lowe's, located on Arizona Highway 264 and Route 12. There's also one location in Grants at the Cibola County Sheriff's Office, 114 McBride Road.

In his statement, **Luján** warns of the potential dangers to the environment if prescription drugs are disposed of improperly.

He also emphasizes that prescription drugs are essential to treating chronic conditions and that they are meant for specific individuals, times and places.

"Every year we see an increasing number of lives claimed by prescription drug abuse; from accidental overdose, suicide and the crimes that result from people becoming dependent on prescription drugs," **Luján** states. "As we receive medication from doctors and pharmacies and fail to use it or dispose of it properly, the opportunity for misuse arises. From giving away pills - not appreciating the danger posed when someone uses a prescription meant for someone else - to the theft of prescription drugs, the failure to properly dispose of such medication can pose a danger that can be defeated by returning them to a designated drop off point."

Other drop-off locations in the Four Corners region can be found online through the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's website.

Information: DEA Call Center, 1-800-882-9539

Online: http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/t

akeback/index. html

LOAD-DATE: April 29, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

173 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Associated Press State & Local

April 24, 2014 Thursday 8:13 PM GMT

Democrat Tom Udall raises $1M for Senate race

BYLINE: BARRY MASSEY, Associated Press

SECTION: POLITICAL NEWS; STATE AND REGIONAL

LENGTH: 579 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) - Democratic incumbent Tom Udall holds a large fundraising advantage over two Republican challengers in the race for New Mexico's U.S. Senate seat.

According to the latest Federal Election Commission reports, Udall's campaign had cash-on-hand of $3.1 million at the end of March.

Former state GOP chairman Allen Weh had a cash balance of $205,569, and Las Cruces attorney David Clements reported a campaign balance of $7,497.

In 2008, Udall spent about $7.8 million in winning the Senate seat in a hotly contested race against Republican Steve Pearce. Both were U.S. House members at the time.

During the first three months of this year, Udall raised about $1 million and spent $262,077.

Udall's top donors included leadership political action committees affiliated with other Democratic senators - Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, Mary Landrieu of Louisiana and Mark Warner of Virginia. Each of their PACs gave $5,000.

Udall is unopposed in the June 3 Democratic primary.

Weh, a retired Marine colonel who owns an aviation company in Albuquerque, raised $413,966, including personal loans and contributions of $160,300. His campaign spent $208,396.

Clements raised $40,579 and spent $44,968 from January through March. His top donors included Las Cruces business owner Randy McMillan, $3,900, and the American Gun Culture Club of Las Cruces, $1,000.

In races for the state's three House seats, Republican incumbent Steve Pearce in the 2nd Congressional District has the largest campaign account. He reported a cash balance of nearly $1.4 million.

Democratic challenger Roxanne "Rocky" Lara, a Carlsbad attorney, had cash-on-hand of $444,233.

Pearce raised $362,694 during the quarter, and Lara collected $307,259. The incumbent spent $75,272, and Lara's campaign reported expenditures of $90,068.

Pearce's top contributors included financial industry political action committees, which gave about $59,000. Included was $3,500 from the PAC of the Independent Community Bankers of America.

Labor union PACs gave $31,000 to Lara, and $10,000 came from a PAC affiliated with Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, a New York Democrat.

In the Albuquerque-area 1st Congressional District, Democratic incumbent Michelle **Lujan** Grisham had cash-on-hand of $842,491. She has two GOP challengers. Retired Army officer Richard Priem reported a campaign account balance of $40,690 and Corrales business owner Michael Frese had $27,456.

Grisham raised $234,985, including about $30,000 from health-care industry PACs. Frese had total receipts of $51,795, including personal loans of $30,000. Priem is mostly self-financing his campaign. He collected $100 in contributions in the past quarter, and his campaign's cash balance stems from a $100,000 personal loan made in December.

Grisham's campaign spent $74,328 compared with $37,758 by Frese and $48,310 by Priem.

In the 3rd District of northern New Mexico, Democratic incumbent **Ben Ray Lujan** reported a campaign cash balance of $589,545. Democratic challenger Robert Blanch wasn't required to file a finance report with the FEC during the quarter because he hadn't raised and spent $5,000. Republican Jefferson Byrd had a cash balance of $3,445.

Lujan raised $138,703, including $12,800 from Indian tribes in New Mexico and other states. Byrd had receipts of $4,332, with the candidate accounting for $3,222 of the total. **Lujan's** campaign spent $65,033 compared with $1,665 by Byrd.

—

Follow Barry Massey on Twitter at https://twitter.com/bmasseyAP

LOAD-DATE: April 25, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

174 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 23, 2014

LUJAN URGES NEW MEXICO COMMUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN NATIONAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE-BACK DAY; Santa Fe, NM - Congressman Ben Ray Lujan of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today urging New Mexicans in communities across the state to participate in National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day this Saturday.; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 432 words

"This Saturday, April 26th, is the 8th annual National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day. Between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. communities across New Mexico and across the nation will have an opportunity to dispose of expired, unwanted, and potentially dangerous prescription drugs and other medications. Last year, Americans discarded over 600,000 pounds of unneeded medication on National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day, and this Saturday we have an important opportunity to dispose of these potentially dangerous drugs that can do harm to those we love or the health of our environment when discarded improperly.

"As we continue to come together as a community and encourage our family, friends, and neighbors to live a healthy lifestyle, it is critical that we recognize the role prescription drugs have in peoples' lives. While prescribed medication from doctors can be essential in treating chronic conditions, disease, and pain, we must be aware that every prescription is meant for a certain time, place, and individual. Because these medications come from a doctor, they are sometimes viewed as less dangerous than illicit drugs, but this could not be further from the truth.

"Every year we see an increasing number of lives claimed by prescription drug abuse; from accidental overdose, suicide, and the crimes that result from people becoming dependent on prescription drugs. As we receive medication from doctors and pharmacies and fail to use it or dispose of it properly, the opportunity for misuse arises. From giving away pills--not appreciating the danger posed when someone uses a prescription meant for someone else--to the theft of prescription

drugs, the failure to properly dispose of such medication can pose a danger that can be defeated by returning them to a designated drop off point.

"I encourage everyone to take this opportunity on Saturday, April 26th, and dispose of unneeded or expired medicine at a drop off location, which can be found at the DEA's website here http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/index.html, or by calling the DEA Call Center at: 1-800-882-9539. We must all work together to ensure that substance abuse doesn't claim the lives of the people we care about, or that prescription drugs don't end up in the wrong hands due to their improper disposal. I hope you will join me in decreasing the availability of unwanted and expired medication, and encourage others to do the same."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan.**house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-urges-new-mexico-communities-to-participate-in-national-prescription-drug-takeback-day/

LOAD-DATE: April 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

April 23, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN URGES NEW MEXICO COMMUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN NATIONAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE-BACK DAY

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 445 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today urging New Mexicans in communities across the state to participate in National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day this Saturday.

"This Saturday, April 26th, is the 8th annual National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day. Between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. communities across New Mexico and across the nation will have an opportunity to dispose of expired, unwanted, and potentially dangerous prescription drugs and other medications. Last year, Americans discarded over 600,000 pounds of unneeded medication on National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day, and this Saturday we have an important opportunity to dispose of these potentially dangerous drugs that can do harm to those we love or the health of our environment when discarded improperly.

"As we continue to come together as a community and encourage our family, friends, and neighbors to live a healthy lifestyle, it is critical that we recognize the role prescription drugs have in peoples' lives. While prescribed medication from doctors can be essential in treating chronic conditions, disease, and pain, we must be aware that every prescription is meant for a certain time, place, and individual. Because these medications come from a doctor, they are sometimes viewed as less dangerous than illicit drugs, but this could not be further from the truth.

"Every year we see an increasing number of lives claimed by prescription drug abuse; from accidental overdose, suicide, and the crimes that result from people becoming dependent on prescription drugs. As we receive medication from doctors and pharmacies and fail to use it or dispose of it properly, the opportunity for misuse arises. From giving away pills-not appreciating the danger posed when someone uses a prescription meant for someone else-to the theft of prescription drugs, the failure to properly dispose of such medication can pose a danger that can be defeated by returning them to a designated drop off point.

"I encourage everyone to take this opportunity on Saturday, April 26th, and dispose of unneeded or expired medicine at a drop off location, which can be found at the DEA's website here, or by calling the DEA Call Center at: 1-800-882-9539. We must all work together to ensure that substance abuse doesn't claim the lives of the people we care about, or that prescription drugs don't end up in the wrong hands due to their improper disposal. I hope you will join me in decreasing the availability of unwanted and expired medication, and encourage others to do the same."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: April 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

176 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

April 22, 2014 Tuesday

Art competition deadline looms

SECTION: TODAY'S NEWS

LENGTH: 273 words

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that entries in this year's Congressional Art Competition will be displayed in an exhibit open to the public at the City of Santa Fe Arts Commission Community Gallery May 2 and May 3. **Luján** will announce the winners of the competition during a reception on Saturday.

"Every year, I am impressed with the quality and creativity of the high school students who participate in this competition, and I am sure this year will be no different," **Luján** said. "I am excited

that we will have the opportunity to show off their fine work in the City of Santa Fe Arts Commission Community Gallery for all to see."

The annual competition allows members of Congress to display the talent and creativity of their high school constituents. The first-place entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year.

The winner will travel to Washington, D.C. for a reception honoring the national winners. Artwork that places second through seventh will be displayed in **Luján's** district offices across northern New Mexico.

Students interested in entering the competition can still do so. Entries must be submitted to the Santa Fe district office by 5 p.m. Friday. More information regarding the contest guidelines is available on **Luján's** website, www.**lujan**.house.gov.

All entries submitted to **Luján's** office by high school students in the Third District will be on display on May 2 from 5 to 7 p.m. and again during a reception at the Gallery on May 3 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., at which time the winners will be announced.

LOAD-DATE: April 23, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

177 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

April 18, 2014 Friday

Luján checks out STEM at UNM-LA; Education House rep has publicly stated his support for project

BYLINE: Tris DeRoma

SECTION: TODAY'S NEWS

LENGTH: 560 words

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D-N.M.) visited the University of New Mexico-Los Alamos recently, anxious to learn more about the programs there and how he can help further the university's immersion in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) programming.

Luján has publicly stated his support of STEM programming, not only as a means to stabilize New Mexico's economy, but also as means of economic mobility for New Mexico's high school and college-aged students.

Accompanying him on his tour of the campus were UNM-LA's Executive Director Dr. Cedric Page, Dean of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Cindy J. Rooney, Carole G. Rutten, the Los Alamos National

Laboratory's Institutional Program Manager for Education in the Community Programs Office and others.

One goal **Lujan** hoped to achieve by his visit was to drive home the importance of STEM-based programming to his counterparts in Washington as well as the importance of branch campuses in general.

"In the midst of the budget debates we had just last week, the Paul Ryan budget will sadly devastate programs like this," **Lujan** said, talking about the budget proposal of Ryan, the Republican House Budget Committee chairman from Wisconsin. "So, what I can take back to this debate is the information I get from these types of visits with the educational leaders of New Mexico, students, as well as the small businesses that depend on STEM education. Perhaps my colleagues will begin to understand the importance of the programs they're looking to cut and their importance to the communities they serve. Hopefully they will then begin to support these programs rather than devastate them."

One of the highlights of **Lujan's** visit included a discussion with students involved in the programs. Sheri Lopez, a pre-engineering student who is undertaking an internship at Fermi Labs, urged **Lujan** to find a way to equal the playing field for women who are applying for STEM jobs.

"There has to be more educational opportunities for young women, maybe starting in elementary school," Lopez said. "The perception's always been that boys are naturally good at math. This sexist idea has been around so long it's ingrained itself, passed on from generation to generation. I think that cycle needs to be broken."

Lujan and Rutten both were impressed with Lopez's statement that they talked of starting a program doing just that, that Lopez offered to help with.

Another student, Joshua Bristol-Cossey, who is in the school's Accelerate Technical Job Training Program and is majoring in Robotics, talked about how important it's been to have a teacher that has actually worked in the field that he's planning to go into once he graduates.

"Another thing we need to expand on is teaching kids about what the job is going to look like," he said. "I thought I was going to become a miserable little worker bee for the rest of my life until I came here. Don Davis (UNM-LA Technology Chair) then told me all about the field."

Other highlights included visiting with the "Project Y" Robotics Team, as well as students enrolled in the school's EMS and Fire Science degree programs.

Page said the students at the discussion made a positive impression on **Lujan**.

"I was very proud to see how well they articulated and expressed their career goals as well as demonstrate to Mr. **Lujan** just what UNM-LA and its programs mean to them," he said.

LOAD-DATE: April 19, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: UNM-LA Executive Director Cedric Page, right, greets Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D-NM) on front steps of the campus. **Luján** was there earlier this week to tout STEM programming and to tour the campus. **Luján** (D-NM) chats with students from the UNM-LA's Robotics club, a successful joint partnership between UNM-LA and Los Alamos Public Schools.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

April 18, 2014 Friday

EDITORIAL: Audiotapes reveal another Martinez

BYLINE: The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: COMMENTARY

LENGTH: 795 words

April 18--Gov. Susana Martinez took center stage, if only for a brief moment, in the nation's political theater this week.

Mother Jones, the left-leaning investigative magazine, published a not-so-flattering profile of the New Mexico governor and possible Republican vice presidential contender. Even juicier than the cover article, which described Martinez as "petty" and "vindictive" under the headline, "The Next Sarah Palin," were the quotes of Martinez talking off the cuff with advisers.

Martinez, about former Lt. Gov. Diane Denish: "That little bitch."

On teachers and their pay: "During the campaign, we can't say it, I guess, because it's education, but ... [teachers] already don't work, you know, two and a half months out of the year."

On the Commission on the Status of Women: "What the hell is that? What the hell does a commission on women's Cabinet do all day long?"

More troubling, aide Matt Kennicott had this to say about the late House Speaker Ben **Luján**: "Somebody told me he's absolutely eloquent in Spanish, but his English? He sounds like a retard." Even in private, that is offensive language, especially for a political operative who ended up landing a cushy state job. Kennicott works for the state agency that -- wait for it -- is charged with providing services for the state's mentally disabled. He earns $84,905 as communications director for New Mexico's Human Services Department, according to the state's Sunshine Portal.

Speaker **Luján's** widow, Carmen, had this to say: "Ben committed his life to helping people, even while fighting cancer -- people always came first. He had an incredible mind and heart. This makes me so sad. He was a lifelong champion of working people. He used his voice and his words to make a difference."

As Mrs. **Luján** pointed out, "these cruel words by Matt [Kennicott] are not just about Ben, they hurt and attack the people of our State. Anyone who speaks with an accent, anyone who speaks Spanglish and uses both English and Spanish to communicate was attacked by the governor's staff."

Their son, U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, put the comments in broader context: "It is sad that a Martinez official believes that New Mexicans who speak with a Spanish accent have a disability or that they use such disparaging terms. It is troubling that Governor Martinez has allowed a culture in which these comments and other offensive remarks by her staff are deemed acceptable. It is deeply disappointing that instead of speaking out against this offensive language, Governor Martinez has

tolerated it and even rewarded this type of behavior by making this individual a spokesman in her administration.

"The decision by Governor Martinez to surround herself with staff like this speaks volumes about her leadership and character. It sends a message that this behavior is acceptable. Using such derogatory terms for women or those who interchange English and Spanish when they speak should not be tolerated."

Kennicott has apologized -- sort of, saying that, "In this private conversation four years ago, I was repeating a direct quote of what someone else had said and I apologize if that offended or hurt anyone. I was relaying this to someone in private and obviously would not have used this language otherwise, as I knew full-well that the governor's sister is developmentally disabled."

Of course, Gov. Martinez has turned the attack into a drive to make money -- and the $10 donations are pouring in. She is decrying the audiotape as "stolen" and complaining about the liberal media. But the tapes, and the attitudes, are accurate. And the pleasant image of the governor who loves reading to children is smudged. She's considered a national front-runner for, at the least, a GOP vice presidential nomination. Republicans hope her face can help change the face of their party, making it more welcoming to both women and minorities. Her seemingly pleasant personality and can-do image is part of that appeal. Now, thanks to the audiotapes (presumably leaked by a former ally), we see a different Martinez.

As for whether this will stick, or whether it's another political storm that will dissipate, we'll see, left-leaning or not, Mother Jones is the same magazine that discovered and wrote about the video showing then-presidential candidate Mitt Romney bashing the "47 percent" of citizens who are nothing but "takers." That video altered the presidential race. What the audiotapes do to Gov. Martinez's carefully constructed image is unknown. But they have certainly moved the curtain aside so that voters can view more clearly the woman in the governor's seat.

___ (c)2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: April 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20140418-SF-EDITORIAL-Audiotapes-reveal-another-Martinez-0418-20140418

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican

Associated Press State & Local

April 17, 2014 Thursday 12:04 AM GMT

Recordings surface in New Mexico governor race

BYLINE: BARRY MASSEY, Associated Press

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL; POLITICAL NEWS

LENGTH: 719 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) - Democrats called Wednesday for Republican Gov. Susana Martinez to apologize after a liberal publication released recordings in which she and aides used profanity and offensive names to describe political opponents.

The governor, who's seeking re-election this year and is viewed as a possible rising star in national GOP ranks, also came under fire for making critical remarks about public school teachers while telling aides that it was a view that couldn't be expressed publicly during her campaign.

"Governor Martinez and her aides' comments are inexcusable. We have clear proof of her intent to deceive voters and her disdain for anyone who has differing views," said Lawrence Rael, one of the five Democrats running for governor in the June primary election.

Martinez campaign spokesman Chris Sanchez didn't issue an apology on behalf of the governor but acknowledged that the governor "used salty language in a private conversation four years ago with close advisers and will pay the appropriate penalty to the cuss jar."

The campaign sent an email to Martinez supporters noting that Martinez had referred to her 2010 general election opponent, then Lt. Gov. Diane Denish, "using the B-word" in a conversation with advisers.

The recordings were part of an unflattering profile of Martinez posted online by Mother Jones magazine.

Sanchez dismissed the article and Democratic criticisms.

"That the national left is trying to smear the first Hispanic woman governor in American history because they view her as a threat is about as surprising as the National Enquirer reporting that Elvis is still alive," Sanchez said in a statement.

The recordings were "private conversations undoubtedly sent to them by individuals or their allies who are either under federal indictment, or have had their homes raided by the FBI for their role in stealing or distributing Gov. Susana Martinez's email," he said.

A former campaign manager for the governor pleaded not guilty last year to federal charges that he hijacked the campaign's email system after Martinez became governor in 2011.

Martinez, in one of the recordings, privately suggests public school teachers may earn too much.

"During the campaign, we can't say it, I guess, because it's education, but I really keep going back to that ... keeping the teachers from feeling the pain when they already don't work, you know, two and a half months out of the year or three months out of the year but earn salaries at the same rate of people who do work 12 months a year," Martinez said in the recording.

Leaders of educational unions said the governor's remarks were demeaning to teachers.

"I wish the governor's words came as more of a surprise, but they don't. Gov. Martinez has been unabashed in her strategy to attack teachers and dismantle public education in New Mexico," said Stephanie Ly, president of the American Federation of Teachers New Mexico.

Educational unions have opposed many of the governor's policies, including a new teacher-evaluation system.

In another recording, Martinez asks about the purpose of the state Commission on the Status of Women and campaign aides profanely joke about the organization. Martinez laughs at the comments.

A campaign aide in another recording suggested that then House Speaker Ben **Lujan's** English language skills made it appear the Democratic leader had a disability - using a disparaging term to describe the condition. **Lujan** died in 2012.

Lujan's son, U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, said in a statement that his mother and family "are genuinely hurt and offended by what was said."

"The decision by Gov. Martinez to surround herself with staff like this speaks volumes about her leadership and character. It sends a message that this behavior is acceptable," **Lujan** said. "Using such derogatory terms for women or those who interchange English and Spanish when they speak should not be tolerated."

The former campaign aide, Matt Kennicott, said in a statement that he "was repeating a direct quote of what someone else had said and I apologize if that offended or hurt anyone."

"I was relaying this to someone in private and obviously would not have used this language otherwise, as I knew full well that the governor's sister is developmentally disabled," said Kennicott, the spokesman for the Human Services Department.

LOAD-DATE: April 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

April 17, 2014 Thursday

Gov. Martinez: Embarrassing audio tapes 'stolen'

BYLINE: Steve Terrell, The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 1392 words

April 17--A left-leaning, San Francisco-based magazine set the New Mexico political world ablaze Wednesday with a scathing cover story on Gov. Susana Martinez that publicized audio clips of Martinez and her campaign staff talking frankly, and sometimes profanely, about Democrats.

The Mother Jones article -- headlined "Is New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez the next Sarah Palin?" -- contends that despite her reputation and public persona, "In private, Martinez can be nasty, juvenile, and vindictive. She appears ignorant about basic policy issues and has surrounded herself with a clique of advisers who are prone to a foxhole mentality."

Reporter Andy Kroll's story comes at a time when Martinez is receiving more and more attention among national Republicans -- as well as frequent chatter in national media about her being a leading contender for vice president on the GOP ticket in 2016. She currently is running for election to another four-year term as governor.

David Corn, Mother Jones' Washington bureau chief, told The New Mexican on Wednesday, "She's been abuzz in GOP circles as someone who can attract Latino and women voters. There's been some talk of her getting a position on the national ticket. A lot of people back East are interested in her."

A Martinez campaign spokesman called Mother Jones, a print magazine that has published since 1976, "an extreme left-wing blog" and said "the national Left is trying to smear the first Hispanic woman governor in American history because they view her as a threat."

Much of the material in the magazine piece wasn't new to those familiar with New Mexico politics. But the audio recordings, which were made during debate preparations during her 2010 campaign, had not had been released previously.

Among the controversial moments in the recordings:

--Martinez campaign staffer Matt Kennicott, who was later hired as spokesman for the state Human Services Department, said of the late New Mexico House Speaker Ben **Luján**, a Democrat from Nambé, "Somebody told me he's absolutely eloquent in Spanish, but his English? He sounds like a retard."

--During the 2010 campaign, when some thought that cutting teachers' salaries might be inevitable because of the budget crisis, Martinez said in a taped conversation, "During the campaign, we can't say it, I guess, because it's education, but ... [teachers] already don't work, you know, two and a half months out of the year or three months out of the year but earn salaries at the same rate of people who do work 12 months a year."

--Talking about how the administration could respond to criticism if Martinez cut teachers' salaries after promising not to, her chief political consultant, Jay McCleskey, suggested the campaign could post "a YouTube video that no one will ever see where you talk about making everyone feel the pain. And when you win, we say, 'See we said this ... the whole time. What are you guys talking about?' " To that, Kennicott responded: "It's on YouTube. C'mon, bitches." [After Martinez became governor, teachers' salaries didn't get cut.]

--While discussing the state's Commission on the Status of Women, Martinez asks: "What the hell is that? What the hell does a commission on women's Cabinet do all day long?" [Martinez as governor vetoed state funds for the commission's budget.]

--Watching a clip of a debate with her 2010 gubernatorial opponent, then Lt. Gov Diane Denish, Martinez referred to her as "that little bitch."

Carmen **Luján**, the widow of Speaker **Luján**, issued a statement Wednesday, saying, "When I read and heard the audio from Gov. Martinez's staff this morning it crushed my heart. I called my family in tears and felt sick to my stomach. ... these cruel words by Matt are not just about Ben, they hurt and attack the people of our State. Anyone who speaks with an accent, anyone who speaks Spanglish and uses both English and Spanish to communicate, was attacked by the governor's staff."

U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., son of the late speaker, also weighed in. "The decision by Gov. Martinez to surround herself with staff like this speaks volumes about her leadership and character. It sends a message that this behavior is acceptable."

Kennicott on Wednesday said in a statement, "In this private conversation four years ago, I was repeating a direct quote of what someone else had said and I apologize if that offended or hurt anyone. I was relaying this to someone in private and obviously would not have used this language otherwise, as I knew full-well that the governor's sister is developmentally-disabled."

Referring to the audio recordings, the Martinez campaign said the tapes were "stolen" and later said the magazine "undoubtedly" got the recordings from "individuals or their allies who are either under federal indictment, or have had their homes raided by the FBI for their role in stealing or distributing Gov. Susana Martinez's email."

Former Martinez campaign manager Jamie Estrada was indicted by a federal grand jury on a charge that he illegally took Martinez's emails. But he had been gone from the campaign nearly a year before the debate preparation recordings were made.

Another person implicated in the email case was Martinez's former personal assistant, Anissa Galassini Ford, whose Rio Rancho home was searched by the FBI last year as part of the same investigation. On Wednesday, Ford declined to confirm or deny that she was the source for Mother Jones. Ford worked for the Martinez campaign until November 2010, after Martinez won the election.

"I won't comment on anything the governor and her people accuse me of," Ford said.

Corn declined to say who gave the recordings to Kroll, but said they came after Kroll had written a first draft of his story.

Martinez, meanwhile, immediately used the Mother Jones piece to appeal to supporters for more campaign funds. She ignored most of the article's content but admitted she had called Denish "the B-word." Martinez said in the fundraising email, "I admit it -- I've had to fund the cuss jar a few times in my life."

Denish commented on her Facebook page, saying, "No one ever accused [Martinez] of having any class. One of the most telling things about the article is that she isn't surrounded by people who are personally committed to her or loyal -- as evidenced by the fact that they are willing to make these audios for future use."

The Martinez campaign tweeted Wednesday afternoon that it had raised nearly $15,000 in a few hours.

Three of the five Democrats running for governor this year -- Lawrence Rael, Alan Webber and Howie Morales -- blasted Martinez over the magazine's revelations. Rael said the recordings "reveal a side of Gov. Martinez and her aides that is offensive on so many levels. ... That she didn't reprimand Matt Kennicott is inexcusable."

Two Albuquerque Republican legislators, Reps. Monica Youngblood and Paul Pacheco, issued a news release accusing Democrats of hypocrisy, saying Rael had accepted a campaign contribution from a convicted sex offender and that Webber in a blog post had dismissed as a "sex scandal" the admission by his former boss, former Oregon Gov. Neil Goldschmidt, that he had sex with a 14-year-old baby-sitter. Webber, in an email to delegates at the Democratic pre-primary convention last month, said, "I used the wrong words. It was a terrible crime. That's what I should have called it."

Leaders of educational unions said the governor's recorded remarks were demeaning to teachers.

"Very few teachers work only nine months, very few get paid as if they worked 12 months," said Betty Patterson, NEA-New Mexico president. "During the nine months, teachers work directly with students, we put in endless hours beyond what is paid or expected."

"I wish the governor's words came as more of a surprise, but they don't," said Stephanie Ly, president of the American Federation of Teachers New Mexico. "Gov. Martinez has been unabashed in her strategy to attack teachers and dismantle public education in New Mexico."

Educational unions have opposed many of the governor's policies, including a new teacher-evaluation system.

Contact Steve Terrell at sterrell@sfnewmexican.com Read his political blog at roundhouseroundup.com.

___ (c)2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: April 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20140417-SF-Gov-Martinez-Embarrassing-audio-tapes-stolen-0417-20140417

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

April 16, 2014 Wednesday

BioScience Lab opens at Santa Fe Business Incubator

SECTION: TODAY'S NEWS

LENGTH: 932 words

The Santa Fe Business Incubator unveiled its new BioScience Lab on Tuesday to a crowd of dignitaries that included Sen. Tom Udall (D-N.M.) and Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, (D-N.M.).

"What's happening now with the Santa Fe Incubator and the BioScience Lab is a shot of growth, a new opportunity, where it's not just experts and researchers and entrepreneurs here from Santa Fe, here from New Mexico," **Luján** said.

"It's from the surrounding states, from cities that aren't so close to us, that are looking to come here because of the investment that the Business Incubator has made with the support of the Department of Commerce and the Economic Development Administration, an investment in technology that's not readily available to everyone else."

The BioScience Lab is a state-of-the-art cell biology and molecular biology facility designed to encourage, attract and support life science companies in the biotech sector. The lab's specialized

equipment includes bio-safety cabinets, ultra low temperature freezers, an ultracentrifuge, inverted fluorescence microscope and a real-time PCR system.

Companies will be able to access the facility on a short-term basis, eliminating the need to invest startup capital in expensive equipment.

Pooling resources is one of the incubator's founding principles. Since opening its doors in 1997, SFBI has spawned 125 businesses, 900 high-paying jobs and more than $100 million in revenues.

Udall praised the enterprise's accomplishments.

"This is an incredible model. It's a public/private partnership model. And for over 25 years it's been working with our national laboratories, with our universities, supporting new entrepreneurs and helping grow our economy," Udall said, vowing to use his position on the appropriations committee to support models such as this.

"This is the kind of thing we're going to have to invest in. We're going to have to support to have the economic growth we need."

New Mexico's entire congressional delegation signed a letter urging the U.S. Economic Development Administration to support the BioScience Lab project, which was awarded a $1.25 million EDA grant.

EDA Regional Director Pedro Garza, whom Udall called "the money," attended the opening.

"I read somewhere that your frame of reference should not be the past. Your frame of reference should be the future, and moving forward. And I think this BioScience Lab, their frame of reference is the future, not the past," Garza said.

Garza spoke fondly of this project and others the EDA has funded in New Mexico.

"These are the EDA's children," Garza said. "We raised them, and they grew up to be good kids, and they're hugely successful and we're very proud of them."

Los Alamos National Laboratory was also acknowledged for its role in the startup. SFBI President and CEO Marie Longserre announced that the last piece of equipment on their wish list, a flow cytometer, had been purchased with the help of a $10,000 grant from LANL.

The cytometer is an outgrowth of technology developed over four decades at LANL.

"The acoustic cytometer is our second most successful spinout from Los Alamos in the area of bioscience," said Duncan McBranch, LANL's chief technology officer. "The first most successful was the Human Genome Project, and most people don't realize that came from Los Alamos."

The cytometer also represents another important aspect of SFBI and the BioScience Lab's mission: tech transfer from the national laboratories and universities to the commercial market.

In a press release about the purchase, David Pesiri, leader of the Richard P. Feynman Center for Innovation (FCI), the laboratory's technology transfer organization, said,

"It's fitting that the technology is coming back home to help boost the high-tech economy in the region. Not only did flow cytometers revolutionize the Human Genome Project, but this technology from the national laboratories is saving lives and delivering value to the marketplace."

Sales for the flow cytometer surpassed $30 million in sales in the past five years.

"It's going to be one of the top instruments in the biotechnology industry," McBranch said.

Acoustic Cytometry, the company producing the flow cytometer, had its startup at SFBI 16 years ago.

Brian McGlynn, President and CEO of BioDirections, the lab's first client, was also on hand.

BioDirections will use the lab's facilities in its quest to develop a low cost, portable, rapid point-of-care diagnostic device to screen for mild traumatic brain injury.

"The collaborator I was already working with had found his start here, and then you put in this magnificent lab..." McGlynn said. "And, quite honestly, when you're dealing with biological and some of the processes, that lab becomes something that most private companies cannot afford. You can't put those pieces together.

"The work we're going to do here will allow us to launch next year, and there are a lot of lives that are going to be saved."

Both Udall and **Luján** stressed the role the BioScience Lab will play in technology transfer for commercial development.

If passed, Udall's Accelerating Technology Transfer to Advance Innovation for the Nation (ATTAIN) Act would facilitate that process.

"There's an inherent benefit from transferring this technology and opening up opportunities with our businesses and engineers, and giving them a path forward to work with entrepreneurs, making sure that business practice is going to embrace the brightest and best of what we have here in New Mexico," **Luján** said.

"This is critically important. This is an example of what happens when partnerships come together."

LOAD-DATE: April 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: Sen. Tom Udall (D-N.M.) was on hand for the launch of the BioScience Lab at the Santa Fe Business Incubator. Los Alamos National Laboratory Chief Technology Officer Duncan McBranch explains the importance of a a critical piece of equipment called a flow cytometer that LANL helped purchase for the BioScience Lab. The science of cytometry was first developed at LANL.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Carlsbad Current-Argus (New Mexico)

April 13, 2014 Sunday

Congress: How the NM delegation voted

BYLINE: Carlsbad Current-Argus

SECTION: NEWS

LENGTH: 209 words

The voting record for New Mexico's congressional delegation for April 6-12.

U.S. House

HR 1872 Budget and Accounting Transparency Act (Passed 230-165) Steve Pearce yes, **Ben Ray Lujan** no, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham no.

HR 1871 Baseline Reform Act (Passed 230-185) Pearce yes, **Lujan** no, **Lujan** Grisham no.

H CON RES 96 Establishing the budget for the United States government for fiscal year 2015 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2016 through 2024. (Passed 219-205) Pearce yes, **Lujan** no, **Lujan** Grisham no.

U.S. SENATE

HR 3979 A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. (Passed 59-38) Martin Heinrich yes, Tom Udall yes.

PN 1074 Confirmation Neil Gregory Kornze, of Nevada, to be director of the Bureau of Land Management. (Confirmed 71-28) Heinrich yes, Udall yes.

S 2199 A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes cloture motion. (Failed 53-44 three-fifths majority needed) Heinrich yes, Udall yes.

LOAD-DATE: April 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Carlsbad Current-Argus, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

183 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Carlsbad Current-Argus (New Mexico)

April 12, 2014 Saturday

Merilee Dannemann: Grisham and gridlock

BYLINE: By Merilee Dannemann Triple Spaced Again

SECTION: OPINION

LENGTH: 644 words

This could be the worst time in all its history to be a member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

More than half of the House's time is spent wasted not on the substance of issues but on wrangling about procedural matters, said Democratic Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, speaking last week to a hometown audience of supporters. Very little real work is getting done, and summer recess is coming up soon.

Like every other member of the U.S. House, Grisham will be home this summer campaigning for re-election as will New Mexico's other members of the U.S. House of Representatives, Democrat **Ben Ray Lujan** and Republican Steve Pearce. The Washington pundits have ranked all of New Mexico's districts as safe seats with the incumbents highly favored to win re-election. But Grisham takes nothing for granted. Because of national interest in our governor's race, she's assuming the state will be bombarded with big national Republican money.

Calling Grisham a bundle of energy is probably clichc by now. It's an apt description for a woman who is short, bouncy and so energetic she could be speaking from a trampoline. I can imagine her striding down hallways in the Capitol and cornering adversarial members twice her size.

She explains the term "regular order." It means the normal rules of procedure under which bills are supposed to be debated and voted upon. The House is not doing anything under regular order these days, she says. All bills are processed under special orders. Only Republican bills get to the floor for a vote, and once they reach the floor, no amendments are allowed. There is no debate.

No debate means Republicans can't debate their colleagues' bills either. They have to be in lock step all the time, which means individual thought is stifled, or just as sinister that amendments have to be worked out by private, back-room deal making. Americans have spent a century fighting for open debate of legislation, but the old smoke-filled rooms are back.

Grisham describes the latest shenanigan, a vote held a few days ago. With almost no warning and very few members on the floor, the Speaker suspended the rules, called for an immediate voice vote and pronounced the bill passed. That was how the House passed the so-called "Doc Fix." Every year this postpones the effect of a law that would make drastic cuts in doctors' reimbursements under Medicare. It's what Congress does because it can't agree on a permanent solution. It's done by a trick because it couldn't be passed by regular order.

Grisham points to two sources for optimism. The first is women members of the House. She says the female members of both parties got together and worked out a compromise to end the recent federal government shutdown.

The second reason for optimism is her fellow Congressional freshmen. Grisham says the newest members are frustrated with the stalemate, meeting together and finding common ground. She expects several bipartisan jobs bills to be rolled out later this year.

I hope she's right. Right now America is ungovernable. That is unfathomably scary.

It's been said recently that you can't expect Congress to get anything done in an election year. That's every other year. And you can't expect Congress to get anything done in a non-election year because the next year will be an election year. And you can't expect Congress to get anything done in the second term of a President or the last two years of the first term of a President. What's left?

When Grisham first ran for Congress, I hoped that if she won, she'd make use of her in-depth understanding of healthcare issues. She can't do that and neither can all the other members who arrived in Washington with expertise and energy until the insane and self-destructive gridlock is broken. I hope her optimism is justified.

Contact Merilee Dannemann throughwww.triplespacedagain.com .

LOAD-DATE: April 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Carlsbad Current-Argus, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

Farmington Daily Times (New Mexico)

April 12, 2014 Saturday

Column: Grisham and gridlock

BYLINE: By Merilee Dannemann, New Mexico News Services

SECTION: OPINION

LENGTH: 658 words

This could be the worst time in all its history to be a member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

More than half of the House's time is spent wasted not on the substance of issues but on wrangling about procedural matters, said Democratic Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, speaking last week to a hometown audience of supporters. Very little real work is getting done, and summer recess is coming up soon.

Like every other member of the U.S. House, Grisham will be home this summer campaigning for re-election as will New Mexico's other members of the U.S. House of Representatives, Democrat **Ben Ray Lujan** and Republican Steve Pearce. The Washington pundits have ranked all of New Mexico's districts as safe seats with the incumbents highly favored to win re-election. But Grisham takes nothing for granted. Because of national interest in our governor's race, she's assuming the state will be bombarded with big national Republican money.

Calling Grisham a bundle of energy is probably cliché by now. It's an apt description for a woman who is short, bouncy and so energetic she could be speaking from a trampoline. I can imagine her striding down hallways in the Capitol and cornering adversarial members twice her size.

She explains the term "regular order." It means the normal rules of procedure under which bills are supposed to be debated and voted upon. The House is not doing anything under regular order these days, she says. All bills are processed under special orders. Only Republican bills get to the floor for a vote, and once they reach the floor, no amendments are allowed. There is no debate.

No debate means Republicans can't debate their colleagues' bills either. They have to be in lock step all the time, which means individual thought is stifled, or just as sinister that amendments have to be worked out by private, back-room deal making. Americans have spent a century fighting for open debate of legislation, but the old smoke-filled rooms are back.

Grisham describes the latest shenanigan, a vote held a few days ago. With almost no warning and very few members on the floor, the Speaker suspended the rules, called for an immediate voice vote and pronounced the bill passed. That was how the House passed the so-called "Doc Fix." Every year this postpones the effect of a law that would make drastic cuts in doctors' reimbursements under

Medicare. It's what Congress does because it can't agree on a permanent solution. It's done by a trick because it couldn't be passed by regular order.

Grisham points to two sources for optimism. The first is women members of the House. She says the female members of both parties got together and worked out a compromise to end the recent federal government shutdown.

The second reason for optimism is her fellow Congressional freshmen. Grisham says the newest members are frustrated with the stalemate, meeting together and finding common ground. She expects several bipartisan jobs bills to be rolled out later this year.

I hope she's right. Right now America is ungovernable. That is unfathomably scary.

It's been said recently that you can't expect Congress to get anything done in an election year. That's every other year. And you can't expect Congress to get anything done in a non-election year because the next year will be an election year. And you can't expect Congress to get anything done in the second term of a President or the last two years of the first term of a President. What's left?

When Grisham first ran for Congress, I hoped that if she won, she'd make use of her in-depth understanding of healthcare issues. She can't do that and neither can all the other members who arrived in Washington with expertise and energy until the insane and self-destructive gridlock is broken. I hope her optimism is justified.

Merilee Dannemann is an independent public policy professional in Albuquerque. Contact Merilee Dannemann throughwww.triplespacedagain.com .

LOAD-DATE: April 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Farmington Daily Times, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

185 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

April 11, 2014 Friday

Ryan budget plan panned and praised

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 347 words

The members of New Mexico's House delegation split along party lines in their assessment of a bill known as the Ryan Budget Resolution.

Rep. Steve Pearce (R-2) was in the majority voting for the bill, which passed without a single Democrat in its favor by a margin of 219 to 205.

"The United States is $17 trillion in debt. Continuing to spend and budget the way we currently do is simply unsustainable," Pearce said after Thursday's vote. "The budget passed today provides a commonsense pathway for Congress and the federal government to put our spending and nation back on a sustainable, manageable path. While it will not be easy, it is the path we must take to provide our children and grandchildren with the opportunities that we all have benefited from."

That's not how Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (D-1) saw it.

"Today, I voted against the extreme Ryan Republican budget. This budget is bad policy for New Mexico and the country," **Lujan** Grisham said in a statement. "This budget makes false promises it can't keep: Their budget never truly balances, it decimates Medicare and Medicaid and does nothing to spur job growth in the country. Instead of protecting New Mexico families, this budget gives millionaires a $200,000 tax cut, while raising taxes by $2,000 on the middle class. It harms veterans, turns Medicare into a voucher program, and makes Medicaid a block grant program that hurts patients, providers, and hospitals in New Mexico."

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D-3) also voted against the bill.

"Rather than enhance our nation's competitiveness by strengthening our investment in education and job training programs that help our workforce prepare for good jobs, the Republican budget cuts these," **Luján** said. "Rather than investing in clean energy, innovation, and manufacturing that has the potential to boost our economy and create jobs in our communities, the Republican budget goes in the opposite direction."

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: April 11, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 10, 2014

LUJAN STATEMENT ON DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE REPORT ON ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 193 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after the release of a Department of Justice report on the Albuquerque Police Department.

"The Department of Justice report details serious problems within the Albuquerque Police Department. Over the past few years, the use of deadly and excessive force, as well as non-lethal force, has shaken the community, and it is clear that there must be systemic changes. The report also highlights the importance of addressing mental illness in our communities and the need to have a thorough discussion about how we better care for those suffering from mental illness. As this process moves forward, it will be essential to have significant community involvement and input in order to restore trust in APD. I appreciate the work by the Department of Justice and their commitment to work with the Police Department and the community to see that critical reforms are implemented swiftly and effectively."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan.**house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-department-of-justice-report-on-albuquerque-police-department/

LOAD-DATE: April 11, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

187 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 10, 2014

LUJAN: HOUSE REPUBLICAN BUDGET TAKES OUR COUNTRY IN THE WRONG DIRECTION;
Democrats Offer Budget to Strengthen the Middle Class;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 449 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting against House Republicans' budget for Fiscal Year 2015.

"With this budget, House Republicans have outlined their priorities and their roadmap for our country. Unfortunately, it would take us down a path that weakens the middle class at the expense

of more tax breaks for those at the top. It cuts investments that are critical to growing our economy and giving the American people an opportunity to get ahead.

"Rather than enhance our nation's competitiveness by strengthening our investment in education and job training programs that help our workforce prepare for good jobs, the Republican budget cuts these. Rather than investing in clean energy, innovation, and manufacturing that has the potential to boost our economy and create jobs in our communities, the Republican budget goes in the opposite direction.

"When it comes to how the Republican budget treats the most vulnerable in our society, the impact is even worse. Approximately 69 percent of the cuts included in the Republican budget come from programs that assist low-income Americans. It slashes funding for nutrition programs at a time when too many New Mexico children are hungry, for Pell Grants that help students afford a higher education, and for Medicaid that provides health care for low-income families. In addition, this legislation would end Medicare as we know it by replacing it with a voucher that fails to cover the cost of health care for New Mexico's seniors. It shifts the costs onto the backs of seniors, leaving them to pay higher out-of-pocket costs.

"I believe that there is a better path forward and that we can give hard-working New Mexicans a better chance to succeed. It begins with a commitment to education at all levels so that our children can begin on the right foot while those already in the workforce can get the training they need to pursue a career in a new field that offers more opportunities. And it includes a framework to reform our broken immigration system - one of the best steps that we could take to strengthen our economy. A recent CBO report shows immigration reform would reduce our deficit by $900 billion while creating new jobs, increasing wages and expanding economic output. While I may not agree with 100 percent of each alternative Democratic budget that was offered, they all address the top priorities that can get our economy back on track and stand in stark contrast to House Republicans' budget plan."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-house-republican-budget-takes-our-country-in-the-wrong-direction/

LOAD-DATE: April 11, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

188 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

April 10, 2014 Thursday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE REPORT ON ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 180 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after the release of a Department of Justice report on the Albuquerque Police Department.

"The Department of Justice report details serious problems within the Albuquerque Police Department. Over the past few years, the use of deadly and excessive force, as well as non-lethal force, has shaken the community, and it is clear that there must be systemic changes. The report also highlights the importance of addressing mental illness in our communities and the need to have a thorough discussion about how we better care for those suffering from mental illness. As this process moves forward, it will be essential to have significant community involvement and input in order to restore trust in APD. I appreciate the work by the Department of Justice and their commitment to work with the Police Department and the community to see that critical reforms are implemented swiftly and effectively."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: April 11, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

States News Service

April 10, 2014 Thursday

LUJAN: HOUSE REPUBLICAN BUDGET TAKES OUR COUNTRY IN THE WRONG DIRECTION

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 446 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Democrats Offer Budget to Strengthen the Middle Class

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting against House Republicans' budget for Fiscal Year 2015.

"With this budget, House Republicans have outlined their priorities and their roadmap for our country. Unfortunately, it would take us down a path that weakens the middle class at the expense of more tax breaks for those at the top. It cuts investments that are critical to growing our economy and giving the American people an opportunity to get ahead.

"Rather than enhance our nation's competitiveness by strengthening our investment in education and job training programs that help our workforce prepare for good jobs, the Republican budget cuts these. Rather than investing in clean energy, innovation, and manufacturing that has the potential to boost our economy and create jobs in our communities, the Republican budget goes in the opposite direction.

"When it comes to how the Republican budget treats the most vulnerable in our society, the impact is even worse. Approximately 69 percent of the cuts included in the Republican budget come from programs that assist low-income Americans. It slashes funding for nutrition programs at a time when too many New Mexico children are hungry, for Pell Grants that help students afford a higher education, and for Medicaid that provides health care for low-income families. In addition, this legislation would end Medicare as we know it by replacing it with a voucher that fails to cover the cost of health care for New Mexico's seniors. It shifts the costs onto the backs of seniors, leaving them to pay higher out-of-pocket costs.

"I believe that there is a better path forward and that we can give hard-working New Mexicans a better chance to succeed. It begins with a commitment to education at all levels so that our children can begin on the right foot while those already in the workforce can get the training they need to pursue a career in a new field that offers more opportunities. And it includes a framework to reform our broken immigration system - one of the best steps that we could take to strengthen our economy. A recent CBO report shows immigration reform would reduce our deficit by $900 billion while creating new jobs, increasing wages and expanding economic output. While I may not agree with 100 percent of each alternative Democratic budget that was offered, they all address the top priorities that can get our economy back on track and stand in stark contrast to House Republicans' budget plan."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: April 11, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

April 10, 2014 Thursday 1:18 AM EST

Lujan: House Republican Budget Takes Our Country in the Wrong Direction

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 446 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting against House Republicans' budget for Fiscal Year 2015.

"With this budget, House Republicans have outlined their priorities and their roadmap for our country. Unfortunately, it would take us down a path that weakens the middle class at the expense of more tax breaks for those at the top. It cuts investments that are critical to growing our economy and giving the American people an opportunity to get ahead.

"Rather than enhance our nation's competitiveness by strengthening our investment in education and job training programs that help our workforce prepare for good jobs, the Republican budget cuts these. Rather than investing in clean energy, innovation, and manufacturing that has the potential to boost our economy and create jobs in our communities, the Republican budget goes in the opposite direction.

"When it comes to how the Republican budget treats the most vulnerable in our society, the impact is even worse. Approximately 69 percent of the cuts included in the Republican budget come from programs that assist low-income Americans. It slashes funding for nutrition programs at a time when too many New Mexico children are hungry, for Pell Grants that help students afford a higher education, and for Medicaid that provides health care for low-income families. In addition, this legislation would end Medicare as we know it by replacing it with a voucher that fails to cover the cost of health care for New Mexico's seniors. It shifts the costs onto the backs of seniors, leaving them to pay higher out-of-pocket costs.

"I believe that there is a better path forward and that we can give hard-working New Mexicans a better chance to succeed. It begins with a commitment to education at all levels so that our children can begin on the right foot while those already in the workforce can get the training they need to pursue a career in a new field that offers more opportunities. And it includes a framework to reform our broken immigration system - one of the best steps that we could take to strengthen our economy. A recent CBO report shows immigration reform would reduce our deficit by $900 billion while creating new jobs, increasing wages and expanding economic output. While I may not agree with 100 percent of each alternative Democratic budget that was offered, they all address the top priorities that can get our economy back on track and stand in stark contrast to House Republicans' budget plan."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140411-4700173 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: April 11, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

April 10, 2014 Thursday 1:17 AM EST

Lujan Statement on Department of Justice Report on Albuquerque Police Department

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 188 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after the release of a Department of Justice report on the Albuquerque Police Department.

"The Department of Justice report details serious problems within the Albuquerque Police Department. Over the past few years, the use of deadly and excessive force, as well as non-lethal force, has shaken the community, and it is clear that there must be systemic changes. The report also highlights the importance of addressing mental illness in our communities and the need to have a thorough discussion about how we better care for those suffering from mental illness. As this process moves forward, it will be essential to have significant community involvement and input in order to restore trust in APD. I appreciate the work by the Department of Justice and their commitment to work with the Police Department and the community to see that critical reforms are implemented swiftly and effectively."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140411-4700169 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: April 11, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 10, 2014 Thursday

Washington: ADDITIONAL SPONSORS -- (House of Representatives - April 09, 2014)

LENGTH: 1204 words

DATELINE: Washington

The Library of Congress, The Government of USA has issued the following news release:

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 10: Mr. Womack and Mr. Webster of Florida.

H.R. 12: Ms. Clark of Massachusetts.

H.R. 24: Mr. Gary G. Miller of California and Ms. Herrera Beutler.

H.R. 100: Mr. Swalwell of California.

H.R. 139: Mr. Lipinski and Mr. Engel.

H.R. 270: Mr. Moran and Mr. Gutiérrez.

H.R. 312: Mr. Delaney.

H.R. 352: Mr. Farenthold, Mr. Ribble, Mr. Huizenga of Michigan, Mr. Poe of Texas, and Mr. Yoho.

H.R. 389: Mr. Griffith of Virginia.

H.R. 498: Mr. LoBiondo and Mr. Reichert.

H.R. 543: Mr. Castro of Texas.

H.R. 578: Mrs. Blackburn.

H.R. 647: Mr. Frelinghuysen and Ms. Gabbard.

H.R. 794: Mr. Thompson of California, Mr. Stivers, Mr. Bishop of New York, Mr. Gene Green of Texas, Ms. Bordallo, and Ms. Norton.

H.R. 808: Mr. Ellison.

H.R. 921: Mr. Tierney, Ms. Shea-Porter, and Mr. Cassidy.

H.R. 963: Mr. David Scott of Georgia, Mr. Waxman, and Mr. Tonko.

H.R. 988: Mr. Cramer.

H.R. 1020: Mr. Kennedy.

H.R. 1037: Ms. Shea-Porter.

H.R. 1072: Mr. Mulvaney.

H.R. 1074: Mr. Shimkus, Mr. Wilson of South Carolina, Mr. Coble, Ms. Velázquez, Mr. Holding, and Mr. Wenstrup.

H.R. 1078: Mr. Rohrabacher.

H.R. 1129: Mr. Deutch.

H.R. 1199: Mr. Owens.

H.R. 1209: Ms. Hanabusa.

H.R. 1226: Mr. Mulvaney.

H.R. 1286: Ms. Kuster.

H.R. 1466: Mr. Sires.

H.R. 1507: Mr. Doyle, Mr. Reed, and Ms. Velázquez.

H.R. 1528: Mrs. Capps.

H.R. 1563: Mr. Walz, Mr. Garcia, Mr. Grayson, Mrs. Capps, Mr. Kennedy, and Mr. Jolly.

H.R. 1734: Mr. Larsen of Washington.

H.R. 1755: Mr. Coffman.

H.R. 1812: Mr. Courtney, Mr. David Scott of Georgia, Mr. Quigley, Ms. Gabbard, Mr. Farenthold, and Mr. Garamendi.

H.R. 1830: Mr. Gingrey of Georgia.

H.R. 1852: Mrs. Noem.

H.R. 1877: Mr. McGovern.

H.R. 1907: Mr. Peters of California, and Ms. Brownley of California.

H.R. 2028: Mr. Peters of California.

H.R. 2144: Mrs. McMorris Rodgers.

H.R. 2146: Mr. Rush, Mr. Ruppersberger, Mr. Cummings, Ms. Norton, Mr. Huffman, Mr. **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico, and Mr. Richmond.

H.R. 2305: Mr. LoBiondo.

H.R. 2415: Mr. Vela.

H.R. 2452: Ms. Edwards, Mr. Vargas, and Mrs. Davis of California.

H.R. 2548: Mr. Courtney, Mr. Gene Green of Texas, Mr. Lowenthal, and Mr. Langevin.

H.R. 2663: Mr. Kilmer and Mr. Poe of Texas.

H.R. 2672: Mr. Welch.

H.R. 2692: Mr. Pascrell.

H.R. 2741: Mr. Smith of Nebraska.

H.R. 2780: Mr. Matheson.

H.R. 2805: Mr. Jones.

H.R. 2939: Mr. Smith of New Jersey, Mr. Woodall, and Mr. Yarmuth.

H.R. 2945: Mr. Loebsack.

H.R. 3040: Mr. Larsen of Washington.

H.R. 3112: Mr. McGovern.

H.R. 3135: Mr. Larsen of Washington.

H.R. 3371: Mr. Farenthold.

H.R. 3374: Mr. Pocan.

H.R. 3377: Mrs. Bachmann and Mr. Hudson.

H.R. 3410: Mr. Walberg.

H.R. 3461: Mr. Sires.

H.R. 3471: Mr. Thompson of California.

H.R. 3482: Mr. Schock.

H.R. 3505: Mr. Sensenbrenner, Mr. Quigley, and Mr. Tiberi.

H.R. 3530: Mr. Latta.

H.R. 3544: Ms. Schakowsky and Mr. Turner.

H.R. 3580: Mr. Thompson of California and Ms. Castor of Florida.

H.R. 3610: Ms. Clarke of New York, Mr. Ellison and Mr. Farenthold.

H.R. 3655: Mr. Johnson of Ohio.

H.R. 3658: Mr. Roskam, Mr. Upton, Mr. McHenry, Mr. Dent, Mr. McCarthy of California, Mr. Wittman, Mr. Jordan, Mr. Cooper, Mr. Marino, Mr. King of Iowa, Mr. Duffy, Mr. Walden, Mr. Sean Patrick Maloney of New York, Mr. Graves of Georgia, Mrs. Lowey, and Mr. Visclosky.

H.R. 3712: Ms. Kuster and Ms. Hahn.

H.R. 3717: Mr. Diaz-Balart and Ms. Sinema.

H.R. 3723: Mr. Schock and Mr. Honda.

H.R. 3836: Mr. Jones, Mr. Connolly, and Mr. David Scott of Georgia.

H.R. 3852: Mr. Holt.

H.R. 3896: Mr. Deutch.

H.R. 3963: Mr. Tonko.

H.R. 3991: Mr. O'Rourke.

H.R. 3992: Ms. Velázquez, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Serrano, Mr. Nunes, and Mr. Rohrabacher.

H.R. 4006: Mr. Nugent.

H.R. 4069: Mrs. Ellmers.

H.R. 4079: Mr. Griffin of Arkansas, Mr. Cohen, and Mr. Roe of Tennessee.

H.R. 4104: Mr. Vargas.

H.R. 4120: Mr. Pascrell.

H.R. 4143: Mr. Peterson.

H.R. 4157: Mr. Walberg.

H.R. 4178: Mr. Ruiz.

H.R. 4188: Mr. Schiff and Ms. Jackson Lee.

H.R. 4217: Mr. Crenshaw, Mr. Swalwell of California, Mr. Vela, Mr. Veasey, and Mr. Yoho.

H.R. 4225: Mr. Boustany, Mr. Farenthold, Mr. McHenry, Mr. Frelinghuysen, Mrs. Brooks of Indiana, Mr. Holding, Mr. Smith of Missouri, and Mr. Yoho.

H.R. 4234: Mr. Cleaver, Ms. Chu, and Mr. O'Rourke.

H.R. 4270: Mr. Campbell.

H.R. 4284: Mr. Thornberry and Mr. McCaul.

H.R. 4299: Mr. Gingrey of Georgia and Mr. Griffith of Virginia.

H.R. 4304: Mr. Poe of Texas, Mr. Collins of New York, Mr. McClintock, and Mr. Stutzman.

H.R. 4305: Mr. Cramer, Mr. Perry, and Mrs. Capito.

H.R. 4310: Mr. Weber of Texas.

H.R. 4317: Mr. Lucas, Mr. Thornberry, and Mr. Walden.

H.R. 4325: Mrs. Capps and Ms. Roybal-Allard.

H.R. 4336: Mr. Ellison.

H.R. 4342: Mr. Farenthold, Mr. Poe of Texas, and Mr. McCaul.

H.R. 4347: Mr. Nugent.

H.R. 4351: Mr. Griffin of Arkansas, Mr. David Scott of Georgia, Mr. Danny K. Davis of Illinois, Mr. Conaway, Mr. Stockman, Mr. Franks of Arizona, Mr. King of New York, Mr. McGovern, Ms. Matsui, Ms. Moore, and Ms. Jackson Lee.

H.R. 4357: Mr. Johnson of Ohio, Mr. Gohmert, Mr. Brady of Texas, and Mr. Cotton.

H.R. 4364: Ms. Eshoo.

H.R. 4382: Mr. Lankford, Mrs. Lummis, Mr. Weber of Texas, Mr. Paulsen, Mr. Yoho, and Mr. DeSantis.

H.R. 4414: Mrs. Black.

H.R. 4415: Mr. Bishop of Georgia, Ms. Brown of Florida, Ms. Brownley of California, Mrs. Bustos, Mr. Butterfield, Mr. Capuano, Mr. Cárdenas, Mr. Carney, Mr. Cartwright, Mr. Cicilline, Ms. Clark of Massachusetts, Ms. Clarke of New York, Mr. Clay, Mr. Conyers, Mr. Costa, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Crowley, Mr. Danny K. Davis of Illinois, Ms. DeGette, Mr. Dingell, Ms. Edwards, Mr. Ellison, Mr. Enyart, Mr. Fattah, Ms. Fudge, Ms. Gabbard, Mr. Garamendi, Mr. Al Green of Texas, Ms. Hahn, Mr. Higgins, Mr. Holt, Mr. Huffman, Mr. Johnson of Georgia, Ms. Kelly of Illinois, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Kind, Mr. Larsen of Washington, Ms. Lee of California, Mr. Levin, Mr. Lowenthal, Mrs. Lowey, Ms. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham of New Mexico, Mr. **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico, Mr. McGovern, Mr. Michaud, Mr. George Miller of California, Ms. Norton, Mr. O'Rourke, Mr. Pallone, Mr. Pascrell, Mr. Peters of Michigan, Ms. Pingree of Maine, Mr. Price of North Carolina, Mr. Rangel, Mr. Ryan of Ohio, Ms. Schakowsky, Mr. Schneider, Mr. Serrano, Mr. Sires, Ms. Slaughter, Mr. Smith of Washington, Mr. Swalwell of California, Mr. Takano, Ms. Titus, Mr. Tonko, Ms. Tsongas, Mr. Van Hollen, Mr. Vargas, Mr. Veasey, Mr. Vela, Ms. Wasserman Schultz, Mr. Waxman, and Mr. Yarmuth.

H. Con. Res. 27: Mrs. Christensen.

H. Con. Res. 86: Mr. Westmoreland and Mr. Coble.

H. Res. 169: Mr. Meeks, Ms. Shea-Porter, Mr. Ribble, Mr. Veasey, Ms. Chu, Mr. Coble, Mr. Rush, and Mr. Jeffries.

H. Res. 190: Mr. Blumenauer, Ms. Clarke of New York, and Mr. Waxman.

H. Res. 417: Ms. Lee of California and Mr. Holt.

H. Res. 418: Mr. Lewis and Mr. Nugent.

H. Res. 456: Mr. Long.

H. Res. 503: Mr. Ellison.

H. Res. 519: Ms. Lofgren.

H. Res. 525: Mr. Farr, Mr. Pocan, Mr. Larsen of Washington, Mr. Farenthold, and Mr. Lowenthal.

H. Res. 527: Ms. Kelly of Illinois and Ms. Eddie Bernice Johnson of Texas.

H. Res. 545: Mr. Peterson.

H. Res. 549: Mr. Carter.

For more information please visit: http://thomas.loc.gov

LOAD-DATE: April 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 8, 2014

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS EQUAL PAY DAY AND IMPORTANCE OF PASSING PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted Equal Pay Day and the importance of taking steps to close the wage gap that still exists between men and women - including passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act. Equal Pay Day symbolizes when, more than three months into the year, women's wages finally catch up to what men were paid the previous year. **Lujan** is a cosponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act, legislation that strengthens and closes loopholes in the Equal Pay Act that was signed into law nearly 51 years ago.

"Equal pay for equal work is a principal that we should all support and one that we should all strive to achieve. However, nationwide, women today only early 77 cents for every dollar earned by men, and in New Mexico women make 80 percent of what men make," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Ensuring women earn equal pay is not just a women's issue, but a family issue. When a woman brings home less money for the same work, it means less for the essential needs of her family - groceries, rent, child care, and more. Passing the Paycheck Fairness Act would take an important step toward closing this gap."

Even when education, industry, and hours are taken into account, there remains a wage gap between men and women. A report by the American Association of University Women found that - compared to men with the same major who are working full time in the same occupation - women make 7 percent less one year out of college. Hispanic women face one of the largest wage gaps, earning on average only 53 cents for every dollar earned by white, non-Hispanic men.

The Paycheck Fairness Act protects employees from retaliation if they share their wages or ask about employers' wage practices, implements stronger deterrents to prevent discrimination in the first place, and provides effective remedies to women who are not being paid equal pay for equal work.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-highlights-equal-pay-day-and-importance-of-passing-paycheck-fairness-act/

LOAD-DATE: April 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

April 8, 2014 Tuesday

Grisham and gridlock

BYLINE: Merilee Dannemann

SECTION: COLUMNS

LENGTH: 647 words

This could be the worst time in all its history to be a member of the United States House of Representatives.

More than half of the House's time is spent - wasted - not on the substance of issues, but on wrangling about procedural matters, said Democratic Congresswoman Michelle **Luján** Grisham, speaking last week to a hometown audience of supporters. Very little real work is getting done, and summer recess is coming up soon.

Like every other member of the U.S. House, Grisham will be home this summer campaigning for re-election - as will New Mexico's other members of the U.S. House of Representatives, Democrat **Ben Ray Luján** and Republican Steve Pearce. The Washington pundits have ranked all of New Mexico's districts as safe seats with the incumbents highly favored to win re-election. But Grisham takes nothing for granted. Because of national interest in our governor's race, she's assuming the state will be bombarded with big national Republican money.

Calling Grisham a bundle of energy is probably cliché by now. It's an apt description for a woman who is short, bouncy and so energetic she could be speaking from a trampoline. I can imagine her striding down hallways in the Capitol and cornering adversarial members twice her size.

She explains the term "regular order." It means the normal rules of procedure under which bills are supposed to be debated and voted upon. The House is not doing anything under regular order these days, she says. All bills are processed under special orders. Only Republican bills get to the floor for a vote, and once they reach the floor, no amendments are allowed. There is no debate.

No debate means Republicans can't debate their colleagues' bills either. They have to be in lock step all the time, which means individual thought is stifled, or - just as sinister - that amendments have to be worked out by private, back-room deal making. Americans have spent a century fighting for open debate of legislation, but the old smoke-filled rooms are back.

Grisham describes the latest shenanigan, a vote held a few days ago. With almost no warning and very few members on the floor, the Speaker suspended the rules, called for an immediate voice vote and pronounced the bill passed. That was how the House passed the so-called "Doc Fix." Every year this postpones the effect of a law that would make drastic cuts in doctors' reimbursements under Medicare. It's what Congress does because it can't agree on a permanent solution. It's done by a trick because it couldn't be passed by regular order.

Grisham points to two sources for optimism. The first is women members of the House. She says the female members of both parties got together and worked out a compromise to end the recent federal government shutdown.

The second reason for optimism is her fellow Congressional freshmen. Grisham says the newest members are frustrated with the stalemate, meeting together and finding common ground. She expects several bipartisan jobs bills to be rolled out later this year.

I hope she's right. Right now America is ungovernable. That is unfathomably scary.

It's been said recently that you can't expect Congress to get anything done in an election year. That's every other year. And you can't expect Congress to get anything done in a non-election year because the next year will be an election year. And you can't expect Congress to get anything done in the second term of a President or the last two years of the first term of a President. What's left?

When Grisham first ran for Congress, I hoped that if she won, she'd make use of her in-depth understanding of healthcare issues. She can't do that - and neither can all the other members who arrived in Washington with expertise and energy - until the insane and self-destructive gridlock is broken. I hope her optimism is justified.

Contact Merilee Dannemann through triplespacedagain.com.

LOAD-DATE: April 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

States News Service

April 8, 2014 Tuesday

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS EQUAL PAY DAY AND IMPORTANCE OF PASSING PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 328 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted Equal Pay Day and the importance of taking steps to close the wage gap that still exists between men and women - including passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act. Equal Pay Day symbolizes when, more than three months into the year, women's wages finally catch up to what men were paid the previous year. **Lujan** is a cosponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act, legislation that strengthens and closes loopholes in the Equal Pay Act that was signed into law nearly 51 years ago.

"Equal pay for equal work is a principal that we should all support and one that we should all strive to achieve. However, nationwide, women today only early 77 cents for every dollar earned by men, and

in New Mexico women make 80 percent of what men make," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Ensuring women earn equal pay is not just a women's issue, but a family issue. When a woman brings home less money for the same work, it means less for the essential needs of her family - groceries, rent, child care, and more. Passing the Paycheck Fairness Act would take an important step toward closing this gap."

Even when education, industry, and hours are taken into account, there remains a wage gap between men and women. A report by the American Association of University Women found that - compared to men with the same major who are working full time in the same occupation - women make 7 percent less one year out of college. Hispanic women face one of the largest wage gaps, earning on average only 53 cents for every dollar earned by white, non-Hispanic men.

The Paycheck Fairness Act protects employees from retaliation if they share their wages or ask about employers' wage practices, implements stronger deterrents to prevent discrimination in the first place, and provides effective remedies to women who are not being paid equal pay for equal work.

LOAD-DATE: April 11, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

196 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

April 8, 2014 Tuesday 10:51 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: Congressman Ben Ray Lujan: Time for House to Act on Unemployment Benefits Extension

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 298 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District again called on House Republican leaders to take action on an extension of unemployment insurance now that the Senate has passed legislation to extend this critical safety net. Yesterday, by a vote of 59 to 38, the Senate passed a bill extending unemployment insurance for five months. The Senate bill would assist 14,100 people in New Mexico.

"During this difficult economic time, many friends and neighbors throughout New Mexico have struggled to find work. Unemployment insurance should be there to help them weather these tough times and make end meet while they continue to look for employment," Congressman **Lujan** said. "For more than three months, I have called for action to extend unemployment insurance that helps families pay the rent and put food on the table. Time and again these calls have fallen on deaf ears

in the Republican-led House. Now that the Senate has passed legislation to extend unemployment insurance, there is no excuse for House Republicans to continue to stand on the sidelines."

The House has failed to act on this issue since unemployment insurance began expiring for long-term unemployed Americans at the end of December. Since that time, 72,000 Americans a week have seen this important lifeline disappear. Across the country, nearly 3 million Americans have lost these benefits, including more than 9,700 people in New Mexico. **Lujan** has repeatedly called for a vote in the House to extend unemployment insurance, and last month he signed onto a discharge petition to try to force a vote on legislation that includes an extension through the end of the year.

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage12bkp-140409-30VitinMar-4696383

LOAD-DATE: April 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

April 8, 2014 Tuesday 10:43 PM EST

Lujan Highlights Equal Pay Day and Importance of Passing Paycheck Fairness Act

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 338 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted Equal Pay Day and the importance of taking steps to close the wage gap that still exists between men and women - including passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act. Equal Pay Day symbolizes when, more than three months into the year, women's wages finally catch up to what men were paid the previous year. **Lujan** is a cosponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act, legislation that strengthens and closes loopholes in the Equal Pay Act that was signed into law nearly 51 years ago.

"Equal pay for equal work is a principal that we should all support and one that we should all strive to achieve. However, nationwide, women today only early 77 cents for every dollar earned by men, and in New Mexico women make 80 percent of what men make," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Ensuring women earn equal pay is not just a women's issue, but a family issue. When a woman brings home less money for the same work, it means less for the essential needs of her family - groceries, rent,

child care, and more. Passing the Paycheck Fairness Act would take an important step toward closing this gap."

Even when education, industry, and hours are taken into account, there remains a wage gap between men and women. A report by the American Association of University Women found that - compared to men with the same major who are working full time in the same occupation - women make 7 percent less one year out of college. Hispanic women face one of the largest wage gaps, earning on average only 53 cents for every dollar earned by white, non-Hispanic men.

The Paycheck Fairness Act protects employees from retaliation if they share their wages or ask about employers' wage practices, implements stronger deterrents to prevent discrimination in the first place, and provides effective remedies to women who are not being paid equal pay for equal work.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140409-4696360 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: April 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

198 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

April 8, 2014 Tuesday

New Mexico: Lujan Highlights Equal Pay Day and Importance of Passing Paycheck Fairness Act

LENGTH: 339 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted Equal Pay Day and the importance of taking steps to close the wage gap that still exists between men and women - including passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act. Equal Pay Day symbolizes when, more than three months into the year, women's wages finally catch up to what men were paid the previous year. **Luján** is a cosponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act, legislation that strengthens and closes loopholes in the Equal Pay Act that was signed into law nearly 51 years ago.

"Equal pay for equal work is a principal that we should all support and one that we should all strive to achieve. However, nationwide, women today only early 77 cents for every dollar earned by men, and

in New Mexico women make 80 percent of what men make," Congressman **Luján** said. "Ensuring women earn equal pay is not just a women's issue, but a family issue. When a woman brings home less money for the same work, it means less for the essential needs of her family - groceries, rent, child care, and more. Passing the Paycheck Fairness Act would take an important step toward closing this gap."

Even when education, industry, and hours are taken into account, there remains a wage gap between men and women. A report by the American Association of University Women found that - compared to men with the same major who are working full time in the same occupation - women make 7 percent less one year out of college. Hispanic women face one of the largest wage gaps, earning on average only 53 cents for every dollar earned by white, non-Hispanic men.

The Paycheck Fairness Act protects employees from retaliation if they share their wages or ask about employers' wage practices, implements stronger deterrents to prevent discrimination in the first place, and provides effective remedies to women who are not being paid equal pay for equal work.

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov/

LOAD-DATE: April 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

199 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

April 8, 2014 Tuesday

New Mexico: Lujan: Time for House to Act on Unemployment Benefits Extension

LENGTH: 301 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District again called on House Republican leaders to take action on an extension of unemployment insurance now that the Senate has passed legislation to extend this critical safety net. Earlier today, by a vote of 59 to 38, the Senate passed a bill extending unemployment insurance for five months. The Senate bill would assist 14,100 people in New Mexico.

"During this difficult economic time, many friends and neighbors throughout New Mexico have struggled to find work. Unemployment insurance should be there to help them weather these tough

times and make end meet while they continue to look for employment," Congressman **Luján** said. "For more than three months, I have called for action to extend unemployment insurance that helps families pay the rent and put food on the table. Time and again these calls have fallen on deaf ears in the Republican-led House. Now that the Senate has passed legislation to extend unemployment insurance, there is no excuse for House Republicans to continue to stand on the sidelines."

The House has failed to act on this issue since unemployment insurance began expiring for long-term unemployed Americans at the end of December. Since that time, 72,000 Americans a week have seen this important lifeline disappear. Across the country, nearly 3 million Americans have lost these benefits, including more than 9,700 people in New Mexico. **Luján** has repeatedly called for a vote in the House to extend unemployment insurance, and last month he signed onto a discharge petition to try to force a vote on legislation that includes an extension through the end of the year.

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov/

LOAD-DATE: April 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

200 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 7, 2014

LUJAN: TIME FOR HOUSE TO ACT ON UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS EXTENSION;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 300 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District again called on House Republican leaders to take action on an extension of unemployment insurance now that the Senate has passed legislation to extend this critical safety net. Earlier today, by a vote of 59 to 38, the Senate passed a bill extending unemployment insurance for five months. The Senate bill would assist 14,100 people in New Mexico.

"During this difficult economic time, many friends and neighbors throughout New Mexico have struggled to find work. Unemployment insurance should be there to help them weather these tough times and make end meet while they continue to look for employment," Congressman **Lujan** said. "For more than three months, I have called for action to extend unemployment insurance that helps families pay the rent and put food on the table. Time and again these calls have fallen on deaf ears in the Republican-led House. Now that the Senate has passed legislation to extend unemployment insurance, there is no excuse for House Republicans to continue to stand on the sidelines."

The House has failed to act on this issue since unemployment insurance began expiring for long-term unemployed Americans at the end of December. Since that time, 72,000 Americans a week have seen this important lifeline disappear. Across the country, nearly 3 million Americans have lost these benefits, including more than 9,700 people in New Mexico. **Lujan** has repeatedly called for a vote in the House to extend unemployment insurance, and last month he signed onto a discharge petition to try to force a vote on legislation that includes an extension through the end of the year.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-time-for-house-to-act-on-unemployment-benefits-extension/

LOAD-DATE: April 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

April 7, 2014 Monday

Fort Wingate Army Depot map shows land parcel distribution

BYLINE: Vida Volkert Staff writer eastnavajo@gallupindependent.com

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1

LENGTH: 488 words

DATELINE: CHURCHROCK

CHURCHROCK - U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N. M., has released a map of the Fort Wingate Army Depot that includes land distribution - as parcels are expected to be turned over to the Zuni and Navajo tribes.

The map shows that most of the internal parcels, including the rail classification yard, will go to the Pueblo of Zuni. The Navajo Nation is expected to receive bordering parcels with Sundance, Baahaali and Fort Wingate.

Andrew Stoddard, communications director for **Luján**, said representatives from both tribes agreed to this distribution during a meeting July 8. The terms of the official document, released by Stoddard, state: "While this document does not reflect any official action taken by either tribe or their Councils, the representatives will move forward to draft legislation in accordance with the attached document."

The document included parcel distribution.

The agreement was signed by Navajo Nation Speaker Johnny Naize, Navajo Nation Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie, Zuni. Gov. Arlen Quetawki and Fort Wingate Coordinator Darrell Tsabetsaye, of Zuni.

Luján and Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N. M., introduced H.R. 3822, the Fort Wingate Land Division Act of 2014, to Congress Jan. 8.

The act was drafted to reflect the agreement, Stoddard said.

During a public hearing on the matter in Churchrock earlier this year, Navajo tribal members from Iyanbito, Churchrock, Pinedale and Baahaali expressed their concerns and asked NN Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie to oppose the deal.

"It's not like we hate the Zuni or have any animosity. It's not that we don't want to work with the Zuni. We just don't like the split. We want the whole thing to go to Navajo," Travis King, the vice president of Iyanbito's Land Use Committee, said. "If you see the map, (the Zuni) get the existing infrastructure and the railroad spur and the entrance to the Army Depot. Who signed the document?"

King said Navajo families of sheepherders had their camps in the area before the Army took over the land in 1940. Because those families were displaced, the Navajo should be compensated now by the Army and awarded the entire property.

"Our people were pushed off this land," he said. "We just waited this long to get it back."

The Office of Contract Archeology documented the cultural landscape within the Fort Wingate Depot Activity boundaries by cultural resources surveys conducted from 1992 through 1996. According to the report, archeological sites within the property include more than 400 sites of Navajo ancestral use including residences, sweat lodges and corrals built of wood; and 300 precontact Pueblo sites, "many that are possibly ancestral to the Zuni people, and one of which (the Fenced Up Horse Canyon ruin) is a uniquely preserved example of a Chaco affiliated outlier settlement."

According to the record, some of the Navajo sites date back to the late 1700s. The Puebloan sites, on the other hand, date back to the mid 900s.

LOAD-DATE: April 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: The entrance to the Fort Wingate Army Depot stands closed. The Navajo and Zuni tribes have made little progress on coming to an agreement on how to divide the lands being given back by the federal government. Independent file photo The Fort Wingate Historical Cemetery is where many soldiers and detainees from the Spanish-American War are buried. Independent file photo

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

202 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

April 7, 2014 Monday 3:03 AM EST

Lujan: Time for House to Act on Unemployment Benefits Extension

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 299 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District again called on House Republican leaders to take action on an extension of unemployment insurance now that the Senate has passed legislation to extend this critical safety net. Earlier today, by a vote of 59 to 38, the Senate passed a bill extending unemployment insurance for five months. The Senate bill would assist 14,100 people in New Mexico.

"During this difficult economic time, many friends and neighbors throughout New Mexico have struggled to find work. Unemployment insurance should be there to help them weather these tough times and make end meet while they continue to look for employment," Congressman **Lujan** said. "For more than three months, I have called for action to extend unemployment insurance that helps families pay the rent and put food on the table. Time and again these calls have fallen on deaf ears in the Republican-led House. Now that the Senate has passed legislation to extend unemployment insurance, there is no excuse for House Republicans to continue to stand on the sidelines."

The House has failed to act on this issue since unemployment insurance began expiring for long-term unemployed Americans at the end of December. Since that time, 72,000 Americans a week have seen this important lifeline disappear. Across the country, nearly 3 million Americans have lost these benefits, including more than 9,700 people in New Mexico. **Lujan** has repeatedly called for a vote in the House to extend unemployment insurance, and last month he signed onto a discharge petition to try to force a vote on legislation that includes an extension through the end of the year.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140408-4695328 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: April 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

April 5, 2014 Saturday

Entries due for 2014 Congressional Art Competition

BYLINE: Richard Reyes Staff writer arts@gallupindependent.com

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 19

LENGTH: 591 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE

SANTA FE - Creative high school students could earn a trip to Washington and have their art work displayed in the U.S. Capitol as part of the 2014 Congressional Art Competition.

The deadline for the art competition, which is open to two-dimensional works, is 5 p.m. April 5, U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** announced in a news release. Winners from each congressional district will earn a trip to Washington for a reception and will have their entry displayed in a yearlong exhibit at the Capitol.

"New Mexico has a long and rich tradition in the arts, and the Congressional Art Competition provides young artists the opportunity to display their fine work," **Luján** stated in the news release. "Every year, I am impressed with the quality and creativity of the high school students who participate in this competition, and I am sure this year will be no different. I look forward to viewing this year's submissions."

The annual competition allows members of Congress to display the talent and creativity of their high school constituents, according to the news release. The contest is open to all high school students within the 3rd Congressional District of New Mexico, which covers the northern part of the state, including Gallup, Farmington, Thoreau and Crownpoint.

The winner will be announced at a reception May 3.

Guidelines

A photo of each piece of artwork should be submitted along with the artwork itself. **Luján's** office staff members will take a photo of the artwork if the student is unable to produce a photo for submission.

A completed 2014 Congressional Art Competition Student Information and Release Form must be submitted with each piece of artwork. The form must be signed by a parent or guardian if the student is younger than 18. The form can be found online: http://**lujan**.house.gov/uploads/2014ArtCompStudentRelease- Form. pdf

The winner does need not be present at the reception.

The top seven placing pieces of artwork will be recognized. The winning piece will be displayed in Washington. The remaining six pieces will be displayed for one year in **Luján's** district offices.

Entries should be addressed Attn: Eliza Sultan, 1611 Calle Lorca Suite A, Santa Fe, NM 87505.

The competition is open to high school students only. Exceptions may be made for schools that have grades seven through 12 on one campus.

Artwork must be two dimensional and must be no larger than 28 inches high, 28 inches wide and 4 inches deep, including the frame. The framed artwork cannot weight more than 15 pounds.

Artwork can be submitted unframed. If the piece is selected as the winner for display in Washington, it will be required to be framed and must adhere to the size guidelines. **Luján's** office will work with the winner to have the work framed.

The contest is open to paintings, drawings, two-dimensional collages, prints, mixed media, computer-generated art and photographs.

Each entry must be original in concept, design and execution and may not violate U.S. Copyright laws.

Work entered must be in the original medium - it cannot be a scanned reproduction of a painting or drawing.

Artwork will hang in the Capitol exhibition for one year and cannot be returned to students earlier. Therefore, students should submit pieces that will not need for other purposes.

Artwork must adhere to the policy of the House Office Building Commission. Exhibits depicting subjects of contemporary political controversy or a sensationalistic or gruesome nature are not allowed.

Information: 505-984-8950

Online: www.house.gov/content/educate/art_competition/

LOAD-DATE: April 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

April 5, 2014 Saturday 12:18 AM EST

Congressional Votes for New Mexico the Week of 03/28 - 04/03/2014

BYLINE: by TARGETED NEWS SERVICE, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 1548 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, April 5 -- There were three votes in the House in the week ending Thursday; there were six in the Senate. The most important House vote was to pass a bill that would define a workweek as 40 hours for the purpose of Obamacare's employer coverage mandate. The most important Senate vote was to pass a bill to patch Medicare's formula for paying doctors for their services.

In addition to roll call votes, the House also passed the Weather Forecasting Improvement Act (H.R. 2413), sponsored by Rep. Jim Bridenstine, R-Okla., to prioritize and redirect National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration resources to investment in improving weather forecasting and severe

weather prediction; the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act (H.R. 4005), sponsored by Rep. Duncan D. Hunter, R-Calif., to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal 2015 and 2016; and the Children's Hospital GME Support Reauthorization Act (S. 1557), sponsored by Sen. Robert P. Casey Jr., D-Pa., to reauthorize through 2017 a program for training graduate medical students in children's hospitals.

The Senate also passed the Green Mountain Lookout Heritage Protection Act (S. 404), sponsored by Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., to preserve the Green Mountain Lookout in the Glacier Peak Wilderness of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest in Washington.

Here's a look at how area members of Congress voted over the previous week.

HOUSE VOTES:

House Vote 1:

AID TO UKRAINE AND RUSSIA SANCTIONS: The House has concurred in the Senate amendment to the Support for the Sovereignty, Integrity, Democracy, and Economic Stability of Ukraine Act (H.R. 4152), sponsored by Rep. Harold Rogers, R-Ky. The amendment would provide $1 billion of loan guarantees for Ukraine's new government, fund democracy, governance, and civil society programs in the country, and impose sanctions and asset freezes against Russian officials. Rogers said the bill would send "a very clear message that the United States will not tolerate the Russian incursion into Ukraine, human rights abuses, or corruption." The vote, on April 1, was 378 yeas to 34 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 2:

U.S. GOVERNMENT BROADCASTS IN UKRAINE: The House has passed a bill (S. 2183), sponsored by Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., that would call for the U.S. government's Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty broadcast services to increase programming efforts in Crimea, Ukraine, and neighboring regions to counter Russian influence over the area. A supporter, Rep. Edward R. Royce, R-Calif., said the programming "is central to our effort to counter Russian aggression and to send the type of support we need for the democratic development of Ukraine." The vote, on April 1, was 399 yeas to 12 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd), Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

House Vote 3:

OBAMACARE AND THE WORKWEEK: The House has passed the Save American Workers Act (H.R. 2575), sponsored by Rep. Todd C. Young, R-Ind. The bill would define a workweek, for the purpose of the health care reform law's mandate for employers to provide health insurance for their employees, as 40 hours or more of work, replacing the current standard of 30 hours or more. Young said the 40-hour standard would help "Americans who are just trying to make ends meet. By simply repealing this provision and restoring the traditional 40-hour workweek, we can help make an America that works." An opponent of the bill, Rep. Sander M. Levin, D-Mich., said it would increase the number of uninsured Americans by half a million and add $74 billion to the deficit. The vote, on April 3, was 248 yeas to 179 nays.

YEAS: Rep. Stevan Pearce R-NM (2nd)

NAYS: Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham D-NM (1st), Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** D-NM (3rd)

SENATE VOTES:

Senate Vote 1:

APPEALS COURT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of John B. Owens to serve as a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. A supporter, Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., cited Owens' experience as an assistant U.S. attorney in California, official in the Justice Department, and more recently as a partner in the Munger, Tolles & Olson law firm. Feinstein said Owens "has a sterling background and would be an excellent circuit court judge." The vote, on March 31, was 56 yeas to 34 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 2:

MEDICARE PAYMENTS TO DOCTORS: The Senate has passed the Protecting Access to Medicare Act (H.R. 4302), sponsored by Rep. Joseph R. Pitts, R-Pa. The bill would extend by 13 months measures to avert implementation of the sustainable growth rate formula for calculating Medicare payments to physicians. A supporter, Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., said the extension would set the stage for Congress to pass a reform plan to end the sustainable growth formula. An opponent of the bill, Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., said it violated by $6 billion spending limits Congress approved in December, using budget gimmicks to offset the cost of not extending the formula. The vote, on March 31, was 64 yeas to 35 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 3:

AMENDING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS BILL: The Senate has rejected a motion to table an amendment sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid to the Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act (H.R. 3979). The amendment would change the enactment date of the bill. An opponent, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, said it was an effort by Senate Democrats to fill the amendment tree for the bill and thereby block Republican efforts to offer amendments that would create jobs and opportunity for workers. The vote to table the amendment, on April 2, was 46 yeas to 50 nays.

NAYS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 4:

DISABILITY AND UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS: The Senate has tabled an appeal of the ruling of the Senate Chair that an amendment sponsored by Sen. David Vitter, R-La., to the Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act (H.R. 3979), was not in order. The amendment would have barred individuals from receiving both unemployment insurance benefits and disability benefits at the same time. Vitter said it "would save about $1 billion over 10 years" and remedy a situation in which individuals can receive benefits from two programs intended for the fundamentally different purposes of assisting those who cannot work on a long-term basis and assisting those who are temporarily unemployed. An opponent of the amendment, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, called it a diversionary tactic intended to prevent an extension of unemployment insurance benefits. The vote to table the appeal, on April 2, was 67 yeas to 29 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 5:

THE BUDGET AND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE: The Senate has agreed to a motion to waive a budgetary point of order concerning the Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act (H.R. 3979), sponsored by Rep. Lou Barletta, R-Pa., which would extend unemployment insurance benefits for five months, retroactive to Dec. 28. A supporter of the point of order, Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., said the bill violated the Ryan-Murray spending agreement, reached

last December, in multiple ways, and used spending gimmicks that would add $5 billion to the government's debt. An opponent of the point of order, Sen. Cory Booker, D-N.J., said the bill was necessary to provide the unemployed with benefits that give them "a little bit of stability so they can do what is necessary to look for work." The vote to waive the point of order, on April 3, was 60 yeas to 36 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

Senate Vote 6:

DEBATING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS BILL: The Senate has agreed to a cloture motion to end debate on the Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act (H.R. 3979), sponsored by Rep. Lou Barletta, R-Pa., which would extend unemployment insurance benefits for five months, retroactive to Dec. 28. An opponent of ending debate, Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, said the bill would do nothing to help the long-term unemployed, and Republican senators were not being allowed to submit bill amendments that would "create circumstances under which the private sector can create more full-time jobs" and decrease the need for unemployment benefits. A supporter of ending debate, Sen. Jack Reed, D-R.I., said "to prevent this legislation from going through is to deny millions of working Americans the support they need to get through a very difficult period." The vote to end debate, on April 3, was 61 yeas to 35 nays.

YEAS: Sen. Martin Heinrich D-NM, Sen. Tom Udall D-NM

For more information about Targeted News Service, please contact Myron Struck, editor, 703/866-4708, editor@targetednews.com; for technical questions about transmission or for retransmissions, please contact Kevin Meek, kevin@targetednews.com

For more information about Targeted News Service products and services, please contact: Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service LLC, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://targetednews.com.

-1157079

LOAD-DATE: April 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

205 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

April 3, 2014 Thursday

NM Democrats vow to pursue campaign finance reform

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 438 words

Members of New Mexico's Congressional delegation said they intend to seek new legislation dealing with campaign contribution following Tuesday's Supreme Court decision in McCutcheon v. FEC that removed several restrictions.

"Americans already believe the election system has been fundamentally corrupted by big money from corporate special interests. And today, the Court has confirmed their fears in its seriously misguided decision, which makes it legal for a few wealthy individuals to flood campaigns with cash, drowning out the voices of regular voters," said Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM) in a statement.

"McCutcheon should be the breaking point that forces Washington to permanently reform the campaign finance system," Udall continued. "And today, I am again calling on the Senate to support my constitutional amendment, which would enable Congress to pass campaign finance reform legislation that withstands constitutional challenges and ensures all voters continue to have a voice in our democracy."

Udall introduced S.J. Res. 19 last June to reverse the 1976 Buckley v. Valeo decision, in which the Court held that restricting independent campaign expenditures violates the First Amendment right to free speech. Udall's constitutional amendment would explicitly authorize Congress to regulate the raising and spending of money for federal political campaigns, including independent expenditures, and allow states to regulate such spending at their level.

Sen. Martin Heinrich, in a similar statement, said he would support such an amendment.

"This deeply flawed Supreme Court decision continues down a path that equates money with speech and corporations with people," Heinrich said. "Make no mistake; decisions like this one and Citizens United erode the integrity of our political process and the public's faith in our leaders to do what's right for the American people."

From the House, Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D-3) also criticized the decision.

"Once again the Supreme Court has struck a blow to our efforts to get money out of politics, and reinforces the importance of passing comprehensive reform that limits the ability of individuals, special interest groups, and corporations to spend endless amounts of money in an effort to unduly influence elections," **Luján** said in a statement.

Luján has cosponsored bills that would mandate more disclosure of campaign contributions and supported legislation that would overturn the Citizens United court decision.

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

April 3, 2014 Thursday

Ruling criticized by NM delegation Dems; Republican Rep. Pearce says ruling upholds Constitution

BYLINE: Michael Coleman Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. A3

LENGTH: 441 words

WASHINGTON - A Supreme Court ruling Wednesday eliminating overall campaign contribution limits for individuals drew fire from Democrats in New Mexico's congressional delegation who said the decision would diminish confidence in the American political process.

Meanwhile, the delegation's lone Republican, Rep. Steve Pearce, voiced support for the decision.

Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., said he hoped the ruling would revive interest in his proposed constitutional amendment that would allow Congress to regulate money in federal campaigns, including independent expenditures, and allow states to regulate such spending at the state level.

"Americans already believe the election system has been fundamentally corrupted by big money from corporate special interests," Udall said. "Today, the court has confirmed their fears in its seriously misguided decision, which makes it legal for a few wealthy individuals to flood campaigns with cash, drowning out the voices of regular voters."

Pearce said the Supreme Court decision reflected principles set out in the Constitution.

"The Supreme Court upheld our Constitution today," Pearce said. "As has been pointed out by analysts, this decision does nothing to change the individual contribution limits. They are still in effect. I do not believe it will have an impact on individual races."

Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., called the decision "deeply flawed" and like Udall, said Congress should have authority to set "sensible limits on campaign contributions."

"This deeply flawed Supreme Court decision continues down a path that equates money with speech and corporations with people," Heinrich said. "Decisions like this one and Citizens United erode the integrity of our political process and the public's faith in our leaders to do what's right for the American people."

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., said the ruling demonstrates a need for comprehensive campaign finance reform.

"Combined with the decision in Citizens United to allow unlimited spending by special interest groups and corporations, today's ruling by the Supreme Court only serves to increase the opportunities for the richest in our country to have an outsized impact while drowning out the voices of the rest of the American people," he said.

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., said the campaign contribution system needs limits and more disclosure.

"I am deeply disappointed that the court has struck down a key safeguard of our democratic system," she said. "The court has long held that contribution limits are essential to guard against corruption and ensure that elected officials represent everyone - not just outside special interests."

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 3, 2014

LUJAN: $1 BILLION FOR URANIUM MINE CLEAN UP ON NAVAJO NATION AN IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 279 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District welcomed news today that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Justice have secured $1 billion for the cleanup of abandoned uranium mines on the Navajo Nation.

"With the scars of uranium mining still visible in communities across the Navajo Nation, this settlement provides significant resources that will help take an important step forward in the effort to clean up the land," Congressman **Lujan** said. "These funds will allow progress to be made, but it is critical that we continue our efforts to secure additional funding to address the legacy of uranium mining on the Navajo Nation. We must also not forget about those whose health and homeland was impacted by uranium mining and the need to compensate workers and their families who became sick from radiation exposure."

As a result of the settlement with Anadarko Petroleum Corp. and Kerr-McGee Corp., the EPA and Navajo Nation will use these funds to clean up contamination, including radioactive waste near communities, from approximately 50 uranium mines operated by Kerr McGee during the Cold War. This amounts to 10 percent of abandoned uranium mines on the Navajo Nation. Anadarko and Kerr McGee will pay a total of $5.15 billion to resolve fraudulent conveyance claims based on allegations the defendants sought to evade their liability for environmental contamination at toxic sites around the country, with $4.4 billion going to environmental cleanup.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-1-billion-for-uranium-mine-clean-up-on-navajo-nation-an-important-step-forward/

LOAD-DATE: April 4, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

April 3, 2014 Thursday

LUJAN: $1 BILLION FOR URANIUM MINE CLEAN UP ON NAVAJO NATION AN IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 265 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District welcomed news today that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Justice have secured $1 billion for the cleanup of abandoned uranium mines on the Navajo Nation.

"With the scars of uranium mining still visible in communities across the Navajo Nation, this settlement provides significant resources that will help take an important step forward in the effort to clean up the land," Congressman **Lujan** said. "These funds will allow progress to be made, but it is critical that we continue our efforts to secure additional funding to address the legacy of uranium mining on the Navajo Nation. We must also not forget about those whose health and homeland was impacted by uranium mining and the need to compensate workers and their families who became sick from radiation exposure."

As a result of the settlement with Anadarko Petroleum Corp. and Kerr-McGee Corp., the EPA and Navajo Nation will use these funds to clean up contamination, including radioactive waste near communities, from approximately 50 uranium mines operated by Kerr McGee during the Cold War. This amounts to 10 percent of abandoned uranium mines on the Navajo Nation. Anadarko and Kerr McGee will pay a total of $5.15 billion to resolve fraudulent conveyance claims based on allegations the defendants sought to evade their liability for environmental contamination at toxic sites around the country, with $4.4 billion going to environmental cleanup.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: April 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Albuquerque Journal: Blogs (New Mexico)

April 2, 2014 Wednesday

N.M. delegation responds to Supreme Court's campaign finance ruling

BYLINE: Michael Coleman, JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU PUBLISHED: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2, 2014 AT 3:32 PM

SECTION: INSIDE THE BELTWAY

LENGTH: 507 words

.....

A Supreme Court ruling Wednesday that eliminates overall campaign contribution limits for individuals drew fire from Democrats in New Mexico's congressional delegation who said the decision would diminish confidence in the American political process.

Meanwhile, the delegation's lone Republican - Rep. Steve Pearce - voiced support for the ruling.

Sen. Tom Udall said Wednesday he hoped the ruling would revive interest in his proposed constitutional amendment to give Congress authority to regulate money in federal political campaigns, including independent expenditures, and allow states to regulate such spending at the state level.

"Americans already believe the election system has been fundamentally corrupted by big money from corporate special interests," Udall said. "Today, the Court has confirmed their fears in its seriously misguided decision, which makes it legal for a few wealthy individuals to flood campaigns with cash, drowning out the voices of regular voters.

"Campaigns should be about the best ideas, not the biggest checkbooks," Udall added. "It's time to put elections back in the hands of American voters, and not with a tiny number of extremely wealthy people and special interests."

Pearce said the Supreme Court decision reflected principles set out in the constitution.

"The Supreme Court upheld our constitution today," Pearce said. "As has been pointed out by analysts, this decision does nothing to change the individual contribution limits. They are still in effect. I do not believe it will have an impact on individual races."

Sen. Martin Heinrich called the decision "deeply flawed" and said Congress should have authority to set "sensible limits" on campaign contributions.

"This deeply flawed Supreme Court decision continues down a path that equates money with speech and corporations with people," Heinrich said. "Decisions like this one and Citizens United erode the integrity of our political process and the public's faith in our leaders to do what's right for the American people."

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** said the ruling demonstrates a need for comprehensive campaign finance reform.

"Combined with the decision in Citizens United to allow unlimited spending by special interest groups and corporations, today's ruling by the Supreme Court only serves to increase the opportunities for the richest in our country to have an outsized impact while drowning out the voices of the rest of the American people,"**Lujan** said.

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham said the campaign contribution system needs stricter limits and more disclosure.

"I am deeply disappointed that the Court has struck down a key safeguard of our democratic system," she said. "The Court has long held that contribution limits are essential to guard against corruption and ensure that elected officials represent everyone-not just outside special interests."

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 2, 2014

LUJAN STATEMENT ON SUPREME COURT DECISION ON CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 241 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after a 5 to 4 Supreme Court ruling struck down limits on the total combined amount an individual can give to political campaigns and PACs.

"Once again the Supreme Court has struck a blow to our efforts to get money out of politics, and reinforces the importance of passing comprehensive reform that limits the ability of individuals, special interest groups, and corporations to spend endless amounts of money in an effort to unduly influence elections.

"Combined with the decision in Citizens United to allow unlimited spending by special interest groups and corporations, today's ruling by the Supreme Court only serves to increase the opportunities for the richest in our country to have an outsized impact while drowning out the voices of the rest of the American people.

"I have cosponsored the DISCLOSE Act, legislation which increases transparency so that corporations and interest groups cannot hide their donors, a Constitutional amendment to overturn the decision in Citizens United, and legislation to provide public financing of Congressional elections. I will continue my efforts to restore accountability and transparency while removing the flood of money in the electoral process."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-supreme-court-decision-on-campaign-contributions/

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

April 2, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON SUPREME COURT DECISION ON CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 230 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after a 5 to 4 Supreme Court ruling struck down limits on the total combined amount an individual can give to political campaigns and PACs.

"Once again the Supreme Court has struck a blow to our efforts to get money out of politics, and reinforces the importance of passing comprehensive reform that limits the ability of individuals, special interest groups, and corporations to spend endless amounts of money in an effort to unduly influence elections.

"Combined with the decision in Citizens United to allow unlimited spending by special interest groups and corporations, today's ruling by the Supreme Court only serves to increase the opportunities for

the richest in our country to have an outsized impact while drowning out the voices of the rest of the American people.

"I have cosponsored the DISCLOSE Act, legislation which increases transparency so that corporations and interest groups cannot hide their donors, a Constitutional amendment to overturn the decision in Citizens United, and legislation to provide public financing of Congressional elections. I will continue my efforts to restore accountability and transparency while removing the flood of money in the electoral process."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: April 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

April 2, 2014 Wednesday 3:05 AM EST

Lujan Statement on Supreme Court Decision on Campaign Contributions

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 238 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after a 5 to 4 Supreme Court ruling struck down limits on the total combined amount an individual can give to political campaigns and PACs.

"Once again the Supreme Court has struck a blow to our efforts to get money out of politics, and reinforces the importance of passing comprehensive reform that limits the ability of individuals, special interest groups, and corporations to spend endless amounts of money in an effort to unduly influence elections.

"Combined with the decision in Citizens United to allow unlimited spending by special interest groups and corporations, today's ruling by the Supreme Court only serves to increase the opportunities for the richest in our country to have an outsized impact while drowning out the voices of the rest of the American people.

"I have cosponsored the DISCLOSE Act, legislation which increases transparency so that corporations and interest groups cannot hide their donors, a Constitutional amendment to overturn the decision in

Citizens United, and legislation to provide public financing of Congressional elections. I will continue my efforts to restore accountability and transparency while removing the flood of money in the electoral process."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140403-4690056 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

213 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

April 2, 2014 Wednesday

New Mexico: Lujan Statement on Supreme Court Decision on Campaign Contributions

LENGTH: 239 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after a 5 to 4 Supreme Court ruling struck down limits on the total combined amount an individual can give to political campaigns and PACs.

"Once again the Supreme Court has struck a blow to our efforts to get money out of politics, and reinforces the importance of passing comprehensive reform that limits the ability of individuals, special interest groups, and corporations to spend endless amounts of money in an effort to unduly influence elections.

"Combined with the decision in Citizens United to allow unlimited spending by special interest groups and corporations, today's ruling by the Supreme Court only serves to increase the opportunities for the richest in our country to have an outsized impact while drowning out the voices of the rest of the American people.

"I have cosponsored the DISCLOSE Act, legislation which increases transparency so that corporations and interest groups cannot hide their donors, a Constitutional amendment to overturn the decision in Citizens United, and legislation to provide public financing of Congressional elections. I will continue

my efforts to restore accountability and transparency while removing the flood of money in the electoral process."

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov/

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 1, 2014

LUJAN STATEMENT ON HOUSE REPUBLICAN BUDGET; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 250 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today following the introduction of House Republicans' budget.

"If it weren't for the fact that this misguided Republican budget reflects that same policies as last year's budget I would think it's nothing more than a bad April Fools' prank. Sadly, House Republicans have introduced a budget plan that again makes deep cuts in areas that are so vital to economic growth - education, innovation, job training, and more. Gutting investments in scientific research, clean energy, and infrastructure will weaken our economic competitiveness.

"In addition, this budget fails to include one of the best steps that we could take to strengthen our economy - comprehensive immigration reform. A recent CBO report shows it would reduce our deficit by $900 billion while creating new jobs, increasing wages and expanding economic output.

"Finally, the House Republican budget would end Medicare as we know it by replacing it with a voucher that fails to cover the cost of health care for New Mexico's seniors. It shifts the costs on backs of seniors, leaving them to pay higher out-of-pocket costs.

"We need a budget that makes smart investments that strengthen the middle class and create greater economic opportunity for hard-working Americans. The Republican budget fails on all these accounts."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan.**house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-house-republican-budget/

LOAD-DATE: April 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

April 1, 2014

Udall, Heinrich, Lujan: Milestone Reached in Construction of Navajo-Gallup Water Project; Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 546 words

WASHINGTON - Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, and U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** welcomed news that the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation has awarded a $19.6 million construction contract to build the Tohlakai Pumping Plant, a significant milestone and the first pumping plant for the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project.

"Access to drinkable water is a basic necessity for public health and economic development, and it's intolerable that many Navajos in New Mexico still must travel miles and miles to bring back water for their families to drink, bathe and cook with every day," Udall said. "We have been working for many years to advance the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project, and this contract is a major milestone. The Tohlaki Pumping Plant will help provide groundwater from Navajo Nation wells until the overall project construction is complete. I will keep fighting as a member of the Appropriations Committee to see this investment finished."

"This investment in the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project is a key milestone toward ensuring New Mexico families have access to safe drinking water," Heinrich said. "Not only will this help provide much needed long-term water security and improve public health for the Navajo Nation, the city of Gallup, and the Jicarilla Apache Nation, but will also promote economic development across the region. I will continue to work to uphold our commitments to our Native communities and ensure they have the resources they need to thrive."

"A source of clean, safe drinking water is essential to the health and wellbeing of both the residents of a community as well as their local economy," **Lujan** said. "The Navajo-Gallup project is essential to ensure that the Navajo Nation and its local community chapters, the city of Gallup, and the Jicarilla Apache Nation have the water resources needed to provide for their people and encourage economic growth that will create new opportunities in these communities. This latest announcement represents another important step forward in the construction of this vital project."

The Navajo-Gallup project is a major component of the historic 2010 Navajo Nation Water Rights Settlement Agreement. The project will supply water to the eastern portion of the Navajo Nation, the

southwestern portion of the Jicarilla Apache Nation and the city of Gallup, serving the future water needs of approximately 250,000 people.

According to the Department of the Interior, construction of the Tohlakai Pumping Plant about eight miles north of Gallup is expected to take 26 months and create 140 direct and indirect jobs. Construction of the overall Navajo-Gallup project, which began in June 2012 and is on schedule to be finished in 2024, is expected to create over 600 jobs during that period.

The Tohlakai Pumping Plant will be used in the short term to provide groundwater from Navajo Nation wells until the overall project construction is complete, including completion of the pipeline from the San Juan River. Additional pumps will be installed to increase the total capacity to about 36.5 cfs of treated surface water from the San Juan River to Navajo communities and the cities of Gallup and Window Rock, Ariz.

Read this original document at: http://www.tomudall.senate.gov/?p=press_releaseandid=1603

LOAD-DATE: April 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

April 1, 2014 Tuesday

Navajo want gaming restricted on Fort Wingate land

BYLINE: Vida Volkert Staff writer eastnavajo@gallupindependent.com

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 445 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON - The Fort Wingate Land Division Act of 2014 is moving forward. Representatives from the Navajo Nation and the Pueblo of Zuni testified Thursday before the House Subcommittee on Indian and Alaska Native Affairs regarding the agreement both tribes made in 2013.

Andrew Stoddard, communications director for U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N. M., said witnesses on behalf of the Navajo Nation were Speaker Johnny Naize and Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie. Zuni. Gov. Arlen Quetawki represented the pueblo.

"This hearing was on legislation that was a product of a collaborative effort between the Navajo Nation and Pueblo of Zuni to resolve their differences on this longstanding issue," Stoddard stated in reply to an email inquiry Monday.

Stoddard said the effort represents a compromise between the two tribes that Yazzie, Naize, Quetawki and Fort Wingate Coordinator Darrell Tsabetsaye, of Zuni, agreed to and signed off on July 8, 2013.

"The agreement closely resembles the plan and map that negotiators and staff of the Navajo Nation, including Edmund Yazzie, presented. Moving forward, the Congressional review process will continue," Stoddard wrote. "Members of the subcommittee have a few more days to submit questions in writing for the witnesses regarding the compromise plan that is reflected in this legislation."

According to a news release issued by the Navajo Nation Washington Office, during his testimony last week, "Delegate Yazzie underscored local chapter opposition to the bill. Speaker Naize emphasized that the Navajo Nation Council has not opposed or supported the measure."

Naize suggested several changes and corrections to the bill based on community input, according to the news release. "Notably, both Speaker Naize and Delegate Yazzie emphasized the need to restrict gaming and address environmental concerns."

Luján and Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N. M., introduced H.R. 3822, the Fort Wingate Land Division Act of 2014, to Congress on Jan. 8.

The act seeks to divide approximately 21,000 acres of parceled land between the Navajo Nation and the Pueblo of Zuni that was previously used by the military to store ammunition and explosive materials.

As a result of the July 8 agreement, the Navajo Nation would receive approximately 10,000 acres and the Zuni Tribe approximately 9,000 acres of the parceled land, with the remaining 2,000 acres to remain under the U.S. Department of Defense because of high levels of contamination in the area.

During the same negotiations in Washington, representatives from the Navajo and Zuni tribes authorized **Luján**, Pearce and Rep. Don Young, of Alaska, to draft legislation concerning distribution of the land.

LOAD-DATE: April 3, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: Military bunkers line the valley at Fort Wingate as Pyramid Peak stands tall on the horizon. This view can be seen from a complex of Anasazi ruins at Fort Wingate, which was once home to several different groups of indigenous peoples. Independent file photo

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

States News Service

April 1, 2014 Tuesday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON HOUSE REPUBLICAN BUDGET

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 243 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today following the introduction of House Republicans' budget.

"If it weren't for the fact that this misguided Republican budget reflects that same policies as last year's budget I would think it's nothing more than a bad April Fools' prank. Sadly, House Republicans have introduced a budget plan that again makes deep cuts in areas that are so vital to economic growth - education, innovation, job training, and more. Gutting investments in scientific research, clean energy, and infrastructure will weaken our economic competitiveness.

"In addition, this budget fails to include one of the best steps that we could take to strengthen our economy - comprehensive immigration reform. A recent CBO report shows it would reduce our deficit by $900 billion while creating new jobs, increasing wages and expanding economic output.

"Finally, the House Republican budget would end Medicare as we know it by replacing it with a voucher that fails to cover the cost of health care for New Mexico's seniors. It shifts the costs on backs of seniors, leaving them to pay higher out-of-pocket costs.

"We need a budget that makes smart investments that strengthen the middle class and create greater economic opportunity for hard-working Americans. The Republican budget fails on all these accounts."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: April 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

April 1, 2014 Tuesday 5:05 AM EST

Lujan Statement on House Republican Budget

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 252 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today following the introduction of House Republicans' budget.

"If it weren't for the fact that this misguided Republican budget reflects that same policies as last year's budget I would think it's nothing more than a bad April Fools' prank. Sadly, House Republicans have introduced a budget plan that again makes deep cuts in areas that are so vital to economic growth - education, innovation, job training, and more. Gutting investments in scientific research, clean energy, and infrastructure will weaken our economic competitiveness.

"In addition, this budget fails to include one of the best steps that we could take to strengthen our economy - comprehensive immigration reform. A recent CBO report shows it would reduce our deficit by $900 billion while creating new jobs, increasing wages and expanding economic output.

"Finally, the House Republican budget would end Medicare as we know it by replacing it with a voucher that fails to cover the cost of health care for New Mexico's seniors. It shifts the costs on backs of seniors, leaving them to pay higher out-of-pocket costs.

"We need a budget that makes smart investments that strengthen the middle class and create greater economic opportunity for hard-working Americans. The Republican budget fails on all these accounts."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar 140402-4688741 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: April 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

April 1, 2014 Tuesday

New Mexico: Lujan Statement on House Republican Budget

LENGTH: 253 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today following the introduction of House Republicans' budget.

"If it weren't for the fact that this misguided Republican budget reflects that same policies as last year's budget I would think it's nothing more than a bad April Fools' prank. Sadly, House Republicans have introduced a budget plan that again makes deep cuts in areas that are so vital to economic growth - education, innovation, job training, and more. Gutting investments in scientific research, clean energy, and infrastructure will weaken our economic competitiveness.

"In addition, this budget fails to include one of the best steps that we could take to strengthen our economy - comprehensive immigration reform. A recent CBO report shows it would reduce our deficit by $900 billion while creating new jobs, increasing wages and expanding economic output.

"Finally, the House Republican budget would end Medicare as we know it by replacing it with a voucher that fails to cover the cost of health care for New Mexico's seniors. It shifts the costs on backs of seniors, leaving them to pay higher out-of-pocket costs.

"We need a budget that makes smart investments that strengthen the middle class and create greater economic opportunity for hard-working Americans. The Republican budget fails on all these accounts."

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov/

LOAD-DATE: April 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 31, 2014

LUJAN STATEMENT ON CESAR CHAVEZ DAY; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 189 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and First Vice Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus released the following statement today to commemorate Cesar Chavez Day.

"As we celebrate the life and legacy of Cesar Chavez, we reflect on the contributions of a true champion for equality and justice. We are reminded of the courage and dedication he displayed in leading a movement that improved the lives of so many hard-working men and women.

"Cesar Chavez fought to secure the basic rights and dignity that all workers deserve and in doing so challenged the forces of discrimination and poverty. This lifelong pursuit that is his legacy is one that we are called to continue - for the ideals he fought for are that same ones that we must continue to strive for in order to build a brighter future for our communities. His commitment to the values of justice and equality serves as example to us all, and illustrates what is possible when we unite to work in common cause for the values we hold dear."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-statement-on-cesar-chavez-day/

LOAD-DATE: April 1, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

March 31, 2014 Monday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON CESAR CHAVEZ DAY

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 184 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and First Vice Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus released the following statement today to commemorate Cesar Chavez Day.

"As we celebrate the life and legacy of Cesar Chavez, we reflect on the contributions of a true champion for equality and justice. We are reminded of the courage and dedication he displayed in leading a movement that improved the lives of so many hard-working men and women.

"Cesar Chavez fought to secure the basic rights and dignity that all workers deserve and in doing so challenged the forces of discrimination and poverty. This lifelong pursuit that is his legacy is one that we are called to continue - for the ideals he fought for are that same ones that we must continue to strive for in order to build a brighter future for our communities. His commitment to the values of justice and equality serves as example to us all, and illustrates what is possible when we unite to work in common cause for the values we hold dear."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: April 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

March 31, 2014 Monday 11:07 PM EST

Lujan Statement on Cesar Chavez Day

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 194 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and First Vice Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus released the following statement today to commemorate Cesar Chavez Day.

"As we celebrate the life and legacy of Cesar Chavez, we reflect on the contributions of a true champion for equality and justice. We are reminded of the courage and dedication he displayed in leading a movement that improved the lives of so many hard-working men and women.

"Cesar Chavez fought to secure the basic rights and dignity that all workers deserve and in doing so challenged the forces of discrimination and poverty. This lifelong pursuit that is his legacy is one that we are called to continue - for the ideals he fought for are that same ones that we must continue to strive for in order to build a brighter future for our communities. His commitment to the values of justice and equality serves as example to us all, and illustrates what is possible when we unite to work in common cause for the values we hold dear."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar 140329-mv-4685919 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: April 1, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

223 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

March 27, 2014 Thursday

Pearce co-sponsors new Border Patrol bill

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 657 words

Rep. Steve Pearce (R-2) and Rep. Beto O'Rourke (D-16) of Texas have introduced a new bill to increase oversight of the Border Patrol as part of immigration reform legislation.

The bill is known as the Border Enforcement, Accountability, Oversight, and Community Engagement Act of 2014.

"Today's bill is a direct response to the needs of our constituents, and is a resounding statement that the two parties can successfully work together on immigration reform," Pearce said in a statement. "This proposal will help bring accountability, transparency, and cooperation to border patrol efforts. This bill helps ensure proper training for all agents and officers, as well as providing mechanisms for greater interaction with the communities in which they serve and protect. Congressman O'Rourke and I continue to show that working on simple, one-step proposals this Congress can fundamentally reform our nations broken immigration system. Together, we can find the clear solutions our country and our communities need."

To read the text of the bill, click here.

While not directly addressing Pearce's bill, Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D-3) issued his own statement accusing Republicans of failing to move on a complete immigration reform package.

"Enough is enough - it is time to bring immigration reform to the House floor for a vote." **Luján** said. "There is a growing coalition - from the high tech sector to law enforcement, from the agricultural sector to the faith community - that has been calling for action on comprehensive immigration reform. The Senate has passed a comprehensive bill and House Democrats have introduced legislation and stand willing to work toward a solution. House Republicans seem to be the only ones that are unwilling to address this critical issue and pass legislation that strengthens our economy, keeps our country safer, and reflects the contributions immigrants make to communities every day. The time for action is now. And with this petition, we are demanding a vote on comprehensive reform."

Luján and Pearce also were on opposite sides in a debate over a bill that would affect how much say the federal government would have over the creation of federal monuments, such as the one being considered for the Organ Mountains.

The bill, which mandates more study before an area is declared a monument, passed in the House by a 222-201 vote.

"Monument designations must come from our local communities, not executive orders from Washington," Pearce said. "Citizens deserve a voice in the land management decisions that affect their jobs, their recreation, and their backyards. I cosponsored today's bill because it puts the power back in the hands of the people by adding a measure of accountability and transparency to the national monument designation process. Hundreds of people in Southern New Mexico stood up, and demanded that the Secretary of the Interior listen to their voice on the Organ Mountains. H.R. 1459 ensures they have a say."

Luján spoke against the bill prior to the vote.

"This issue hits close to home for me and my constituents. Last March, President Obama designated the Rio Grande del Norte in northern New Mexico as a national monument under the Antiquities Act," **Luján** said. "This was the result of years of work and the community coming together to find consensus on a path forward that respects our tradition and respects our culture. Protecting the Rio Grande del Norte had broad support and a strong coalition worked with the Administration and Secretary Salazar to show that protecting this land needed to be a top priority... This attack on the Antiquities Act is an attack on the preservation of lands that are a part of who we are, our rich history as a diverse nation, and our ability to enjoy these lands in the future."

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: March 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 27, 2014

House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Indian and Alaska Native Affairs Hearing; H.R.4002, to revoke the charter of incorporation of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma at the request of that tribe; and H.R.3822, the "Fort Wingate Land Division Act of 2014."; Testimony by Rep. Young, Don - (R-AK)

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 455 words

Today, the Committee will examine two bills of great importance to three federally recognized Indian tribes.

The first bill is H.R. 4002, sponsored by our Subcommittee colleague, Mr. Mullin at the request of his constituent, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. The bill appears to be a non-controversial technical correction relating to the tribe's charter of incorporation, and we look forward to hearing from the Chief of the Miami to explain the need for it.

The other bill, H.R. 3822, is sponsored by Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** and cosponsored by Congressman Steve Pearce. H.R. 3822 would provide an equitable division of public land in a closed Anny munitions depot known as Fort Wingate, to the Pueblo of Zuni and the Navajo Nation. The lands in question as well as significant portions ofthe Navajo reservation are located in Mr. **Lujan's** congressional district, while the Zuni reservation is in Congressman Steve Pearce's district.

H.R. 3822 is the culmination of intense negotiations between the Zuni and Navajo tribes, mediated by Congressmen **Lujan**, Pearce, and myself. Interest in dividing Fort Wingate between the tribes has a long history, but it was in the last Congress when significant strides were made toward closing a deal.

In the last Congress the Subcommittee held an oversight hearing on the status of negotiations, which at the time had resulted in an agreement between the Zuni Tribe and the President of the Navajo Nation, but not the needed endorsement of the Navajo Nation Council.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the tribes were urged in the strongest terms to reach an agreement both could support in accordance with their laws and constitutions. An undue delay in reaching a deal could have only one result: to let non-tribal individuals and entities pursue acquisition of the Fort Wingate property, which could pennanently foreclose the return oflands to which both tribes claim deep historical and cultural ties.

In reviewing the testimony, I note the Navajo Nation Council has not yet passed requisite legislation to officially endorse the bill. However, there are grounds for optimism because the remaining issues - at least as I see them -are not insunnountable.

Again, time is not on the side of the tribes. Let's hold out hope that the deal will be closed very soon. When it is achieved -and I'm confident it will be --credit is due in large part to the skill and care that Mr. **Lujan** has put into the effort as well as the persistence of Mr. Pearce to jump start negotiations when they were stalled.

The Zuni and Navajo should be proud to have these two Gentlemen as their Representatives in the House.

Read this original document at:
http://naturalresources.house.gov/UploadedFiles/YoungOpeningStatement3-27-14.pdf

LOAD-DATE: March 28, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHC

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

CQ Congressional Testimony

March 27, 2014 Thursday

INDIAN AFFAIRS BILLS; COMMITTEE: HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES; SUBCOMMITTEE: INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE AFFAIRS

SECTION: CAPITOL HILL HEARING TESTIMONY

LENGTH: 517 words

BILL NO:
Retrieve Bill Tracking Report: 113 Bill Tracking H.R. 4002
Retrieve Full Text of Bill: 113 H.R. 4002
Retrieve Bill Tracking Report: 113 Bill Tracking H.R. 3822
Retrieve Full Text of Bill: 113 H.R. 3822

TESTIMONY-BY: DON YOUNG, CHAIRMAN

AFFILIATION: SUBCOMMITTEE ON INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE AFFAIRS

Statement of Don Young Chairman Subcommittee on Indian and Alaska Native Affairs

Committee on House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Indian and Alaska Native Affairs

March 27, 2014

Today, the Committee will examine two bills of great importance to three federally recognized Indian tribes.

The first bill is H.R. 4002, sponsored by our Subcommittee colleague, Mr. Mullin at the request of his constituent, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. The bill appears to be a noncontroversial technical correction relating to the tribe's charter of incorporation, and we look forward to hearing from the Chief of the Miami to explain the need for it.

The other bill, H.R. 3822, is sponsored by Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** and cosponsored by Congressman Steve Pearce. H.R. 3822 would provide an equitable division of public land in a closed Anny munitions depot known as Fort Wingate, to the Pueblo of Zuni and the Navajo Nation. The lands in question as well as significant portions ofthe Navajo reservation are located in Mr. **Lujan's** congressional district, while the Zuni reservation is in Congressman Steve Pearce's district.

H.R. 3822 is the culmination of intense negotiations between the Zuni and Navajo tribes, mediated by Congressmen **Lujan**, Pearce, and myself. Interest in dividing Fort Wingate between the tribes has a long history, but it was in the last Congress when significant strides were made toward closing a deal.

In the last Congress the Subcommittee held an oversight hearing on the status of negotiations, which at the time had resulted in an agreement between the Zuni Tribe and the President of the Navajo Nation, but not the needed endorsement of the Navajo Nation Council.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the tribes were urged in the strongest terms to reach an agreement both could support in accordance with their laws and constitutions. An undue delay in reaching a deal could have only one result: to let non-tribal individuals and entities pursue acquisition of the Fort Wingate property, which could pennanently foreclose the return oflands to which both tribes claim deep historical and cultural ties.

In reviewing the testimony, I note the Navajo Nation Council has not yet passed requisite legislation to officially endorse the bill. However, there are grounds for optimism because the remaining issues - at least as I see them - are not insunnountable.

Again, time is not on the side of the tribes. Let's hold out hope that the deal will be closed very soon. When it is achieved - and I'm confident it will be -- credit is due in large part to the skill and care that Mr. **Lujan** has put into the effort as well as the persistence of Mr. Pearce to jump start negotiations when they were stalled.

The Zuni and Navajo should be proud to have these two Gentlemen as their Representatives in the House.

LOAD-DATE: March 28, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Congressional Testimony

Copyright 2014 Congressional Quarterly, Inc.
All Rights Reserved.

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 26, 2014

LUJAN OPPOSES ATTEMPT TO UNDERMINE ANTIQUITIES ACT AND PROTECTION OF TREASURED LANDS; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 353 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor today in opposition to H.R. 1459, legislation that undermines the Antiquities Act, one of the best tools for protecting treasured cultural, historic, and natural sites. Below are **Lujan's** remarks.

"Mr. Speaker, it is with great disappointment that I come to the floor today in opposition to this attempt by my Republican colleagues to undermine the Antiquities Act; a law that has resulted in the protection and preservation of some of our nation's most cherished lands. The Grand Canyon, Zion

National Park, the Cesar Chavez National Monument, and many more have all been protected under the Antiquities Act by presidents of both parties.

"This issue hits close to home for me and my constituents. Last March, President Obama designated the Rio Grande del Norte in northern New Mexico as a national monument under the Antiquities Act.

"This was the result of years of work and the community coming together to find consensus on a path forward that respects our tradition and respects our culture. Protecting the Rio Grande del Norte had broad support and a strong coalition worked with the Administration and Secretary Salazar to show that protecting this land needed to be a top priority.

"Whether it's for recreation, farming, or sustaining a way of life, the Rio Grande del Norte impacts all those who visit and all those who live off the sustenance it provides. It is one of the crowning jewels of our state, and if it were not for the Antiquities Act this majestic land that represents our culture and drives the local economy would not have received the protections that will ensure its vitality for future generations.

"This attack on the Antiquities Act is an attack on the preservation of lands that are a part of who we are, our rich history as a diverse nation, and our ability to enjoy these lands in the future. I urge my colleagues to vote no on this bill."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-opposes-attempt-to-undermine-antiquities-act-and-protection-of-treasured-lands/

LOAD-DATE: March 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

227 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 26, 2014

LUJAN CALLS FOR A VOTE ON COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 311 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and First Vice Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus called for a vote in the House of Representatives on comprehensive immigration reform. House Democrats have introduced a discharge petition that

would require an up or down vote on H.R. 15, a bipartisan immigration bill, once a majority of the House, 218 members, sign on to the petition. **Lujan** signed the petition this morning.

"Enough is enough - it is time to bring immigration reform to the House floor for a vote." Congressman **Lujan** said. "There is a growing coalition - from the high tech sector to law enforcement, from the agricultural sector to the faith community - that has been calling for action on comprehensive immigration reform. The Senate has passed a comprehensive bill and House Democrats have introduced legislation and stand willing to work toward a solution. House Republicans seem to be the only ones that are unwilling to address this critical issue and pass legislation that strengthens our economy, keeps our country safer, and reflects the contributions immigrants make to communities every day. The time for action is now. And with this petition, we are demanding a vote on comprehensive reform."

Lujan has been a strong voice on this issue with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and is an original cosponsor of H.R. 15, which according to a recent study by the Congressional Budget Office, would reduce the deficit by $900 billion.

"The current system is broken and families are suffering," **Lujan** added. "We cannot afford to wait any longer, and House Republicans are out of excuses for delaying action on this urgent issue. Our communities deserve a vote on the House floor."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-calls-for-a-vote-on-comprehensive-immigration-reform/

LOAD-DATE: March 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

228 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Quay County Sun (Tucumcari, New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

March 26, 2014 Wednesday

VFW 2528 welcomes veterans home

BYLINE: Steve Hansen, Quay County Sun, Tucumcari, N.M.

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 655 words

March 26--QCS Photo: Steve Hansen Ron Wilmot, field representative for U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**,D-N.M., reads a statement from Rep. **Lujan** Saturday at the Welcome Home

Veterans ceremony Saturday in Tucumcari. Looking on are, from left, Col. David Wiesner, U.S. Air Force, and State Rep. Dennis Roch, R-Logan.

When the rest of the nation declared March 22 as Welcome Home Vietnam Vets day, Tucumcari's Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2528 took it a step further.

"We decided to use this day to welcome home all veterans from all wars," said Fred Porter, president of Tucumcari's Delfinio Gonzalez post the VFW.

On Saturday, the post held ceremonies and a luncheon to welcome home two veterans of World War II, one Korean War veteran, six Vietnam vets, four Iraq war veterans and one veteran of the campaign in Afghanistan.

About 60 veterans, VFW members and guests attended the ceremony and heard two guest speakers, both colonels in the armed forces, talk about their careers and their views of military service.

Col. David Wiesner, of the U.S. Air Force, stationed at Cannon Air Force Base, Clovis, talked about his career that included duty in Germany to support the Kosovo war and supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom, the second Iraq campaign that began in 2003. He also served in Korea, as well as additional Middle East assignments.

"I got a hero's welcome," he said. "Which is not true of Vietnam veterans."

The nation, he said, learned a hard lesson with Vietnam veterans, that no matter how one feels about a particular war, the nations must always be grateful to the veterans who fought there.

Col. Timothy Paul, of the New Mexico National Guard, told the audience that one of the best ways to honor veterans is to vote, exercising in the most responsible way the freedom that U.S. armed forces have fought to maintain.

"If you don't vote," he said. "You have no choice."

He aimed that message at young people of voting age.

"What our duty is as veterans is to tell young people to get out the vote," he said.

As faulty as American democracy can seem at times," he said. "We do it better than 99 percent of the rest of the world."

He said Tucumcari "is an important part the state and nation."

Paul advised his Tucumcari audience, "Make sure your voice is heard."

He also singled out Vietnam veterans and told the audience to "say thanks to every Vietnam veteran you see."

Porter reminded the audience that Delfinio Gonzalez, in whose honor the Tucumcari VFW post is named, was the first Quay County resident killed in action in World War I. Gonzalez was killed in 1918 during World War I in France, he said.

Paul said VFW members do much more than swap war stories at a bar. They are involved with assuring that veterans use the benefits they have earned in community activities.

"Besides, most of us don't tell war stories because we don't want to remember some things," he added.

New Mexico Rep. Dennis Roch, R-Logan, cited speeches of both former President Ronald Reagan and President Barak Obama that illustrated how welcoming home veterans is a non-partisan duty.

Veterans represent citizens from all ethnic and cultural groups and all walks of life, he said, adding that it's a shame that Vietnam veterans did not receive the welcome they deserved when they came home.

Roch quoted President Obama, who said of Vietnam vets, "You were denigrated when you should have been celebrated."

Ron Wilmot, field representative for U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., said the nation must ensure that veterans receive the benefits they have earned, in addition to honoring their service.

Paul Elam, a local singer, performed the songs "God Bless the USA" and "Some Gave All."

Olana Romero sang the national anthem to help open the ceremony.

Deacon Bobby Welch opened and closed the ceremony with prayers.

___ (c)2014 the Quay County Sun (Tucumcari, N.M.) Visit the Quay County Sun (Tucumcari, N.M.) at www.qcsunonline.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: April 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20140326-QY-VFW-2528-welcomes-veterans-home-0326-20140326

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: QY

Copyright 2014 Quay County Sun

States News Service

March 26, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN OPPOSES ATTEMPT TO UNDERMINE ANTIQUITIES ACT AND PROTECTION OF TREASURED LANDS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 339 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor today in opposition to H.R. 1459, legislation that undermines the Antiquities Act, one of the best tools for protecting treasured cultural, historic, and natural sites. Below are **Lujan's** remarks.

"Mr. Speaker, it is with great disappointment that I come to the floor today in opposition to this attempt by my Republican colleagues to undermine the Antiquities Act; a law that has resulted in the protection and preservation of some of our nation's most cherished lands. The Grand Canyon, Zion National Park, the Cesar Chavez National Monument, and many more have all been protected under the Antiquities Act by presidents of both parties.

"This issue hits close to home for me and my constituents. Last March, President Obama designated the Rio Grande del Norte in northern New Mexico as a national monument under the Antiquities Act.

"This was the result of years of work and the community coming together to find consensus on a path forward that respects our tradition and respects our culture. Protecting the Rio Grande del Norte had broad support and a strong coalition worked with the Administration and Secretary Salazar to show that protecting this land needed to be a top priority.

"Whether it's for recreation, farming, or sustaining a way of life, the Rio Grande del Norte impacts all those who visit and all those who live off the sustenance it provides. It is one of the crowning jewels of our state, and if it were not for the Antiquities Act this majestic land that represents our culture and drives the local economy would not have received the protections that will ensure its vitality for future generations.

"This attack on the Antiquities Act is an attack on the preservation of lands that are a part of who we are, our rich history as a diverse nation, and our ability to enjoy these lands in the future. I urge my colleagues to vote no on this bill."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: March 26, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

States News Service

March 26, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN CALLS FOR A VOTE ON COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 301 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and First Vice Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus called for a vote in the House of Representatives on comprehensive immigration reform. House Democrats have introduced a discharge petition that would require an up or down vote on H.R. 15, a bipartisan immigration bill, once a majority of the House, 218 members, sign on to the petition. **Lujan** signed the petition this morning.

"Enough is enough - it is time to bring immigration reform to the House floor for a vote." Congressman **Lujan** said. "There is a growing coalition - from the high tech sector to law enforcement, from the agricultural sector to the faith community - that has been calling for action on comprehensive immigration reform. The Senate has passed a comprehensive bill and House Democrats have introduced legislation and stand willing to work toward a solution. House Republicans seem to be the only ones that are unwilling to address this critical issue and pass legislation that strengthens our economy, keeps our country safer, and reflects the contributions immigrants make to communities every day. The time for action is now. And with this petition, we are demanding a vote on comprehensive reform."

Lujan has been a strong voice on this issue with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and is an original cosponsor of H.R. 15, which according to a recent study by the Congressional Budget Office, would reduce the deficit by $900 billion.

"The current system is broken and families are suffering," **Lujan** added. "We cannot afford to wait any longer, and House Republicans are out of excuses for delaying action on this urgent issue. Our communities deserve a vote on the House floor."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: March 26, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

March 26, 2014 Wednesday 4:07 AM EST

Lujan Calls for a Vote on Comprehensive Immigration Reform

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 310 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and First Vice Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus called for a vote in the House of Representatives on comprehensive immigration

reform. House Democrats have introduced a discharge petition that would require an up or down vote on H.R. 15, a bipartisan immigration bill, once a majority of the House, 218 members, sign on to the petition. **Lujan** signed the petition this morning.

"Enough is enough - it is time to bring immigration reform to the House floor for a vote." Congressman **Lujan** said. "There is a growing coalition - from the high tech sector to law enforcement, from the agricultural sector to the faith community - that has been calling for action on comprehensive immigration reform. The Senate has passed a comprehensive bill and House Democrats have introduced legislation and stand willing to work toward a solution. House Republicans seem to be the only ones that are unwilling to address this critical issue and pass legislation that strengthens our economy, keeps our country safer, and reflects the contributions immigrants make to communities every day. The time for action is now. And with this petition, we are demanding a vote on comprehensive reform."

Lujan has been a strong voice on this issue with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and is an original cosponsor of H.R. 15, which according to a recent study by the Congressional Budget Office, would reduce the deficit by $900 billion.

"The current system is broken and families are suffering," **Lujan** added. "We cannot afford to wait any longer, and House Republicans are out of excuses for delaying action on this urgent issue. Our communities deserve a vote on the House floor."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140327-4681772 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: March 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

March 26, 2014 Wednesday 4:06 AM EST

Lujan Opposes Attempt to Undermine Antiquities Act and Protection of Treasured Lands

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 348 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor today in opposition to H.R. 1459, legislation that undermines the Antiquities Act, one of the best tools for protecting treasured cultural, historic, and natural sites. Below are **Lujan's** remarks.

"Mr. Speaker, it is with great disappointment that I come to the floor today in opposition to this attempt by my Republican colleagues to undermine the Antiquities Act; a law that has resulted in the protection and preservation of some of our nation's most cherished lands. The Grand Canyon, Zion National Park, the Cesar Chavez National Monument, and many more have all been protected under the Antiquities Act by presidents of both parties.

"This issue hits close to home for me and my constituents. Last March, President Obama designated the Rio Grande del Norte in northern New Mexico as a national monument under the Antiquities Act.

"This was the result of years of work and the community coming together to find consensus on a path forward that respects our tradition and respects our culture. Protecting the Rio Grande del Norte had broad support and a strong coalition worked with the Administration and Secretary Salazar to show that protecting this land needed to be a top priority.

"Whether it's for recreation, farming, or sustaining a way of life, the Rio Grande del Norte impacts all those who visit and all those who live off the sustenance it provides. It is one of the crowning jewels of our state, and if it were not for the Antiquities Act this majestic land that represents our culture and drives the local economy would not have received the protections that will ensure its vitality for future generations.

"This attack on the Antiquities Act is an attack on the preservation of lands that are a part of who we are, our rich history as a diverse nation, and our ability to enjoy these lands in the future. I urge my colleagues to vote no on this bill."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140327-4681771 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: March 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

March 26, 2014 Wednesday

New Mexico: Lujan Calls for a Vote on Comprehensive Immigration Reform

LENGTH: 311 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District and First Vice Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus called for a vote in the House of Representatives on comprehensive immigration reform. House Democrats have introduced a discharge petition that would require an up or down vote on H.R. 15, a bipartisan immigration bill, once a majority of the House, 218 members, sign on to the petition. **Luján** signed the petition this morning.

"Enough is enough - it is time to bring immigration reform to the House floor for a vote." Congressman **Luján** said. "There is a growing coalition - from the high tech sector to law enforcement, from the agricultural sector to the faith community - that has been calling for action on comprehensive immigration reform. The Senate has passed a comprehensive bill and House Democrats have introduced legislation and stand willing to work toward a solution. House Republicans seem to be the only ones that are unwilling to address this critical issue and pass legislation that strengthens our economy, keeps our country safer, and reflects the contributions immigrants make to communities every day. The time for action is now. And with this petition, we are demanding a vote on comprehensive reform."

Luján has been a strong voice on this issue with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and is an original cosponsor of H.R. 15, which according to a recent study by the Congressional Budget Office, would reduce the deficit by $900 billion.

"The current system is broken and families are suffering," **Luján** added. "We cannot afford to wait any longer, and House Republicans are out of excuses for delaying action on this urgent issue. Our communities deserve a vote on the House floor."

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov/

LOAD-DATE: March 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

March 26, 2014 Wednesday

New Mexico: Lujan Announces Congressional Art Competition for High School Students

LENGTH: 760 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced details today for this year's Congressional Art Competition. This annual competition allows members of Congress to display the talent and creativity of their high school constituents. The winning entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year. The winner will travel to Washington, D.C. for a reception honoring the national winners.

"New Mexico has a long and rich tradition in the arts and the Congressional Art Competition provides young artists the opportunity to display their fine work," Congressman **Luján** said. "Every year, I am impressed with the quality and creativity of the high school students who participate in this competition and I am sure this year will be no different. I look forward to viewing this year's submissions."

The competition is open to all high school students within the Third Congressional District of New Mexico. All entries must be submitted to **Luján**'s Santa Fe district office by Friday, April 25, 2014 at 5 p.m. The winner will be announced at a reception on Saturday, May 3.

2014 3rd Congressional District of New Mexico General Guidelines for Students

A photo of each piece of artwork should be submitted with each piece of artwork (Rep. **Luján**'s office will take a photo of the artwork if the student is unable to produce a photo for submission).
A completed 2014 Congressional Art Competition Student Information and Release Form (signed by a parent or guardian if the student is under the age of 18), must be submitted with each piece of artwork.
Winner need not be present at the reception to win.
Recognition will be given to the top seven placing pieces of artwork, with the winning piece being displayed in Washington, D.C. The remaining six pieces of artwork will be displayed for one year in the district offices of Rep. **Luján**.
Artwork must be submitted for review and judging by Friday, April 25, 2014 at 5 p.m. to the Santa Fe office of Rep. **Luján**.

Attn: Eliza Sultan
1611 Calle Lorca Suite A
Santa Fe, NM 87505
(505) 984-8950

2014 Congressional General Guidelines for Students

The competition is open to high school students only. Exception may be made for schools that have 7th through 12th grades on one campus.
Artwork must be two-dimensional.
Each piece can be no larger than 28"x28"x4" (28 inches high, 28 inches wide, and 4 inches deep), including the frame. Artwork can be submitted to Rep. **Luján**'s office unframed. If the artwork is selected as the winning piece for display in D.C., it will be required to be framed and must adhere to the size guidelines. Rep.**Luján**'s office will work with the winner to have the winning piece framed.
Framed artwork cannot weigh more than 15 lbs.
Accepted media for artwork are as follows:
o Paintings: oil, acrylics, watercolor, etc.
o Drawings: pastels, colored pencils, pencil, charcoal, ink, markers
o Collages: must be two dimensional
o Prints: lithographs, silkscreen, block prints
o Mixed Media: use of more than two mediums such as pencil, ink, watercolor, etc.
o Computer-Generated art

o Photographs
Each entry must be original in concept, design, and execution and may not violate U.S. copyright laws. Any entry that has been copied from an existing photo or image that was created by someone other than the student is a violation of the competition rules and will not be accepted.
Work entered must be in the original medium (that is, not a scanned reproduction of a painting or drawing).
Artwork will hang in the Capitol for the entire year of the exhibition and cannot be returned to the students earlier. Students should, therefore, submit artwork they will not need for other purposes.
Artwork must adhere to the policy of the House Office Building Commission. In accordance with this policy, exhibits depicting subjects of contemporary political controversy or a sensationalistic or gruesome nature are not allowed. It is necessary that all artwork be reviewed by the panel chaired by the Architect of the Capitol and any portion not in consonance with the Commission's policy will be omitted from the exhibit. The panel will make the final decision regarding the suitability of all artwork for the Congressional Art Competition exhibition in the Capitol.

# # #

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov/

LOAD-DATE: March 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

March 26, 2014 Wednesday

New Mexico: Lujan Opposes Attempt to Undermine Antiquities Act and Protection of Treasured Lands

LENGTH: 62 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor today in opposition to H.R. 1459, legislation that undermines the Antiquities Act, one of the best tools for protecting treasured cultural, historic, and natural sites.

For further information please visit: http://**lujan.**house.gov/

LOAD-DATE: March 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 25, 2014

LUJAN ANNOUNCES CONGRESSIONAL ART COMPETITION FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 743 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced details today for this year's Congressional Art Competition. This annual competition allows members of Congress to display the talent and creativity of their high school constituents. The winning entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year. The winner will travel to Washington, D.C. for a reception honoring the national winners.

"New Mexico has a long and rich tradition in the arts and the Congressional Art Competition provides young artists the opportunity to display their fine work," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Every year, I am impressed with the quality and creativity of the high school students who participate in this competition and I am sure this year will be no different. I look forward to viewing this year's submissions."

The competition is open to all high school students within the Third Congressional District of New Mexico. All entries must be submitted to **Lujan's** Santa Fe district office by Friday, April 25, 2014 at 5 p.m. The winner will be announced at a reception on Saturday, May 3.

2014 3rd Congressional District of New Mexico General Guidelines for Students

* A photo of each piece of artwork should be submitted with each piece of artwork (Rep. **Lujan's** office will take a photo of the artwork if the student is unable to produce a photo for submission).

* A completed 2014 Congressional Art Competition Student Information and Release Form (signed by a parent or guardian if the student is under the age of 18), must be submitted with each piece of artwork.

* Winner need not be present at the reception to win.

* Recognition will be given to the top seven placing pieces of artwork, with the winning piece being displayed in Washington, D.C. The remaining six pieces of artwork will be displayed for one year in the district offices of Rep. **Lujan**.

* Artwork must be submitted for review and judging by Friday, April 25, 2014 at 5 p.m. to the Santa Fe office of Rep. **Lujan**.

Attn: Eliza Sultan

1611 Calle Lorca Suite A

Santa Fe, NM 87505

(505) 984-8950

2014 Congressional General Guidelines for Students

* The competition is open to high school students only. Exception may be made for schools that have 7th through 12th grades on one campus.

* Artwork must be two-dimensional.

* Each piece can be no larger than 28"x28"x4" (28 inches high, 28 inches wide, and 4 inches deep), including the frame. Artwork can be submitted to Rep. **Lujan's** office unframed. If the artwork is selected as the winning piece for display in D.C., it will be required to be framed and must adhere to the size guidelines. Rep.**Lujan's** office will work with the winner to have the winning piece framed.

* Framed artwork cannot weigh more than 15 lbs.

* Accepted media for artwork are as follows:

o Paintings: oil, acrylics, watercolor, etc.

o Drawings: pastels, colored pencils, pencil, charcoal, ink, markers

o Collages: must be two dimensional

o Prints: lithographs, silkscreen, block prints

o Mixed Media: use of more than two mediums such as pencil, ink, watercolor, etc.

o Computer-Generated art

o Photographs

* Each entry must be original in concept, design, and execution and may not violate U.S. copyright laws. Any entry that has been copied from an existing photo or image that was created by someone other than the student is a violation of the competition rules and will not be accepted.

* Work entered must be in the original medium (that is, not a scanned reproduction of a painting or drawing).

* Artwork will hang in the Capitol for the entire year of the exhibition and cannot be returned to the students earlier. Students should, therefore, submit artwork they will not need for other purposes.

* Artwork must adhere to the policy of the House Office Building Commission. In accordance with this policy, exhibits depicting subjects of contemporary political controversy or a sensationalistic or gruesome nature are not allowed. It is necessary that all artwork be reviewed by the panel chaired

by the Architect of the Capitol and any portion not in consonance with the Commission's policy will be omitted from the exhibit. The panel will make the final decision regarding the suitability of all artwork for the Congressional Art Competition exhibition in the Capitol.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-announces-congressional-art-competition-for-high-school-students/

LOAD-DATE: March 26, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

March 25, 2014 Tuesday

Lujan announces art competition for state high school students

SECTION: TODAY'S NEWS

LENGTH: 227 words

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D-N.M.) announced details today for this year's Congressional Art Competition. This annual competition allows members of Congress to display the talent and creativity of their high school constituents.

The winning entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year. The winner will travel to Washington, D.C. for a reception honoring the national winners.

"New Mexico has a long and rich tradition in the arts and the Congressional Art Competition provides young artists the opportunity to display their fine work," **Luján** said.The competition is open to all high school students within the Third Congressional District of New Mexico. All entries must be submitted to **Luján's** Santa Fe district office by 5 p.m. April 25. The winner will be announced at a reception on May 3.

Guidelines include:

Â· A photo of each piece of artwork should be submitted with each piece of artwork (Rep. **Luján's** office will take a photo of the artwork if the student is unable to produce a photo for submission).

Â· A completed 2014 Congressional Art Competition Student Information and Release Form **lujan**.house.gov/uploads/2014%20Art%20Comp%20-%20Student%20Release%20Form.pdf

(signed by a parent or guardian if the student is under the age of 18), must be submitted with each piece of artwork.

LOAD-DATE: March 26, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

States News Service

March 25, 2014 Tuesday

LUJAN ANNOUNCES CONGRESSIONAL ART COMPETITION FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 727 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced details today for this year's Congressional Art Competition. This annual competition allows members of Congress to display the talent and creativity of their high school constituents. The winning entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year. The winner will travel to Washington, D.C. for a reception honoring the national winners.

"New Mexico has a long and rich tradition in the arts and the Congressional Art Competition provides young artists the opportunity to display their fine work," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Every year, I am impressed with the quality and creativity of the high school students who participate in this competition and I am sure this year will be no different. I look forward to viewing this year's submissions."

The competition is open to all high school students within the Third Congressional District of New Mexico. All entries must be submitted to **Lujan's** Santa Fe district office by Friday, April 25, 2014 at 5 p.m. The winner will be announced at a reception on Saturday, May 3.

2014 3rd Congressional District of New Mexico General Guidelines for Students

A photo of each piece of artwork should be submitted with each piece of artwork (Rep. **Lujan's** office will take a photo of the artwork if the student is unable to produce a photo for submission).

A completed 2014 Congressional Art Competition Student Information and Release Form (signed by a parent or guardian if the student is under the age of 18), must be submitted with each piece of artwork.

Winner need not be present at the reception to win.

Recognition will be given to the top seven placing pieces of artwork, with the winning piece being displayed in Washington, D.C. The remaining six pieces of artwork will be displayed for one year in the district offices of Rep. **Lujan**.

Artwork must be submitted for review and judging by Friday, April 25, 2014 at 5 p.m. to the Santa Fe office of Rep. **Lujan**.

Attn: Eliza Sultan

1611 Calle Lorca Suite A

Santa Fe, NM 87505

(505) 984-8950

2014 Congressional General Guidelines for Students

The competition is open to high school students only. Exception may be made for schools that have 7th through 12th grades on one campus.

Artwork must be two-dimensional.

Each piece can be no larger than 28"x28"x4" (28 inches high, 28 inches wide, and 4 inches deep), including the frame. Artwork can be submitted to Rep. **Lujan's** office unframed. If the artwork is selected as the winning piece for display in D.C., it will be required to be framed and must adhere to the size guidelines. Rep.**Lujan's** office will work with the winner to have the winning piece framed.

Framed artwork cannot weigh more than 15 lbs.

Accepted media for artwork are as follows:

o Paintings: oil, acrylics, watercolor, etc.

o Drawings: pastels, colored pencils, pencil, charcoal, ink, markers

o Collages: must be two dimensional

o Prints: lithographs, silkscreen, block prints

o Mixed Media: use of more than two mediums such as pencil, ink, watercolor, etc.

o Computer-Generated art

o Photographs

Each entry must be original in concept, design, and execution and may not violate U.S. copyright laws. Any entry that has been copied from an existing photo or image that was created by someone other than the student is a violation of the competition rules and will not be accepted.

Work entered must be in the original medium (that is, not a scanned reproduction of a painting or drawing).

Artwork will hang in the Capitol for the entire year of the exhibition and cannot be returned to the students earlier. Students should, therefore, submit artwork they will not need for other purposes.

Artwork must adhere to the policy of the House Office Building Commission. In accordance with this policy, exhibits depicting subjects of contemporary political controversy or a sensationalistic or gruesome nature are not allowed. It is necessary that all artwork be reviewed by the panel chaired by the Architect of the Capitol and any portion not in consonance with the Commission's policy will be omitted from the exhibit. The panel will make the final decision regarding the suitability of all artwork for the Congressional Art Competition exhibition in the Capitol.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: April 6, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

March 25, 2014 Tuesday 1:24 AM EST

Lujan Announces Congressional Art Competition for High School Students

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 759 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced details today for this year's Congressional Art Competition. This annual competition allows members of Congress to display the talent and creativity of their high school constituents. The winning entry from each Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year. The winner will travel to Washington, D.C. for a reception honoring the national winners.

"New Mexico has a long and rich tradition in the arts and the Congressional Art Competition provides young artists the opportunity to display their fine work," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Every year, I am impressed with the quality and creativity of the high school students who participate in this competition and I am sure this year will be no different. I look forward to viewing this year's submissions."

The competition is open to all high school students within the Third Congressional District of New Mexico. All entries must be submitted to **Lujan's** Santa Fe district office by Friday, April 25, 2014 at 5 p.m. The winner will be announced at a reception on Saturday, May 3.

2014 3rd Congressional District of New Mexico General Guidelines for Students

* A photo of each piece of artwork should be submitted with each piece of artwork (Rep. **Lujan's** office will take a photo of the artwork if the student is unable to produce a photo for submission).

* A completed 2014 Congressional Art Competition Student Information and Release Form (signed by a parent or guardian if the student is under the age of 18), must be submitted with each piece of artwork.

* Winner need not be present at the reception to win.

* Recognition will be given to the top seven placing pieces of artwork, with the winning piece being displayed in Washington, D.C. The remaining six pieces of artwork will be displayed for one year in the district offices of Rep. **Lujan**.

* Artwork must be submitted for review and judging by Friday, April 25, 2014 at 5 p.m. to the Santa Fe office of Rep. **Lujan**.

Attn: Eliza Sultan

1611 Calle Lorca Suite A

Santa Fe, NM 87505

(505) 984-8950

2014 Congressional General Guidelines for Students

* The competition is open to high school students only. Exception may be made for schools that have 7th through 12th grades on one campus.

* Artwork must be two-dimensional.

* Each piece can be no larger than 28"x28"x4" (28 inches high, 28 inches wide, and 4 inches deep), including the frame. Artwork can be submitted to Rep. **Lujan's** office unframed. If the artwork is selected as the winning piece for display in D.C., it will be required to be framed and must adhere to the size guidelines. Rep.**Lujan's** office will work with the winner to have the winning piece framed.

* Framed artwork cannot weigh more than 15 lbs.

* Accepted media for artwork are as follows:

- Paintings: oil, acrylics, watercolor, etc.

- Drawings: pastels, colored pencils, pencil, charcoal, ink, markers

- Collages: must be two dimensional

- Prints: lithographs, silkscreen, block prints

- Mixed Media: use of more than two mediums such as pencil, ink, watercolor, etc.

- Computer-Generated art

- Photographs

* Each entry must be original in concept, design, and execution and may not violate U.S. copyright laws. Any entry that has been copied from an existing photo or image that was created by someone other than the student is a violation of the competition rules and will not be accepted.

* Work entered must be in the original medium (that is, not a scanned reproduction of a painting or drawing).

* Artwork will hang in the Capitol for the entire year of the exhibition and cannot be returned to the students earlier. Students should, therefore, submit artwork they will not need for other purposes.

* Artwork must adhere to the policy of the House Office Building Commission. In accordance with this policy, exhibits depicting subjects of contemporary political controversy or a sensationalistic or gruesome nature are not allowed. It is necessary that all artwork be reviewed by the panel chaired by the Architect of the Capitol and any portion not in consonance with the Commission's policy will be omitted from the exhibit. The panel will make the final decision regarding the suitability of all artwork for the Congressional Art Competition exhibition in the Capitol.

2014 Art Competition Release Form (http://**lujan**.house.gov/uploads/2014%20Art%20Comp%20-%20Student%20Release%20Form.pdf)

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140326-4679567

LOAD-DATE: March 26, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

240 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

March 23, 2014 Sunday

DOE's neglect of its tech-transfer mandate 'unacceptable'

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. B2

LENGTH: 805 words

With New Mexico's economy in the tank, it sure would be helpful if Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories could find more ways to spin their multi-billion-dollar, cutting-edge technology into the private sector to create new jobs.

Officials at the Department of Energy, which oversees the national labs in New Mexico and around the country, have long professed a commitment to this type of technology transfer. Unfortunately, their record doesn't back up their rhetoric.

DOE's tech transfer initiatives can take different forms, but here's how one arrangement is supposed to work.

The labs license technologies developed in-house - for example, Sandia's water contaminant removal or portable gas leak detection systems - to private companies for manufacture and sale on the commercial market. The labs then get a percentage of equity in the company, with the labs' share of any proceeds used to help further their science missions.

Yet an audit by DOE's inspector general's office released last month found only two of 11 national labs even bothered to keep records of their private equity holdings.

And the two that did - Argonne and the Y2 National Security Complex - reported only negligible numbers, the audit found.

Congress, under the leadership of former Sens. Pete Domenici and Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico, passed a law in 2005 to force DOE to try harder to move its cutting-edge research and technology to the marketplace. The law required DOE to appoint a new technology transfer coordinator at its Washington headquarters to crack the whip on the labs, which are naturally more attuned to science than creating business opportunities.

For several years, the labs simply added the tech transfer job to an existing director's already significant duties. Finally, in 2010, Steven Chu, then DOE's secretary, hired Karina Edmonds to do the tech transfer job full-time. Edmonds ran with the ball for a couple of years before returning to academia. The post has been vacant since early 2013.

The 2005 law also required DOE to set aside 0.9 percent of its applied research and development budget for a technology commercialization fund.

The inspector general's audit found that not only did DOE never plan to meet the spending requirements set out in the law, but also it didn't even bother to calculate how much money it needed to divert to the program.

In 2011, the DOE's general counsel sounded an alarm that the law was being ignored, but the department's inspector general found nearly three years later that DOE personnel were still "unable to provide documentation" and had no "forward-looking approach." DOE management concurred with all of the inspector general's findings and vowed to do better.

Meanwhile, some in Congress - including a couple of New Mexicans - are once again looking at legislation to jump start DOE's sluggish tech transfer efforts.

Sen. Tom Udall and Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, both Democrats, have separate bills on this front, while Sens. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., and Chris Coons, D-Del., have teamed up on bipartisan legislation.

Earlier this month in Washington, Rubio told me that part of the problem is that the federal government - not just DOE - tends to give the private sector the cold shoulder when it comes to tech transfer.

"Innovators and job creators feel like it's an adversarial process," Rubio said. "That attitude is pervasive throughout government."

Rubio and Coons, among other things, want to bring businesses into DOE at earlier stages of research and development to help ensure more technologies are adaptable to the commercial marketplace.

Udall's legislation would compel DOE to adapt an existing public-private partnership model used by the Small Business Administration for economic development and apply it to technology transfer. The Udall bill would also require DOE to assess technology transfer work as part of its reviews of lab performance, among other things.

Now, it is virtually impossible to measure the economic impact of tech transfer from the labs to the U.S. economy.

Meanwhile, **Lujan's** bill would authorize $20 million per year for five years to cover the government's share of DOE's Cooperative Research and Development Agreements with small innovative companies. That cost is now assumed entirely by the businesses, some of which are reluctant to assume that much risk.

Of course, not everyone is keen on using tax dollars to prop up private sector investment and that could be where **Lujan's** bill runs into opposition in the Republican-controlled House.

In any case, lawmakers from both parties seem to agree that DOE makes some mind-blowing technologies. They just wish the economy could benefit more from them.

"Technology transfer is important in New Mexico and to the nation," Udall said. "And the Department's failure to perform is unacceptable."

E-mail: mcoleman@abqjournal.com

LOAD-DATE: March 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

241 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

March 22, 2014 Saturday

Neutron Center loses funding

SECTION: TODAY'S NEWS

LENGTH: 718 words

When President Barack Obama sent his FY2015 budget to Congress, it turned out to be bad news for the Manuel **Lujan** Jr. Neutron Center, which is part of the Los Alamos Neutron Science Center.

Through the past two decades, the **Lujan** Center has been operated through a partnership between the National Nuclear Security Administration and the Office of Basic Energy Sciences.

Obama's budget request cut $10 million in funding for the operational costs of the **Lujan** Center.

This is what the budget request said.

"The BES operations of the **Lujan** Neutron Scattering Center will cease and funding is requested for safe storage of facility components". For well over a decade, the **Lujan** Center at LANSCE has been

an international center of excellence and innovation for basic and applied research in neutron scattering and fundamental nuclear physics," the budget statement said.

"The **Lujan** Center provides scientific users from almost every state in the nation unique capabilities for scientific research in material science, condensed matter science, biology, nuclear science and technology. The **Lujan** Center has a distinguished record of innovation and contribution to our nation's neutron scattering capability, a significant record of accomplishment in executing research of great importance to US national security, as well as a long history of training new users in the United States. We will keep our users informed on this developing situation and the path forward."

Dr. Tyrel M. McQueen, Chair of the LANSCE User Group Executive Committee, sent a letter to employees and those involved in the various user groups.

McQueen pointed out that the Basic Energy Sciences user program in neutron scattering will be utilized at Oak Ridge National Laboratory's Spallation Neutron Source (SNS) and its High Flux Isotope Reactor (HFIR).

"At this time, Los Alamos National Laboratory, the NNSA, and the other research sponsors are assessing the implications of this disappointing decision to the other neutron scattering activities at the **Lujan** Center," McQueen wrote.

"Numerous users have already expressed dismay and concern about the pending loss of access to unique instrumentation and the negative impact to their research programs. Some have observed that capacity is insufficient at other U.S. facilities to meet both the scientific and training needs of the community. Many have noted that the decision reduces the competitiveness of the U.S. neutron scattering community and the scientific programs that rely on the unique attributes of neutrons."

The Nuclear Materials Monitor reported that lab officials fear the decision to terminate the **Lujan** Center, which came without warning to the lab, represents diminishing support for LANSCE overall.

The Obama Administration previously attempted to block funding for a refurbishment of the facility only to have Congress intervene several times and provide funding for the upgrade.

Jennifer Talhelm, a spokeswoman for Sen. Tom Udall (D-N.M.), told the trade publication that the senator would fight to fund the facility this year.

"Senator Udall is a strong supporter of the **Lujan** Neutron Scattering Center, which is important for the stockpile stewardship program and which does critical science research both for the lab and for the nation, including the production of important medical isotopes," Talhelm said, adding: "He has previously fought successfully to prevent cuts to LANSCE, and he believes this program will remain important to the nation in the in the future."

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-N.M) said in a statement, "Reductions to general science research are troubling. "Previous budgets have also called for cuts to the **Lujan** Center, and I've worked with the New Mexico delegation to restore funding and keep it operational. I will continue to advocate for the areas that help ensure our labs remain a key component in U.S. competitiveness, job creation, and national security."

According to the lab website, the 800-million-electron-volt (MeV) accelerator and its attendant facilities at Technical Area 53 have been a resource to a broad international community of scientific researchers since 1972. The Los Alamos Meson Physics Facility (LAMPF), as it was originally called, hosted about 1000 users per year to to perform medium energy physics experiments.

LOAD-DATE: March 25, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

US Official News

March 21, 2014 Friday

New Mexico: Lujan Announces $120,000 in Economic Development Funds for Eastern Plains Council of Governments

LENGTH: 245 words

DATELINE: Santa Fe

Office of Bin Ray **Lujan** has issued the following news release:

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that the Eastern Plains Council of Governments will receive $120,000 through the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to assist with efforts to increase private capital investments and job creation in the region.

"A coordinated strategy to promote growth and economic development is essential to building a brighter future for the eastside as well as fostering an environment that supports the small business community," Congressman **Luján** said. "These important federal funds will strengthen the Eastern Plains Council of Government's ability to carry out its mission of coordinating regional development in an effort to bring good jobs and new opportunities to our communities."

The Economic Development District Planning investment will support efforts to establish a comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) for the region served by the Eastern Plains Council of Governments, which includes Curry, DeBaca, Guadalupe, Harding, Quay, Roosevelt, and Union counties. The CEDS process is designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen the regional economy. Last year, the Eastern Plains Council of Government was awarded $60,000 from EDA to support its efforts.

# # #

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov/

LOAD-DATE: March 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

States News Service

March 20, 2014 Thursday

LUJAN ANNOUNCES $120,000 IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FOR EASTERN PLAINS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 234 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that the Eastern Plains Council of Governments will receive $120,000 through the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to assist with efforts to increase private capital investments and job creation in the region.

"A coordinated strategy to promote growth and economic development is essential to building a brighter future for the eastside as well as fostering an environment that supports the small business community," Congressman **Lujan** said. "These important federal funds will strengthen the Eastern Plains Council of Government's ability to carry out its mission of coordinating regional development in an effort to bring good jobs and new opportunities to our communities."

The Economic Development District Planning investment will support efforts to establish a comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) for the region served by the Eastern Plains Council of Governments, which includes Curry, DeBaca, Guadalupe, Harding, Quay, Roosevelt, and Union counties. The CEDS process is designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen the regional economy. Last year, the Eastern Plains Council of Government was awarded $60,000 from EDA to support its efforts.

LOAD-DATE: March 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

March 20, 2014 Thursday 8:51 PM EST

Lujan Announces $120,000 in Economic Development Funds for Eastern Plains Council of Governments

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 244 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that the Eastern Plains Council of Governments will receive $120,000 through the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to assist with efforts to increase private capital investments and job creation in the region.

"A coordinated strategy to promote growth and economic development is essential to building a brighter future for the eastside as well as fostering an environment that supports the small business community," Congressman **Lujan** said. "These important federal funds will strengthen the Eastern Plains Council of Government's ability to carry out its mission of coordinating regional development in an effort to bring good jobs and new opportunities to our communities."

The Economic Development District Planning investment will support efforts to establish a comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) for the region served by the Eastern Plains Council of Governments, which includes Curry, DeBaca, Guadalupe, Harding, Quay, Roosevelt, and Union counties. The CEDS process is designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen the regional economy. Last year, the Eastern Plains Council of Government was awarded $60,000 from EDA to support its efforts.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140321-4674356 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: March 20, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

245 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

March 18, 2014 Tuesday

Bill introduced to protect Native American seeds

BYLINE: Bernie Dotson Staff writer city@gallupindependent.com

SECTION: LOCAL; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 246 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON - U.S. Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N. M., and Tom Udall, D-N. M., introduced the Native American Seeds Protection Act Friday, a proposal that would help protect and preserve Native American seeds used for cultural, religious, medicinal, ceremonial and agriculture purposes, according to a news release.

"Our tribal communities have always enhanced New Mexico's rich culture and traditions," Heinrich said. "This bill helps protect those traditions by ensuring these seeds are preserved and that future generations remain connected to their culture and heritage."

"The priceless cultural legacy of Native American communities is woven into the cultural fabric of our state," Udall said. "For generations, tribes have cultivated plants that have played an important role in cultural traditions and farming practices. This legislation would protect the purity of native seeds and help ensure they remain available to future generations not only as an agricultural resource, but as a tie to cultural practices."

The proposal would permit Indian tribes to work alongside public research institutions to encourage education and training programs aimed at protecting the purity of Native American seeds. The bill also helps secure funding for the construction of seed storage facilities.

The measure is a companion bill to a proposal sponsored by U.S. Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N. M., and **Ben Ray Luján** D-N. M., that has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives.

LOAD-DATE: March 21, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

246 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

March 14, 2014 Friday

Delegation pushes ABQ as federal manufacturing hub

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 327 words

The five members of New Mexico's Congressional delegation have sent a joint letter to the federal Economic Development Administration urging that Albuquerque be picked as one of its 12 designated "manufacturing communities."

The selected communities are to be given extra consideration for up to $1.3 billion in federal spending as well as assistance with workforce and training, advanced research, infrastructure and site development, supply chain support, export promotion and capital access, according to the representatives.

In the letter, signed by Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, the delegation members said they were writing in support of an application by a collaboration of national laboratories, private industry, universities, community colleges, local governments and nonprofit organizations pursuing projects in optics and photonics technologies.

"Optics and photonics technology represents a field of science and engineering full of pathways for commercial, industrial and military applications," the representatives said. "Each of these applications provides an opportunity to improve our national security and competitive advantage in the global market through innovative manufacturing technologies."

The delegation added that optics and photonics are increasingly critical across a broad spectrum of commercial and national defense industries, and that strengthening New Mexico's capabilities, "would help ensure the United States continues to lead the world in optics and photonics development and manufacturing."

"Optics and photonics address and solve many of the challenges of the modern worlds, and we want those solutions to be researched, developed and manufactured in the United States," the delegation said.

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: March 14, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

247 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

March 14, 2014 Friday

LUJAN: REPUBLICANS ABANDON EFFORT TO FIND BIPARTISAN SOLUTION TO DOCTORS' PAYMENTS UNDER MEDICARE

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 512 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted today against a Republican bill to address the Medicare physician payment formula that impacts how much doctors are reimbursed for treating patients under Medicare. House Republicans amended a bipartisan bill that had wide support, adding in a provision to undermine the Affordable Care Act (ACA) by repealing the shared responsibility provision that allows the quality of insurance to significantly improve while minimizing premium increases.

"There is wide agreement that Congress needs to come together to pass legislation that ensures doctors will not receive deep cuts for treating seniors under Medicare. Unfortunately, House Republicans have chosen to put politics first rather than work together on a bipartisan solution," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Rather than build on bipartisan discussions that have been moving the process forward, House Republicans are again seeking to undermine the ACA. With the deadline to solve this problem quickly approaching, it is disappointing that House Republicans are putting politics ahead of the needs of America's seniors."

Under current law, Medicare physicians are scheduled to receive a 24 percent cut in reimbursements on April 1. A cut of this magnitude could impact seniors' ability to see their doctor. Prior to the move by House Republicans to bring legislation to the floor that also includes the Affordable Care Act, bipartisan efforts were in progress to replace the cuts with a 0.5 percent increase through 2018 and transition to a new reimbursement system.

This attempt to tie a fix for the Medicare physician payment formula to a provision undermining the ACA has led groups such as the American Medical Association and the AARP to express disappointment with the legislation.

"House Republicans were willing to shut down the government over their demands to undermine the Affordable Care Act. I hope they are not willing to jeopardize seniors' access to their doctors as well," **Lujan** added. "Time is running out to fix this problem. I hope House Republicans will drop their attempt to tie this important issue to the ACA."

The shared responsibility provision of the ACA plays a critical role in ensuring that millions of Americans don't lose their coverage when they get sick and that individuals with pre-existing conditions can get coverage. Repealing this aspect of the law would result in higher premiums for those who remain insured, fewer premium tax credits for middle-income families, and increased cost-shifting of uncompensated care to health care providers, workers, and businesses.

The shared responsibility provision was originally developed by the Heritage Foundation in 1989 to prevent the problem of "free riders" who don't get health insurance and face health care costs they cannot afford to pay. The costs of their uncompensated care are then passed along to all those who have health insurance in the form of higher premiums for consumers and businesses.

LOAD-DATE: March 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

March 14, 2014 Friday 10:16 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: New Mexico's Democratic Congressional Delegation Pushing for Advanced Photonics Manufacturing Consortium to be Designated as a 'Manufacturing Community'

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 506 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** and Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham are advocating for New Mexico Advanced Photonics Manufacturing Consortium in Albuquerque to be recognized by the federal government as a "Manufacturing Community," a designation that could make it eligible for up to $1.3 billion in future federal investment to further economic development strategies.

The delegation together wrote a letter in support of an application by the consortium, a collaboration of national laboratories, private industry, universities, community colleges, local governments and nonprofit organizations. The delegation and the members of the public-private partnership say New Mexico's extensive expertise make it a natural location for additional national investment in research and manufacturing of optics and photonics technologies, which are used in robotics, medical imaging, next-generation displays, defense, biometric security and many other fields.

"Optics and photonics technology represents a field of science and engineering full of pathways for commercial, industrial and military applications," the lawmakers wrote in their letter to the Economic Development Administration's Interagency Review Panel. "Each of these applications provides an opportunity to improve our national security and competitive advantage in the global market through innovative manufacturing technologies."

The administration's Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership will select up to 12 "Manufacturing Communities," giving them elevated consideration for up to $1.3 billion as well as assistance with workforce and training, advanced research, infrastructure and site development, supply chain support, export promotion and capital access.

The goal of the initiative is to encourage communities to devise comprehensive economic development strategies that strengthen their competitive edge in attracting global manufacturers and their supply chains.

Not only is New Mexico a leader in optics and photonics capabilities, the delegation and advocates say, optics and photonics are increasingly critical across a broad spectrum of commercial and national defense industries. Strengthening New Mexico's capabilities would help ensure the United States continues to lead the world in optics and photonics development and manufacturing.

"Optics and photonics address and solve many of the challenges of the modern worlds, and we want those solutions to be researched, developed and manufactured in the United States," the delegation wrote.

"We are in strong support of this broad collaborative effort, and request that you give the New Mexico Advanced Photonics Manufacturing Consortium's submission full and fair consideration," the letter concludes.

A full copy of the letter is available HERE (http://www.scribd.com/doc/212260207/Photonics-Delegation-Letter-3-4-14).

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage12bkp-140315-30VitinMar-4668666

LOAD-DATE: March 15, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

249 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

March 13, 2014 Thursday

Bill introduced to protect native seeds

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 260 words

The Senate is being asked to consider a bill sponsored by New Mexico's senators aimed at helping preserve Native American seeds used for cultural, religious, medicinal, ceremonial, and agriculture purposes.

"Our tribal communities have always enhanced New Mexico's rich culture and traditions," Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) said in a statement. "This bill helps protect those traditions by ensuring these seeds are preserved and that future generations remain connected to their culture and heritage."

In a letter supporting the bill, Pueblo of Tesuque Gov. Robert A. Mora, Sr. wrote, "The bill supports longstanding efforts to sustain our traditional ways of life and cultural practices of sowing and harvesting of native seeds. These traditions and practices are often threatened by environmental and other factors that compromise the integrity of native seeds. Our goal is to pass on our traditional practices to future generation."

The proposal would permit Indian tribes to work alongside public research institutions to encourage education and training programs aimed at protecting the purity of Native American seeds, according to a news release issued by Heinrich and Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM). The bill also looks to secure funding for the construction of seed storage facilities.

Representatives Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (D-01) and **Ben Ray Luján** (D-03) have introduced a similar bill in the House.

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: March 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

250 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 13, 2014

DELEGATION RELEASE: N.M. Delegation Pushing for Advanced Photonics Manufacturing Consortium to be Designated as a 'Manufacturing Community';
Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 971 words

WASHINGTON - U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham are advocating for New Mexico Advanced Photonics Manufacturing Consortium in Albuquerque to be recognized by the federal government as a "Manufacturing Community," a designation that could make it eligible for up to $1.3 billion in future federal investment to further economic development strategies.

The delegation together wrote a letter in support of an application by the consortium, a collaboration of national laboratories, private industry, universities, community colleges, local governments and nonprofit organizations. The delegation and the members of the public-private partnership say New Mexico's extensive expertise make it a natural location for additional national investment in research and manufacturing of optics and photonics technologies, which are used in robotics, medical imaging, next-generation displays, defense, biometric security and many other fields.

"Optics and photonics technology represents a field of science and engineering full of pathways for commercial, industrial and military applications," the lawmakers wrote in their letter to the Economic Development Administration's Interagency Review Panel. "Each of these applications provides an opportunity to improve our national security and competitive advantage in the global market through innovative manufacturing technologies."

The administration's Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership will select up to 12 "Manufacturing Communities," giving them elevated consideration for up to $1.3 billion as well as

assistance with workforce and training, advanced research, infrastructure and site development, supply chain support, export promotion and capital access.

The goal of the initiative is to encourage communities to devise comprehensive economic development strategies that strengthen their competitive edge in attracting global manufacturers and their supply chains.

Not only is New Mexico a leader in optics and photonics capabilities, the delegation and advocates say, optics and photonics are increasingly critical across a broad spectrum of commercial and national defense industries. Strengthening New Mexico's capabilities would help ensure the United States continues to lead the world in optics and photonics development and manufacturing.

"Optics and photonics address and solve many of the challenges of the modern worlds, and we want those solutions to be researched, developed and manufactured in the United States," the delegation wrote.

"We are in strong support of this broad collaborative effort, and request that you give the New Mexico Advanced Photonics Manufacturing Consortium's submission full and fair consideration," the letter concludes.

A full copy of the letter is below and HERE http://www.scribd.com/doc/212260207/Photonics-Delegation-Letter-3-4-14.

Economic Development Administration

Office of Performance and National Programs

U.S. Department of Commerce

1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Suite 71030

Washington, DC 20230

Dear Interagency Review Panel:

We are writing in support of the New Mexico Advanced Photonics Manufacturing Consortium's application to be designated as a Manufacturing Community. In response to the President's call for a National Network for Manufacturing and Innovation (NNMI), a collaboration of National Laboratories, industry, universities, community colleges, local governments, and non-profit organizations have come together in New Mexico.

The consortium has developed a complete proposal for the U.S. Economic Development Administration's open solicitation for the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) program. The consortium's unique public-private partnership is building on New Mexico's core capabilities and strengths in optics and photonics, and leveraging our region's innovative capacity to sustain and grow United States leadership in the application of light based technologies.

Optics and photonics address and solve many of the challenges of the modern world, and we want those solutions to be researched, developed and manufactured in the United States. Light-based technologies directly respond to the needs of humankind. The modern technology around you - your phone, computer, TV - and the communications technologies that enable these devices to function are all made possible largely by optics and photonics. Other technologies benefit from optics and photonics as well, including advanced manufacturing, robotics, medical imaging, next-generation displays, defense technologies, biometric security, image processing, communications, and many others.

In 2012, the National Academies National Research Council released a Report, "Optics and Photonics, Essential Technologies for Our Nation," which emphasized the importance of these technologies. The

United Nations proclaimed 2015 as the International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies, showing the international significance of these technologies. Because photonics is a very broad field, the consortium has evaluated several strategic focus areas, to determine the scope of each opportunity.

Optics and photonics technology represents a field of science and engineering full of pathways for commercial, industrial and military applications. Each of these applications provides an opportunity to improve our national security and competitive advantage in the global market through innovative manufacturing technologies.

We are in strong support of this broad collaborative effort, and request that you give the New Mexico Advanced Photonics Manufacturing Consortium's submission full and fair consideration.

Read this original document at:
http://lujangrisham.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/delegation-release-nm-delegation-pushing-for-advanced-photonics

LOAD-DATE: March 14, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 12, 2014

LUJAN CALLS FOR A VOTE TO EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 311 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District called for a vote in the House of Representatives to extend unemployment insurance through the end of the year for millions of out-of-work Americans. House Democrats have introduced a discharge petition that would require an up or down vote on legislation extending unemployment insurance once a majority of the House, 218 members, sign on to the petition. **Lujan** signed the petition this afternoon.

"Calls to extend unemployment insurance have fallen on deaf ears in the House of Representatives while two million Americans struggle to get by," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Republicans have failed to address this issue. There has not been one single vote to extend unemployment insurance while time and again House Republicans have scheduled votes to undermine the Affordable Care Act. With

too many families still struggling to get by, it's long past time Congress acted and passed an emergency extension of unemployment benefits."

Lujan has been a strong voice on this issue, calling on House Republicans stop ignoring this important issue. Last week, he joined 160 other Democrats on a letter to Speaker Boehner highlighting the fact that approximately 200,000 veterans are among the 2 million Americans who have lost unemployment insurance. Currently, more than 9,700 New Mexicans have lost these benefits that help families make ends meet during difficult economic times while they actively look for work.

House Republicans have blocked multiple efforts by Democrats to bring up legislation to extend the program on the House floor. Last month, a measure to extend the program came one vote short of the 60 votes necessary to move legislation forward in the Senate.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-calls-for-a-vote-to-extend-unemployment-insurance/

LOAD-DATE: March 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 12, 2014

Heinrich, Udall Introduce Bill To Protect And Preserve Native American Seeds;
Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 366 words

WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 12, 2014) - Today, U.S. Senators Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.) and Tom Udall (D-N.M.) introduced the Native American Seeds Protection Act, a proposal that would help protect and preserve Native American seeds used for cultural, religious, medicinal, ceremonial, and agriculture purposes.

"Our tribal communities have always enhanced New Mexico's rich culture and traditions," said Sen. Heinrich. "This bill helps protect those traditions by ensuring these seeds are preserved and that future generations remain connected to their culture and heritage."

"The priceless cultural legacy of Native American communities is woven into the cultural fabric of our state," said. Sen. Udall. "For generations, tribes have cultivated plants that have played an important role in cultural traditions and farming practices. This legislation would protect the purity of native seeds and help ensure they remain available to future generations not only as an agricultural resource, but as a tie to cultural practices. I look forward to meeting with Tesuque Pueblo Governor Mora tomorrow to discuss this and other issues, and to working with Senator Heinrich to pass this important bill."

In a letter of support, Pueblo of Tesuque Governor Robert A. Mora, Sr. wrote, "The bill supports longstanding efforts to sustain our traditional ways of life and cultural practices of sowing and harvesting of native seeds. These traditions and practices are often threatened by environmental and other factors that compromise the integrity of native seeds. Our goal is to pass on our traditional practices to future generation."

The proposal would permit Indian tribes to work alongside public research institutions to encourage education and training programs aimed at protecting the purity of Native American seeds. The bill also helps secure funding for the construction of seed storage facilities.

The measure is a companion bill to U.S. Representatives Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01) and **Ben Ray Lujan** (NM-03) proposal that was introduced in the House.

Read this original document at: http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/press-releases/heinrich-udall-introduce-bill-to-protect-and-preserve-native-american-seeds

LOAD-DATE: March 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

253 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

March 12, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN CALLS FOR A VOTE TO EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 301 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District called for a vote in the House of Representatives to extend unemployment insurance through the end of the year for millions of out-of-work Americans. House Democrats have introduced a discharge petition that would require an up or down vote on legislation extending unemployment insurance once a majority of the House, 218 members, sign on to the petition. **Lujan** signed the petition this afternoon.

"Calls to extend unemployment insurance have fallen on deaf ears in the House of Representatives while two million Americans struggle to get by," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Republicans have failed to address this issue. There has not been one single vote to extend unemployment insurance while time and again House Republicans have scheduled votes to undermine the Affordable Care Act. With too many families still struggling to get by, it's long past time Congress acted and passed an emergency extension of unemployment benefits."

Lujan has been a strong voice on this issue, calling on House Republicans stop ignoring this important issue. Last week, he joined 160 other Democrats on a letter to Speaker Boehner highlighting the fact that approximately 200,000 veterans are among the 2 million Americans who have lost unemployment insurance. Currently, more than 9,700 New Mexicans have lost these benefits that help families make ends meet during difficult economic times while they actively look for work.

House Republicans have blocked multiple efforts by Democrats to bring up legislation to extend the program on the House floor. Last month, a measure to extend the program came one vote short of the 60 votes necessary to move legislation forward in the Senate.

LOAD-DATE: March 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

March 12, 2014 Wednesday 3:51 AM EST

Heinrich, Udall Introduce Bill to Protect And Preserve Native American Seeds

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 361 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The office of Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Senators Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.) and Tom Udall (D-N.M.) introduced the Native American Seeds Protection Act, a proposal that would help protect and preserve Native American seeds used for cultural, religious, medicinal, ceremonial, and agriculture purposes.

"Our tribal communities have always enhanced New Mexico's rich culture and traditions," said Sen. Heinrich. "This bill helps protect those traditions by ensuring these seeds are preserved and that future generations remain connected to their culture and heritage."

"The priceless cultural legacy of Native American communities is woven into the cultural fabric of our state," said. Sen. Udall. "For generations, tribes have cultivated plants that have played an important role in cultural traditions and farming practices. This legislation would protect the purity of native seeds and help ensure they remain available to future generations not only as an agricultural resource, but as a tie to cultural practices. I look forward to meeting with Tesuque Pueblo Governor Mora tomorrow to discuss this and other issues, and to working with Senator Heinrich to pass this important bill."

In a letter of support, Pueblo of Tesuque Governor Robert A. Mora, Sr. wrote, "The bill supports longstanding efforts to sustain our traditional ways of life and cultural practices of sowing and harvesting of native seeds. These traditions and practices are often threatened by environmental and other factors that compromise the integrity of native seeds. Our goal is to pass on our traditional practices to future generation."

The proposal would permit Indian tribes to work alongside public research institutions to encourage education and training programs aimed at protecting the purity of Native American seeds. The bill also helps secure funding for the construction of seed storage facilities.

The measure is a companion bill to U.S. Representatives Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01) and **Ben Ray Lujan** (NM-03) proposal that was introduced in the House.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TacordaCheng-140312-4666047 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: March 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

255 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

March 12, 2014 Wednesday 1:57 AM EST

Lujan Calls for a Vote to Extend Unemployment Insurance

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 330 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District called for a vote in the House of Representatives to extend unemployment insurance through the end of the year for millions of out-of-work Americans. House Democrats have introduced a discharge petition that would require an up or down vote on legislation extending unemployment insurance once a majority of the House, 218 members, sign on to the petition. **Lujan** signed the petition this afternoon.

"Calls to extend unemployment insurance have fallen on deaf ears in the House of Representatives while two million Americans struggle to get by," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Republicans have failed to address this issue. There has not been one single vote to extend unemployment insurance while time and again House Republicans have scheduled votes to undermine the Affordable Care Act. With too many families still struggling to get by, it's long past time Congress acted and passed an emergency extension of unemployment benefits."

Lujan has been a strong voice on this issue, calling on House Republicans stop ignoring this important issue. Last week, he joined 160 other Democrats on a letter to Speaker Boehner (http://www.**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-and-160-members-of-congress-call-for-a-vote-to-help-jobless-veterans/) highlighting the fact that approximately 200,000 veterans are among the 2 million Americans who have lost unemployment insurance. Currently, more than 9,700 New Mexicans have lost these benefits that help families make ends meet during difficult economic times while they actively look for work.

House Republicans have blocked multiple efforts by Democrats to bring up legislation to extend the program on the House floor. Last month, a measure to extend the program came one vote short of the 60 votes necessary to move legislation forward in the Senate.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140313-4665613 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: March 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

March 10, 2014 Monday

Democrats seek vote on benefits

BYLINE: Staff

LENGTH: 256 words

More than 160 members of the House Democratic Caucus have signed a letter to asking House Speaker John Boehner to call for a vote to extend unemployment insurance.

The letter cited a new report that found that 200,000 veterans are among the more than 2 million people that have lost unemployment insurance benefits since they expired in December of last year.

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D-3) was among those sending the letter.

"For more than two months, I have called on House Republicans to act on an extension of unemployment insurance. Every week that they have failed to address this issue, more New Mexicans have seen this vital safety net disappear," **Luján** said in a statement. "Now we see with this latest report, the impact this is having on our veteran community. During a difficult time, men and women who have served our nation are losing support that helps them make ends meet while they look for work. It's time for Congress to act and help our veterans and the 2 million Americans who are still struggling during this tough economic period."

Luján said that figures released last week showed the number of Americans who have lost unemployment insurance surpassed 2 million, including more than 9,700 New Mexicans. On average, every week, 72,000 more people will lose their unemployment insurance unless Congress acts to extend the emergency compensation program, he said.

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: March 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

257 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

March 9, 2014 Sunday

Luján, Lara sweep congregational contests

BYLINE: Milan Simonich, The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 560 words

March 09--LAGUNA PUEBLO -- U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** showed his might Saturday, taking more than 98 percent of the vote at the Democratic pre-primary convention.

Luján, of Santa Fe, topped newcomer Robert Blanch in the battle for delegates in the 3rd Congressional District. **Luján** received 566 votes to nine for Blanch.

Blanch, an assistant district attorney in Bernalillo County, lives in a section of Albuquerque that was added to the northern congressional district after the 2010 census. He would have to petition onto the ballot if he wanted to continue his long-shot campaign against **Luján** for the Democratic nomination.

Republicans last week again nominated Jefferson Byrd as their candidate for Congress in Northern New Mexico. A rancher from Tucumcari, Byrd lost the general election to **Luján** two years ago.

In the Democratic pre-primary race in the 2nd Congressional District, Rocky Lara of Carlsbad was the runaway winner.

Lara took about 85 percent of the delegates. Her opponent, Leslie Endean-Singh of Alamogordo, did not reach the 20 percent threshold to make the ballot.

Endean-Singh, 69, said she was meeting with her team Saturday evening to decide whether she would continue her campaign through a petition drive. She is an attorney and previously served as a prosecutor and a magistrate judge.

Lara, 39, also is an attorney and a former Eddy County commissioner.

"I am honored to have the overwhelming support of Democrats in New Mexico's 2nd Congressional District," she said. "The momentum and energy our grass-roots campaign has built was evident in today's results."

Republican Steve Pearce of Hobbs is the incumbent congressman in the 2nd District. Pearce, 66, first won election to Congress in 2002.

He vacated the seat in 2008 to run for the U.S. Senate, a race he lost. Pearce recaptured the House seat in 2010.

Lara said her focus was on Pearce.

"Democrats in every corner of Southern New Mexico are united and motivated to take on Congressman Pearce and win in November," she said.

In a fiery speech to convention delegates, Lara spoke of her support for organized labor and her pride in being raised in a union household. Her father was a potash miner.

Momentum was on Lara's side well before the convention.

She was one of 16 new House candidates that the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee identified in its "Red to Blue Program." Democratic candidates in those districts could get financial help on a national scale if the party sees the potential of picking up the seat.

In addition, **Luján** and U.S. Sen. Martin Heinrich of Albuquerque endorsed Lara, something that typically does not happen in primary races.

Lara used part of her speech to reject the notion that she is running this time without great expectations, but to establish herself for a repeat campaign in two years.

"I am in this race to win," she said.

In the Albuquerque-based 1st Congressional District, U.S. Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham had no opposition from fellow Democrats. Two Republicans, Michael Frese and Richard Priem, will compete for the chance to run against her in November.

Contact Milan Simonich at 986-3080 or msimonich@sfnewmexican.com Follow his Ringside Seat blog at santafenewmexican.com.

___ (c)2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: March 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20140309-SF-**Luján**-Lara-sweep-congregational-contests-0309-20140309

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2014 The Santa Fe New Mexican

States News Service

March 7, 2014 Friday

SERRANO, CROWLEY, AND LUJAN JOIN COLLEAGUES IN URGING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A STEM GRANT PROGRAM FOR HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTIONS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 794 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New York Rep. Jos E Serrano:

On March 4th, Congressman Serrano and 21 of his Democratic colleagues sent a letter to President Obama, urging him to demonstrate continued support for STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) programs at Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). Serrano and his colleagues are specifically requesting the implementation of a dedicated grant program within the National Science Foundation (NSF). STEM fields are critical to the nation's global competitiveness, and it is essential that investments are made for underrepresented populations.

A STEM education grant program was authorized as part of the America COMPETES Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-69), but has yet to be implemented.

Full text of the letter below.

March 4, 2014

President Barack Obama

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue

Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We know that you share our commitment to encouraging more minorities, including Hispanic college students, to enter the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. Bringing this underrepresented population into these fields of tomorrow is critical for our country's competitiveness in a global economy, which is why we believe it is so important that your Administration move swiftly to implement the STEM Education grant program for Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) at the National Science Foundation, as authorized by Congress in the America COMPETES Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-69).

The National Science Foundation, like other government agencies, has long recognized the value of targeted capacity-building programs at minority-serving institutions. While there may be other programs throughout federal agencies that have similar goals, the National Science Foundation programs have clearly filled an important niche in the training of minority students. There are currently in place programs for Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Tribal Colleges and Universities. The absence of a dedicated program for HSIs is notable - a situation we sought to correct in the America COMPETES Act.

In particular, we are concerned that the lack of a dedicated program for HSIs sends a negative message to the very students we need to reach. These students need to feel welcome in the science fields - particularly as the Hispanic population has been traditionally underrepresented, younger students may have difficulty seeing role models at the higher levels to inspire them. We appreciate the work the Administration has done to encourage and support educational achievement, such as through the White House Initiative for Educational Excellence for Hispanics. We believe a dedicated grant program at the National Science Foundation is the kind of concrete step needed to build upon these efforts and advance them further.

If we want to reach Hispanic students and entice them into a career in the science and technology fields, HSIs provide the infrastructure we need to build upon. Currently, well over half of all Hispanic students are enrolled at colleges and universities designated as HSIs. The majority of HSIs have Hispanic student populations well over the minimum threshold of 25 percent needed to receive this designation.

Furthermore, these institutions have the expertise in the needs of their student body, and as such are best equipped to build targeted STEM programs that will draw in Hispanic students. These reasons are what led Congress to recognize the role of HSIs in the America COMPETES Act by explicitly directing the National Science Foundation to establish a capacity building program for STEM education at HSIs.

Congress is due to soon act on the next reauthorization of the America COMPETES Act, and we intend to pursue the implementation of the Hispanic-Serving Institutions program as a priority. We hope that your Administration, including the National Science Foundation, will work with us and use this reauthorization to address any lingering concerns that are preventing this program from being established as Congress has made clear it expects to see done.

Together, we can help Hispanic students reach their rightful place in the STEM fields, and we firmly believe that the implementation of a dedicated grant program for HSIs at the National Science

Foundation is a critical first step. We look forward to working with you to strengthen efforts to improve STEM education in our country.

Sincerely,

Joseph Crowley

Ben Ray Lujan

Jose E. Serrano

Sheila Jackson Lee

Filemon Vela

Eliot L. Engel

Gregory W. Meeks

Adam D. Schiff

Juan Vargas

Gloria Negrete McLeod

Eric Swalwell

Michael M. Honda

Dina Titus

Rush Holt

Jim Costa

Michelle **Lujan** Grisham

Ral M. Grijalva

Barbara Lee

Matt Cartwright

Joaquin Castro

Mark Takano

Judy Chu

LOAD-DATE: March 7, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

March 7, 2014 Friday 4:03 AM EST

Two Curry County Commissioners Attend NACO 2014 Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 284 words

DATELINE: CLOVIS, N.M.

Curry County issued the following news release:

Commissioners Wendell Bostwick and Tim Ashley attended the National Association of Counties (NACO) 2014 Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. March 1-5.

The conference brought over 2,000 elected and appointed county officials from across the country together to focus on the current legislative issues that face counties. This year, attendees were given the opportunity to hear from Mike Allen, Chief White House Correspondent for Politico, at the opening general session and later heard from various officials such as John Huntsman former governor of Utah and Anthony Foxx, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Bostwick attended various committee meetings such as the Public and Land Steering Committee and the Agricultural and Rural Affair Steering Committee. "All the workshops and sessions were very interesting with many of the topics being discussed germane to the issues in Curry County and New Mexico," said Bostwick.

Included in the conference agenda was a workshop on the overview of the Endangered Species Act. This act affects every State as listing certain species as endangered can cause detriment to local businesses and economies.

Aside from the conference, Bostwick and Ashley were able to meet with various State Senators and Representatives such as Representative Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, Senator Tom Udall and Senator Martin Heinrich to discuss topics such as Cannon Air Force Base, Ute water project and Lesser Prairie Chicken.

Questions may be addressed to the County Manager's Office at 575-763-6016.

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage9as-140308-30FurigayJane-4661755 30FurigayJane

LOAD-DATE: March 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 6, 2014

LUJAN AND 160 MEMBERS OF CONGRESS CALL FOR A VOTE TO HELP JOBLESS VETERANS;
New Report Shows 200,000 Veterans Have Lost Unemployment Insurance;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 383 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District joined 160 other members of the House Democratic Caucus in sending a letter to House Speaker John Boehner calling for a vote to extend unemployment insurance. The letter highlights a new report by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities that finds 200,000 veterans are among the more than 2 million people that have lost unemployment insurance benefits since they expired in December of last year.

"For more than two months, I have called on House Republicans to act on an extension of unemployment insurance. Every week that they have failed to address this issue, more New Mexicans have seen this vital safety net disappear," said Congressman **Lujan**. "Now we see with this latest report, the impact this is having on our veteran community. During a difficult time, men and women who have served our nation are losing support that helps them make ends meet while they look for work. It's time for Congress to act and help our veterans and the 2 million Americans who are still struggling during this tough economic period."

"Unemployment insurance is critical for these Veterans to be able feed their families and put a roof over their head as they seek to transition from combat to career or try to get back on their feet with a new job," the letter reads. "For the sake of these Veterans who are heroes, we urge you to allow an up-or-down vote on a proposal to extend unemployment insurance as soon as possible."

Earlier this week, the number of Americans who have lost unemployment insurance surpassed two million, including more than 9,700 New Mexicans. On average, every week, 72,000 more people will lose their unemployment insurance unless Congress acts to extend the emergency compensation program.

House Republicans have blocked multiple efforts by Democrats to bring up legislation to extend the program on the House floor. Last month, a measure to extend the program came one vote short of the 60 votes necessary to move legislation forward in the Senate.

Go to: http://**lujan**.house.gov/uploads/Unemployment%20Insurance%20and%20Veterans%203.6.141.pdf to read the letter.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-and-160-members-of-congress-call-for-a-vote-to-help-jobless-veterans/

LOAD-DATE: March 7, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

March 6, 2014 Thursday

LUJAN AND 160 MEMBERS OF CONGRESS CALL FOR A VOTE TO HELP JOBLESS VETERANS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 351 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District joined 160 other members of the House Democratic Caucus in sending a letter to House Speaker John Boehner calling for a vote to extend unemployment insurance. The letter highlights a new report by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities that finds 200,000 veterans are among the more than 2 million people that have lost unemployment insurance benefits since they expired in December of last year.

"For more than two months, I have called on House Republicans to act on an extension of unemployment insurance. Every week that they have failed to address this issue, more New Mexicans have seen this vital safety net disappear," said Congressman **Lujan**. "Now we see with this latest report, the impact this is having on our veteran community. During a difficult time, men and women who have served our nation are losing support that helps them make ends meet while they look for work. It's time for Congress to act and help our veterans and the 2 million Americans who are still struggling during this tough economic period."

"Unemployment insurance is critical for these Veterans to be able feed their families and put a roof over their head as they seek to transition from combat to career or try to get back on their feet with a new job," the letter reads. "For the sake of these Veterans who are heroes, we urge you to allow an up-or-down vote on a proposal to extend unemployment insurance as soon as possible."

Earlier this week, the number of Americans who have lost unemployment insurance surpassed two million, including more than 9,700 New Mexicans. On average, every week, 72,000 more people will lose their unemployment insurance unless Congress acts to extend the emergency compensation program.

House Republicans have blocked multiple efforts by Democrats to bring up legislation to extend the program on the House floor. Last month, a measure to extend the program came one vote short of the 60 votes necessary to move legislation forward in the Senate.

LOAD-DATE: March 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

March 6, 2014 Thursday 1:23 AM EST

Lujan and 160 Members of Congress Call for a Vote to Help Jobless Veterans

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 380 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District joined 160 other members of the House Democratic Caucus in sending a letter to House Speaker John Boehner calling for a vote to extend unemployment insurance. The letter highlights a new report by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities that finds 200,000 veterans are among the more than 2 million people that have lost unemployment insurance benefits since they expired in December of last year.

"For more than two months, I have called on House Republicans to act on an extension of unemployment insurance. Every week that they have failed to address this issue, more New Mexicans have seen this vital safety net disappear," said Congressman **Lujan**. "Now we see with this latest report, the impact this is having on our veteran community. During a difficult time, men and women who have served our nation are losing support that helps them make ends meet while they look for work. It's time for Congress to act and help our veterans and the 2 million Americans who are still struggling during this tough economic period."

"Unemployment insurance is critical for these Veterans to be able feed their families and put a roof over their head as they seek to transition from combat to career or try to get back on their feet with a new job," the letter reads. "For the sake of these Veterans who are heroes, we urge you to allow an up-or-down vote on a proposal to extend unemployment insurance as soon as possible."

Earlier this week, the number of Americans who have lost unemployment insurance surpassed two million, including more than 9,700 New Mexicans. On average, every week, 72,000 more people will lose their unemployment insurance unless Congress acts to extend the emergency compensation program.

House Republicans have blocked multiple efforts by Democrats to bring up legislation to extend the program on the House floor. Last month, a measure to extend the program came one vote short of the 60 votes necessary to move legislation forward in the Senate.

Click here (http://**lujan**.house.gov/uploads/Unemployment%20Insurance%20and%20Veterans%203.6.141.pdf) to read the letter.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS30VitinMar-140307-4659614 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: March 7, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

263 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal: Blogs (New Mexico)

March 5, 2014 Wednesday

New Mexico's congressional delegation condemns Russia's actions in Ukraine

BYLINE: Michael Coleman, JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU PUBLISHED: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 2014 AT 9:07 AM

SECTION: INSIDE THE BELTWAY

LENGTH: 594 words

.....

New Mexico's congressional delegation is joining other members of Congress and leaders throughout the Western Hemisphere to condemn Russia's invasion of the Crimean peninsula in Ukraine and call for possible sanctions and other maneuvers against Russia as retribution.

The statements came as the European Union was preparing a $15 billion aid package to Ukraine.

Sen. Tom Udall, a Democrat and members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee said the international community needs to send a "strong message."

"The United States, the European Union, and NATO need to send a strong message to Russia that violations of Ukrainian sovereignty are not acceptable," Udall said. "Diplomatic and economic options to isolate Russia for its aggressive actions in Crimea are certainly on the table. Our goal should be a negotiated settlement that preserves Ukrainian sovereignty and results in Russia ending its

occupation of Ukrainian territory. I urge Ukraine to move ahead quickly with presidential elections and continue its transition to democratic stability. I support the proposed U.S. loan guarantee and hope that the U.S. State Department, the European Union, and the International Monetary Fund can work quickly to negotiate a broader economic package to help address Ukraine's underlying economic problems."

Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., said Russian President Vladimir Putin's behavior is disturbing.

"Russian aggression in the Crimean peninsula is consistent with a pattern of behavior from President Putin that is at odds with the international community," Heinrich said. "I am deeply concerned by President Putin's disregard for the sovereignty of Ukraine, and I fully support efforts to isolate Russia economically and diplomatically through sanctions, potential expulsion from the G8, and other measures. Russia must act responsibly if it wishes to continue participating in international forums and Russia's recent actions are neither responsible nor constructive. I will continue to support working with our European partners and our NATO allies to demonstrate our support of a Ukrainian future that is decided by Ukrainian citizens and not outside forces."

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., called the crisis in Ukraine "incredibly alarming."

"We must engage in aggressive diplomacy while keeping all available sanctions on the table," **Lujan** Grisham said. "I'm hopeful the continued American and European engagement will allow the political process, as outlined in the constitution of Ukraine to unfold. I'm also pleased that Secretary Kerry traveled to Kiev, and we are working closely with our European partners to peacefully resolve this situation."

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., said isolating Russia economically should be considered.

"I am gravely concerned by Russia's aggression in the Crimean peninsula that violates the sovereignty of Ukraine," he said. "The people of Ukraine should be allowed to chart their own path forward through free and fair elections without the threat of force from Russia. We need to work with our European allies to condemn Putin's actions and consider sanctions that will isolate Russia from the global community."

Rep. Steve Pearce encouraged decisive U.S. action.

"Russia's blatant aggression cannot go unchecked," he said. "The US and the EU should impose strict economic and diplomatic sanctions to hold Russia accountable."

LOAD-DATE: March 7, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

264 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

March 5, 2014

LUJAN: HOUSE REPUBLICANS AGAIN VOTE TO UNDERMINE ACA WHILE IGNORING CRITICAL LEGISLATION;

50 Votes on ACA, Not One on Immigration Reform, Minimum Wage, or Unemployment Insurance; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 364 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted against yet another House Republican attempt to undermine the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The legislation on the floor today - the 50th vote on the ACA in the House - delays the individual responsibility provision and would result in an increase in premiums for millions of Americans.

"House Republicans have made their point over and over again. They want to repeal the ACA despite not having an alternative," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Their repeal only plan would put insurance companies back in charge and open the door for the worst abuses that the ACA has ended, such as discrimination based on pre-existing conditions. Their obsession with repealing the ACA stands in stark contrast to the important legislation they have failed to act on. Fifty votes on the ACA, yet not one vote on the House floor to reform our broken immigration system, extend unemployment insurance for those struggling to find work, and increase the minimum wage for hard-working Americans. House Republicans' priorities are clear - undermine the ACA while ignoring ways to strengthen our economy and the middle class."

The shared responsibility provision of the ACA plays a critical role in ensuring that millions of Americans don't lose their coverage when they get sick and that individuals with pre-existing conditions can get coverage. Repealing this aspect of the law would result in higher premiums for those who remain insured, fewer premium tax credits for middle-income families, and increased cost-shifting of uncompensated care to health care providers, workers, and businesses.

The individual responsibility provision was originally developed by the Heritage Foundation in 1989 to prevent the problem of "free riders" who don't get health insurance and face health care costs they cannot afford to pay. The costs of their uncompensated care are then passed along to all those who have health insurance in the form of higher premiums for consumers and businesses.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-house-republicans-again-vote-to-undermine-aca-while-ignoring-critical-legislation/

LOAD-DATE: March 6, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

March 5, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN: HOUSE REPUBLICANS AGAIN VOTE TO UNDERMINE ACA WHILE IGNORING CRITICAL LEGISLATION

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 349 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted against yet another House Republican attempt to undermine the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The legislation on the floor today - the 50th vote on the ACA in the House - delays the individual responsibility provision and would result in an increase in premiums for millions of Americans.

"House Republicans have made their point over and over again. They want to repeal the ACA despite not having an alternative," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Their repeal only plan would put insurance companies back in charge and open the door for the worst abuses that the ACA has ended, such as discrimination based on pre-existing conditions. Their obsession with repealing the ACA stands in stark contrast to the important legislation they have failed to act on. Fifty votes on the ACA, yet not one vote on the House floor to reform our broken immigration system, extend unemployment insurance for those struggling to find work, and increase the minimum wage for hard-working Americans. House Republicans' priorities are clear - undermine the ACA while ignoring ways to strengthen our economy and the middle class."

The shared responsibility provision of the ACA plays a critical role in ensuring that millions of Americans don't lose their coverage when they get sick and that individuals with pre-existing conditions can get coverage. Repealing this aspect of the law would result in higher premiums for those who remain insured, fewer premium tax credits for middle-income families, and increased cost-shifting of uncompensated care to health care providers, workers, and businesses.

The individual responsibility provision was originally developed by the Heritage Foundation in 1989 to prevent the problem of "free riders" who don't get health insurance and face health care costs they cannot afford to pay. The costs of their uncompensated care are then passed along to all those who have health insurance in the form of higher premiums for consumers and businesses.

LOAD-DATE: March 24, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

March 5, 2014 Wednesday 10:00 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: Senator Udall, Congressman Lujan Announce Over $5.1 Million for Wireless Service for Navajo Nation and Picuris Pueblo

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 383 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

U.S. Senator Tom Udall and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Lujan** announced that the Federal Communications Commission will award over $5.1 million to support mobile broadband service in areas of the Navajo Nation and Picuris Pueblo lacking wireless coverage. Through a reverse auction bidding process designed to maximize the expansion of wireless coverage, the FCC allocated a total of $5,149,628 to Smith Bagley, Inc. and Commnet Wireless, LLC for mobile broadband service at Picuris Pueblo in Taos County and on the Navajo Nation, which spans New Mexico, Arizona and Utah. Of the total award, more than $2 million will support wireless deployment over the next three years to 2,096 people living in New Mexico.

The FCC created the Tribal Mobility Fund as part of its reform of the Universal Service Fund. Through the initial phase of the fund, the FCC awarded a total of $49.8 million in one-time support to companies across five states that agreed to build 3G or 4G mobile broadband networks for currently underserved Tribal lands.

Both Udall and **Lujan** have strongly supported the expansion of broadband and wireless technology to Tribal and rural communities to help spur the growth of businesses and increase educational opportunities.

"Wireless coverage not only keeps us connected but can truly save lives during an emergency, " Udall said. "Wireless service in Tribal communities is vital for safety and security and to connect people and businesses around the world. This FCC action is a positive step forward, and as a member of the Appropriations Committee, I'll keep working until every New Mexican has access to high-speed Internet and wireless service."

"In this digital age, access to wireless service is becoming more and more important," **Lujan** said. "Wireless service not only connects families and friends and improves the safety and security of communities, it connects them to opportunities that would otherwise be closed off. This award by the FCC is a welcome step forward, and these funds for tribal communities are essential to promoting economic growth. We must continue our efforts to bring wireless service to every corner of New Mexico."

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage12bkp-140306-30VitinMar-4657275

LOAD-DATE: March 6, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

March 5, 2014 Wednesday 7:27 PM EST

Lujan: House Republicans Again Vote to Undermine ACA While Ignoring Critical Legislation

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 359 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted against yet another House Republican attempt to undermine the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The legislation on the floor today - the 50th vote on the ACA in the House - delays the individual responsibility provision and would result in an increase in premiums for millions of Americans.

"House Republicans have made their point over and over again. They want to repeal the ACA despite not having an alternative," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Their repeal only plan would put insurance companies back in charge and open the door for the worst abuses that the ACA has ended, such as discrimination based on pre-existing conditions. Their obsession with repealing the ACA stands in stark contrast to the important legislation they have failed to act on. Fifty votes on the ACA, yet not one vote on the House floor to reform our broken immigration system, extend unemployment insurance for those struggling to find work, and increase the minimum wage for hard-working Americans. House Republicans' priorities are clear - undermine the ACA while ignoring ways to strengthen our economy and the middle class."

The shared responsibility provision of the ACA plays a critical role in ensuring that millions of Americans don't lose their coverage when they get sick and that individuals with pre-existing conditions can get coverage. Repealing this aspect of the law would result in higher premiums for those who remain insured, fewer premium tax credits for middle-income families, and increased cost-shifting of uncompensated care to health care providers, workers, and businesses.

The individual responsibility provision was originally developed by the Heritage Foundation in 1989 to prevent the problem of "free riders" who don't get health insurance and face health care costs they cannot afford to pay. The costs of their uncompensated care are then passed along to all those who have health insurance in the form of higher premiums for consumers and businesses.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140306-4657072 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: March 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

TendersInfo

March 5, 2014 Wednesday

United States : COMMISSION awards $5.1 million for supporting MOBILE BROADBAND SERVICE

LENGTH: 274 words

About $5.1 million has been presented by the Federal Communications Commission for backing up mobile broadband service in areas of the Navajo Nation and Picuris Pueblo lacking wireless coverage, stated U.S. Senator Tom Udall and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Luján**.

A total of $5,149,628 to Smith Bagley, Inc. and Commnet Wireless, LLC has been apportioned by FCC for mobile broadband service at Picuris Pueblo in Taos County and on the Navajo Nation, which spans New Mexico, Arizona and Utah. Of the total award, more than $2 million will support wireless deployment over the next three years to 2,096 people living in New Mexico, as per Udall and **Lujan**. The statement said, The FCC created the Tribal Mobility Fund as part of its reform of the Universal Service Fund. Through the initial phase of the fund, the FCC awarded a total of $49.8 million in one-time support to companies across five states that agreed to build 3G or 4G mobile broadband networks for currently under served Tribal lands. Both Udall and **Luján** have strongly supported the expansion of broadband and wireless technology to Tribal and rural communities to help spur the growth of businesses and increase educational opportunities.
According to Udall, Wireless coverage not only keeps us connected but can truly save lives during an emergency. Wireless service in Tribal communities is vital for safety and security and to connect people and businesses around the world. This FCC action is a positive step forward, and as a member of the Appropriations Committee, I ll keep working until every New Mexican has access to high-speed Internet and wireless service. Ltd.

LOAD-DATE: March 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Publication

JOURNAL-CODE: 812

Copyright 2014 TendersInfo - Euclid Infotech Pvt. Ltd.
Provided by Syndigate.info, an Albawaba.com company
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

March 4, 2014 Tuesday 10:00 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: NM Dems Support and Stand Ready to Re-Elect Congressman Ben Ray Lujan

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 160 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

NM Dems support and are ready to work hard to ensure that our senior Democratic Congressman, **Ben Ray Lujan** wins big and returns to Washington for another 2 years.

"Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** represents not only the 3rd Congressional District in New Mexico but every New Mexican that is trying to support a family and give their kids a better life. He works tirelessly to find solutions to our jobs crisis, fights for an increase in the minimum wage, and never stops working to help give our kids a world class education," said DPNM Chairman Sam Bregman.

"**Ben Ray Lujan** is a rising star in the Democratic Party and deserves our thanks and support for the hard work he undertakes every day for New Mexico. Along with Senator Udall, Congressman **Lujan** is helping DPNM build a better future for all New Mexicans," Bregman added.

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage12bkp-140305-30VitinMar-4655711

LOAD-DATE: March 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Las Cruces Sun-News (New Mexico)

March 2, 2014 Sunday

John Cornell: Bill good for energy projects and sportsmen

BYLINE: By John Cornell Guest column

SECTION: OPINION

LENGTH: 575 words

You've seen them as you drive down Highways 26 and 27 where wind and solar farms are visible in New Mexico. The rapid growth of wind and solar in our state is indicative of the rapid growth of renewable energy in this country, particularly here in the West. Utility-scale wind and solar energy production has increased by 23 percent in recent years. These homegrown energy sources will also help our country become more energy self reliant.

However, as we look to reduce our carbon footprint and expand renewable energy use, we need to remember something utility-scale wind and solar facilities require large expanses of real estate and will be on that landscape for decades to come. So where can developers get access to large undeveloped areas? Our federal public lands have increasingly been a popular place to site these industrial renewable energy developments and our federal land management agencies have worked hard to facilitate this development in recent years. Yet we receive nothing in exchange for the use of these lands by large-scale energy projects that will have a permanent impact on the landscapes and fish and wildlife.

This just doesn't seem right, which is why last week I traveled to Washington, DC to talk to Senators Martin Heinrich and Tom Udall and Representatives Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, **Ben Ray Lujan** and Stevan Pearce to thank them for their support of the Public Lands Renewable Energy Development Act (PLREDA, H.R. 596 and S. 279). This bill would create a leasing and royalty system for the development of renewable energy on federal public lands, similar to what is already in place for traditional mineral development.

A royalty-based leasing system for renewable energy development would be beneficial for industry, providing a more efficient permitting process that would reduce costs and risks to investors and focus limited agency resources. Through revenue sharing provisions, the PLREDA would benefit the local communities here in New Mexico where renewable development is occurring. Even more importantly, 35 percent of the royalties would be dedicated to conservation. That's right, for the first time private development on our federal lands would financially support efforts to restore habitats and fish and wildlife populations that are being impacted by that development.

Recent media coverage has begun to shine a light on some of the less positive impacts of wind and solar energy development. Wind turbines are killing eagles regularly in this region as well as bats and numerous other migratory bird species. Solar developments take up large swaths of land, affecting access for sportsmen and recreational users.

Renewable energy is certainly clean energy, but it is not without its own negative consequences. As part of a competitive leasing program, the bill will require that proposed sites be reviewed for potential impacts on fish, wildlife and other natural resources. This is something that sportsmen and women in New Mexico ardently support.

The Public Lands Renewable Energy Development Act would level the playing field and ensure that we are reinvesting in the conservation of our nonrenewable natural resources. I am glad that New Mexico's delegation recognizes the prudence of such an approach and I hope that Congress moves this bill forward this year so that we do not waste any more time as this industry grows so quickly.

John Cornell is president of Doca Ana County Associated Sportsmen

LOAD-DATE: March 3, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Las Cruces Sun-News, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

271 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

February 27, 2014 Thursday 1:30 AM EST

New Mexico Dems: Udall, Heinrich, Lujan: New Mexicans Deserve Clear Information About Lamy Project

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 412 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, and Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** announced yesterday that they have sent a letter on behalf of their constituents to Pacer Energy Marketing, which has announced plans to truck crude oil from the Four Corners to a property in Lamy owned by Santa Fe Southern Railway, where it would be transported by rail to refineries south of Albuquerque.

The lawmakers note in their letter that Pacer's plans have raised strong concerns among the residents of Lamy about the potential for spills and accidents, potential risks to water supplies and community wells, and the limited ability for emergency personnel to respond in case of an accident.

Udall, Heinrich and **Lujan** are working with state and local officials to determine what jurisdictions, permits and regulations apply. In the meantime, they are asking Pacer to provide information to help them - and the community - understand the implications of the project.

"We believe accurate and detailed information regarding the scope of your proposal should be shared with our constituents and local officials as soon as possible," the lawmakers wrote. "New Mexicans deserve to have clear information about a proposal that will have a significant impact on their community."

Specifically, they are requesting:

* An over view of the proposed project;

* An outline of what infrastructure changes or investments are planned as part of the project;

* A list and explanation of what federal, state, and local permits will be necessary to pursue the project;

* A list of what federal, state, and local permits or authorizations have been obtained or applied for at this time, and from what authorities;

* A list, including citations, for all applicable federal statutes and regulations that the project will need to comply with to protect and ensure the safety of the community's water, air, and residents;

* The proposed timeline for any construction and permitting activities for the project;

* A description of any community benefits that Pacer believes are relevant for the project, such as jobs created, estimated state and local tax revenue generated, or other community contributions.

The lawmakers are awaiting a response from Pacer.

A full copy of the letter is available below and at: http://www.scribd.com/doc/209381914/Letter-to-Pacer-Energy-Marketing-on-Lamy

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage12bkp-140228-30VitinMar-4651736

LOAD-DATE: February 28, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

February 26, 2014 Wednesday

House approves 'unlocking' bill

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 277 words

The House of Representatives approved a bill Tuesday that would allow people to open their cell phones for service from companies other than the one from which they obtained the device.

The bill was passed with a 295-114 vote. The legislation is known as the "Unlocking Consumer Choice and Wireless Competition Act".

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D-03) was among those voting against the bill. **Luján**, in a statement, said he made his decision because he believes the act was changed at the last minute in a way that weakens consumers' ownership rights.

"While this is a complex issue, what is at stake is straightforward," he said. "This is not just about the ability to unlock a phone and choose your mobile network, it is about the use of copyright laws to limit the freedom and choices of consumers. Instead of clarifying a questionable legal interpretation that prevents consumers from using their electronic devices for legal purposes, this bill legitimates that decision and allows anti-competitive practices to become legally enforceable. Many would agree that consumers should be able to unlock their phone or use electronic devices for legal purposes without running afoul of copyright law. Unfortunately this bill does not provide the straightforward solution that it did before the bill was changed."

Luján pointed out that consumer groups Public Knowledge and the Electronic Frontier Foundation had also withdrawn their support for the legislation.

Similar legislation is being considered by the Senate.

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: February 26, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 26, 2014

LUJAN CALLS FOR A VOTE IN THE HOUSE TO RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 372 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District joined a number of his Democratic colleagues today at a press conference highlighting their efforts to force a vote in the House of Representatives on an increase in the minimum wage.

"At today's minimum wage, many full-time workers and their families still live below the poverty line. As a nation, we can and we must do better if we are going to provide people with opportunities to pull themselves up and out of poverty with hard work and determination," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Raising the federal minimum wage to $10.10 for all workers would benefit 28 million workers and lift

nearly 1 million people out of poverty. In New Mexico alone, approximately 147,000 workers would be impacted - almost 19 percent of the workforce. It will put more money in the pockets of workers who will spend that money in our communities and in our small businesses, helping them grow. That is why more than two-thirds of small business owners support an increase in the minimum wage."

Despite significant public support, House Speaker John Boehner has refused to allow a vote on a minimum wage increase. House Democrats have introduced a discharge petition that would require an up or down vote on legislation raising the federal minimum wage to $10.10 an hour when a majority of the House, 218 members, sign on to the petition. **Lujan** signed the petition this afternoon.

More than 600 economists, including seven Nobel Prize winners, recently signed a letter to the President and Congressional leaders expressing their support for raising the minimum wage. They highlighted recent research into the effects of a higher minimum wage, stating that "increases in the minimum wage have had little or no negative effect on the employment of minimum-wage workers, even during times of weakness in the labor market."

"It has been almost five years since Congress acted to increase the minimum wage, while inflation has pushed up the cost of everyday goods since that time. It's time for Congress to act and give America's workers a raise," added **Lujan**.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-calls-for-a-vote-in-the-house-to-raise-the-minimum-wage/

LOAD-DATE: February 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 26, 2014

Udall, Heinrich, Lujan: New Mexicans Deserve Clear Information about Lamy Project;
Lawmakers ask Pacer Energy for 'accurate and detailed information' about the project to be shared with Lamy community;
Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 415 words

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, and U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** announced that they have sent a letter on behalf of their constituents to Pacer Energy Marketing, which has announced plans to truck crude oil from the Four Corners to a property in Lamy owned by Santa Fe Southern Railway, where it would be transported by rail to refineries south of Albuquerque.

The lawmakers note in their letter that Pacer's plans have raised strong concerns among the residents of Lamy about the potential for spills and accidents, potential risks to water supplies and community wells, and the limited ability for emergency personnel to respond in case of an accident.

Udall, Heinrich and **Lujan** are working with state and local officials to determine what jurisdictions, permits and regulations apply. In the meantime, they are asking Pacer to provide information to help them - and the community - understand the implications of the project.

"We believe accurate and detailed information regarding the scope of your proposal should be shared with our constituents and local officials as soon as possible," the lawmakers wrote. "New Mexicans deserve to have clear information about a proposal that will have a significant impact on their community."

Specifically, they are requesting:

-An over view of the proposed project;

-An outline of what infrastructure changes or investments are planned as part of the project;

-A list and explanation of what federal, state, and local permits will be necessary to pursue the project;

-A list of what federal, state, and local permits or authorizations have been obtained or applied for at this time, and from what authorities;

-A list, including citations, for all applicable federal statutes and regulations that the project will need to comply with to protect and ensure the safety of the community's water, air, and residents;

-The proposed timeline for any construction and permitting activities for the project;

-A description of any community benefits that Pacer believes are relevant for the project, such as jobs created, estimated state and local tax revenue generated, or other community contributions.

The lawmakers are awaiting a response from Pacer.

A full copy of the letter is available here http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/download/letter-to-pacer-energy-marketing-on-lamy.

Read this original document at: http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/press-releases/udall-heinrich-**lujan**-new-mexicans-deserve-clear-information-about-lamy-project

LOAD-DATE: February 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 26, 2014

Udall, Heinrich, Lujan: New Mexicans Deserve Clear Information about Lamy Project;
Lawmakers ask Pacer Energy for 'accurate and detailed information' about the project to be shared with Lamy community;
Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 412 words

WASHINGTON - Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, and U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** announced that they have sent a letter on behalf of their constituents to Pacer Energy Marketing, which has announced plans to truck crude oil from the Four Corners to a property in Lamy owned by Santa Fe Southern Railway, where it would be transported by rail to refineries south of Albuquerque.

The lawmakers note in their letter that Pacer's plans have raised strong concerns among the residents of Lamy about the potential for spills and accidents, potential risks to water supplies and community wells, and the limited ability for emergency personnel to respond in case of an accident.

Udall, Heinrich and **Lujan** are working with state and local officials to determine what jurisdictions, permits and regulations apply. In the meantime, they are asking Pacer to provide information to help them - and the community - understand the implications of the project.

"We believe accurate and detailed information regarding the scope of your proposal should be shared with our constituents and local officials as soon as possible," the lawmakers wrote. "New Mexicans deserve to have clear information about a proposal that will have a significant impact on their community."

Specifically, they are requesting:

-An over view of the proposed project;

-An outline of what infrastructure changes or investments are planned as part of the project;

-A list and explanation of what federal, state, and local permits will be necessary to pursue the project;

-A list of what federal, state, and local permits or authorizations have been obtained or applied for at this time, and from what authorities;

-A list, including citations, for all applicable federal statutes and regulations that the project will need to comply with to protect and ensure the safety of the community's water, air, and residents;

-The proposed timeline for any construction and permitting activities for the project;

-A description of any community benefits that Pacer believes are relevant for the project, such as jobs created, estimated state and local tax revenue generated, or other community contributions.

The lawmakers are awaiting a response from Pacer.

A full copy of the letter is available below and at: http://www.scribd.com/doc/209381914/Letter-to-Pacer-Energy-Marketing-on-Lamy

Letter to Pacer Energy Marketing on Lamy by Tom Udall

Read this original document at: http://www.tomudall.senate.gov/?p=press_releaseandid=1562

LOAD-DATE: February 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

February 26, 2014 Wednesday 4:54 AM EST

Udall, Heinrich, Lujan: New Mexicans Deserve Clear Information about Lamy Project

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 432 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The office of Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, and U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** announced that they have sent a letter on behalf of their constituents to Pacer Energy Marketing, which has announced plans to truck crude oil from the Four Corners to a property in Lamy owned by Santa Fe Southern Railway, where it would be transported by rail to refineries south of Albuquerque.

The lawmakers note in their letter that Pacer's plans have raised strong concerns among the residents of Lamy about the potential for spills and accidents, potential risks to water supplies and community wells, and the limited ability for emergency personnel to respond in case of an accident.

Udall, Heinrich and **Lujan** are working with state and local officials to determine what jurisdictions, permits and regulations apply. In the meantime, they are asking Pacer to provide information to help them - and the community - understand the implications of the project.

"We believe accurate and detailed information regarding the scope of your proposal should be shared with our constituents and local officials as soon as possible," the lawmakers wrote. "New Mexicans deserve to have clear information about a proposal that will have a significant impact on their community."

Specifically, they are requesting:

-An over view of the proposed project;

-An outline of what infrastructure changes or investments are planned as part of the project;

-A list and explanation of what federal, state, and local permits will be necessary to pursue the project;

-A list of what federal, state, and local permits or authorizations have been obtained or applied for at this time, and from what authorities;

-A list, including citations, for all applicable federal statutes and regulations that the project will need to comply with to protect and ensure the safety of the community's water, air, and residents;

-The proposed timeline for any construction and permitting activities for the project;

-A description of any community benefits that Pacer believes are relevant for the project, such as jobs created, estimated state and local tax revenue generated, or other community contributions.

The lawmakers are awaiting a response from Pacer.

A full copy of the letter is available below and at: http://www.scribd.com/doc/209381914/Letter-to-Pacer-Energy-Marketing-on-Lamy

Letter to Pacer Energy Marketing on Lamy (http://www.scribd.com/doc/209381914/Letter-to-Pacer-Energy-Marketing-on-Lamy) by Tom Udall

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140227-4650765 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: February 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

February 26, 2014 Wednesday 3:50 AM EST

Udall, Heinrich, Lujan: New Mexicans Deserve Clear Information About Lamy Project

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 412 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The office of Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, and U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** announced that they have sent a letter on behalf of their constituents to Pacer Energy Marketing, which has announced plans to truck crude oil from the Four Corners to a property in Lamy owned by Santa Fe Southern Railway, where it would be transported by rail to refineries south of Albuquerque.

The lawmakers note in their letter that Pacer's plans have raised strong concerns among the residents of Lamy about the potential for spills and accidents, potential risks to water supplies and community wells, and the limited ability for emergency personnel to respond in case of an accident.

Udall, Heinrich and **Lujan** are working with state and local officials to determine what jurisdictions, permits and regulations apply. In the meantime, they are asking Pacer to provide information to help them - and the community - understand the implications of the project.

"We believe accurate and detailed information regarding the scope of your proposal should be shared with our constituents and local officials as soon as possible," the lawmakers wrote. "New Mexicans deserve to have clear information about a proposal that will have a significant impact on their community."

Specifically, they are requesting:

-An over view of the proposed project;

-An outline of what infrastructure changes or investments are planned as part of the project;

-A list and explanation of what federal, state, and local permits will be necessary to pursue the project;

-A list of what federal, state, and local permits or authorizations have been obtained or applied for at this time, and from what authorities;

-A list, including citations, for all applicable federal statutes and regulations that the project will need to comply with to protect and ensure the safety of the community's water, air, and residents;

-The proposed timeline for any construction and permitting activities for the project;

-A description of any community benefits that Pacer believes are relevant for the project, such as jobs created, estimated state and local tax revenue generated, or other community contributions.

The lawmakers are awaiting a response from Pacer.

A full copy of the letter is available here.http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/download/letter-to-pacer-energy-marketing-on-lamy

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TacordaCheng-140227-4650608 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: February 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

February 26, 2014 Wednesday 1:32 AM EST

Lujan Calls for a Vote in the House to Raise the Minimum Wage

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 379 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District joined a number of his Democratic colleagues today at a press conference highlighting their efforts to force a vote in the House of Representatives on an increase in the minimum wage.

"At today's minimum wage, many full-time workers and their families still live below the poverty line. As a nation, we can and we must do better if we are going to provide people with opportunities to pull themselves up and out of poverty with hard work and determination," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Raising the federal minimum wage to $10.10 for all workers would benefit 28 million workers and lift nearly 1 million people out of poverty. In New Mexico alone, approximately 147,000 workers would be impacted - almost 19 percent of the workforce. It will put more money in the pockets of workers who will spend that money in our communities and in our small businesses, helping them grow. That is why more than two-thirds of small business owners support an increase in the minimum wage."

Despite significant public support, House Speaker John Boehner has refused to allow a vote on a minimum wage increase. House Democrats have introduced a discharge petition that would require an up or down vote on legislation raising the federal minimum wage to $10.10 an hour when a majority of the House, 218 members, sign on to the petition. **Lujan** signed the petition this afternoon.

More than 600 economists, including seven Nobel Prize winners, recently signed a letter (http://www.epi.org/minimum-wage-statement/) to the President and Congressional leaders expressing their support for raising the minimum wage. They highlighted recent research into the effects of a higher minimum wage, stating that "increases in the minimum wage have had little or no

negative effect on the employment of minimum-wage workers, even during times of weakness in the labor market."

"It has been almost five years since Congress acted to increase the minimum wage, while inflation has pushed up the cost of everyday goods since that time. It's time for Congress to act and give America's workers a raise," added **Lujan**.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140227-4650090 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: February 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

279 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

February 25, 2014 Tuesday 1:32 AM EST

Lujan Votes Against Bill That Limits Consumers' Ownership Rights

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 356 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted against legislation this evening that was originally aimed at allowing consumers to switch mobile networks without having to buy a new phone - or "unlock" their phone - but was changed at the last minute in a manner that weakens consumers' ownership rights.

"While this is a complex issue, what is at stake is straightforward. This is not just about the ability to unlock a phone and choose your mobile network, it is about the use of copyright laws to limit the freedom and choices of consumers," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Instead of clarifying a questionable legal interpretation that prevents consumers from using their electronic devices for legal purposes, this bill legitimates that decision and allows anti-competitive practices to become legally enforceable. Many would agree that consumers should be able to unlock their phone or use electronic devices for legal purposes without running afoul of copyright law. Unfortunately this bill does not provide the straightforward solution that it did before the bill was changed."

At issue is a ruling by the Librarian of Congress that decided removing locks on cell phones violates the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. H.R. 1123, originally was written to replace this ruling with an earlier decision that cellphone users could unlock their phones without violating copyright law.

H.R. 1123 passed out of the Judiciary Committee with bipartisan support, but was changed before coming to the House floor to make the unlocking of phones in bulk for the purpose of reselling them a violation of copyright law. Rather than overturning the ruling by the Librarian of Congress, the bill put on the floor tonight allows copyright law to limit the freedom of consumers to use their phones as they choose. As a result of this last minute change by the by House Republicans, consumer groups Public Knowledge and the Electronic Frontier Foundation withdrew their support for the legislation.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140227-4650092 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: February 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

February 21, 2014 Friday 2:03 AM EST

New Mexico Dems: Udall, Heinrich, Lujan Announce $1 Million Safer Grant for Bloomfield Fire Department

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 444 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Yesterday, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, and U.S. Representative **Ben Ray Lujan**, announced that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has awarded the Bloomfield Fire Department with a $1,023,494 grant under the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) program. The grant funds will be used to increase the number of firefighters in Bloomfield, and help the Bloomfield Fire Department to enhance its deployment capabilities to ensure that the community has adequate protection from fires and fire-related hazards.

SAFER grants provide funds directly to fire departments to help them to improve and restore staffing to comply with minimum industry standards, and to maintain the 24-hour staffing needed to provide adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards. Increased funding provided through SAFER grants allows fire departments to rehire laid-off firefighters, retain firefighters facing imminent

layoffs, and hire new firefighters. The grants also assist with the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters. Full staffing enables fire departments to more effectively and safely respond to emergencies with decreased response times and greater numbers of trained personnel.

"This grant will provide important funding to the Bloomfield Fire Department, and help it to ensure it is fully staffed and appropriately equipped to respond to emergencies safely and effectively," Udall said. "New Mexicans understand the great risks that firefighters regularly face for our safety, and I'm proud to support this important investment in the safety of the both the firefighters of Bloomfield and the surrounding community, which they serve with dedication."

"Our brave firefighters serve on the frontlines every day to protect our communities, " Heinrich said. "This investment will help the Bloomfield Fire Department maintain the staffing it needs to keep the public safe. I will continue to support these essential grant programs to ensure our first responders can do their jobs effectively and safely."

"With New Mexico facing the threat of a longer fire season, these federal funds are a critical component to ensuring that the Bloomfield area has the personnel it needs to protect the community," **Lujan** said. "New Mexico's firefighters serve with distinction in harm's way and we must do all we can to see that they have the resources they need to do their jobs as safely and effectively as possible. This investment will contribute greatly to that effort."

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage1pm-140222-30TagarumaMar-4645654 30TagarumaMar

LOAD-DATE: February 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

February 15, 2014 Saturday

Washington: ADDITIONAL SPONSORS -- (House of Representatives - February 14, 2014)

LENGTH: 536 words

DATELINE: Washington

The Library of Congress, The Government of USA has issued the following news release:

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 164: Mr. Barber and Ms. Chu.

H.R. 207: Mr. Young of Indiana.

H.R. 310: Mr. Gibson.

H.R. 515: Mr. Cicilline.

H.R. 543: Mr. Bera of California.

H.R. 685: Mr. Cicilline.

H.R. 946: Mr. Lucas.

H.R. 1173: Mr. Welch.

H.R. 1176: Mr. Luetkemeyer.

H.R. 1201: Mr. Rigell.

H.R. 1286: Mr. Maffei.

H.R. 1343: Mr. Johnson of Georgia and Mr. Lowenthal.

H.R. 1386: Mr. Lucas.

H.R. 1508: Mr. Israel, Ms. Tsongas, Mrs. McCarthy of New York, Mr. Coffman, Mr. Lipinski, and Mr. George Miller of California.

H.R. 1563: Mr. Foster.

H.R. 1708: Ms. Bordallo.

H.R. 1709: Mr. Grijalva.

H.R. 1710: Mr. Grijalva.

H.R. 1750: Mr. Gohmert.

H.R. 1761: Mr. Garamendi.

H.R. 1953: Mr. Rigell.

H.R. 1978: Mr. Cicilline.

H.R. 2000: Mr. Veasey.

H.R. 2028: Mr. Garcia, Mr. Israel, and Mr. Ruiz.

H.R. 2109: Mr. Meeks.

H.R. 2415: Mr. Schneider.

H.R. 2509: Ms. Schwartz.

H.R. 2535: Mr. Terry.

H.R. 2575: Mr. Amash.

H.R. 2591: Mr. Grayson.

H.R. 2737: Mr. Rush.

H.R. 2743: Mr. Jones.

H.R. 2797: Ms. Sewell of Alabama.

H.R. 2866: Mr. Chabot, Mr. Sanford, Mr. Roe of Tennessee, Mr. Rothfus, Mr. Byrne, Mr. Cuellar, Mr. Schock, Mrs. Noem, Mr. DesJarlais, Mr. McHenry, Mr. Fincher, Mr. Barr, Mr. Broun of Georgia, Mr. Pastor of Arizona, and Mr. McIntyre.

H.R. 2869: Mrs. Ellmers.

H.R. 3335: Mr. Benishek and Mr. Peterson.

H.R. 3370: Mr. Lowenthal, Mr. Takano, Mr. Nolan, Mr. Kildee, Mr. Grijalva, Ms. Fudge, Mr. Clyburn, Mr. Dingell, Mr. Schiff, Mr. Larson of Connecticut, Ms. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham of New Mexico, Mr. Van Hollen, Ms. Esty, Mr. Rangel, Ms. Hahn, Ms. Titus, Mr. Hoyer, Mr. Lipinski, Mr. Levin, Ms. Linda T. Sánchez of California, Mr. Johnson of Georgia, Mr. Castro of Texas, Mr. McDermott, Mrs. Lowey, Mr. Bishop of Georgia, Mr. **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico, Mr. Smith of Washington, Ms. Eshoo, Mr. Matheson, Mr. Conyers, Ms. Schwartz, Mr. Cuellar, Mr. O'Rourke, and Mr. Brady of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3461: Mrs. Kirkpatrick, Ms. Kelly of Illinois, and Ms. Matsui.

H.R. 3462: Mr. Gingrey of Georgia.

H.R. 3471: Ms. Matsui and Mr. Foster.

H.R. 3494: Mr. Garamendi.

H.R. 3513: Mr. Connolly.

H.R. 3658: Ms. McCollum.

H.R. 3662: Mr. Huffman and Ms. Lofgren.

H.R. 3673: Mr. Calvert.

H.R. 3690: Ms. Jackson Lee, Mr. Rangel, and Mr. Polis.

H.R. 3708: Mr. Bridenstine, Mr. Duncan of South Carolina, Mr. Fleischmann, and Mr. Griffith of Virginia.

H.R. 3712: Ms. Velázquez, Ms. Chu, Mr. Garamendi, Mr. Maffei, and Mr. Foster.

H.R. 3793: Ms. Meng and Mr. **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico.

H.R. 3826: Mr. Goodlatte.

H.R. 3840: Mr. Conaway.

H.R. 3865: Mr. Smith of Texas, Mr. Griffith of Virginia, and Mr. Yoder.

H.R. 3979: Mr. Poe of Texas.

H.R. 3997: Mr. Farr.

H.R. 4008: Mr. Jones.

H.R. 4019: Ms. Sinema, Mr. Peters of California, and Mr. Foster.

H.J. Res. 110: Mr. Bishop of Utah, Mr. Duncan of South Carolina, and Mr. Westmoreland.

H. Res. 442: Mr. Perry and Mr. Hall.

H. Res. 468: Ms. Edwards and Mr. Schiff.

H. Res. 476: Mr. Chaffetz, Ms. Jenkins, Mr. Broun of Georgia, and Mr. Gingrey of Georgia.

H. Res. 479: Mr. Huffman.

For more information please visit: http://thomas.loc.gov

LOAD-DATE: February 15, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

282 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

February 14, 2014 Friday

Congressional Democrats back higher wage bill in NM

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 196 words

The Democratic members of New Mexico's Congressional delegation have issued a joint statement supporting a proposal being debated by the state Legislature to raise the state's minimum wage.

The message was signed by Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham. They said they also support the idea of raising the federal minimum wage.

"Increasing the minimum wage ensures families have money to spend at local businesses, and it's one of the best things we can do to kickstart New Mexico's economy," Udall said. "At today's minimum wage, too many New Mexico families work two or three jobs just to put food on the table and fill up the gas tank, yet they still can't make enough to climb out of poverty. Our nation was founded on the promise that - no matter your background - anyone who works hard can get ahead. It's time to raise the minimum wage to make sure we're keeping that promise so that all New Mexico families have a real chance at the American dream."

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: February 14, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

283 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

February 14, 2014 Friday 10:30 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: New Mexico's Democratic Congressional Delegation Supports NM Minimum Wage Increase

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 498 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan**, and Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham have announced their enthusiastic support for increasing New Mexico's minimum wage.

The New Mexico state legislature is currently debating a measure to raise the minimum wage and provide for annual inflation increases to strengthen the economy and help lift more families into the middle class. Udall, Heinrich, **Lujan** and **Lujan** Grisham also support raising the federal minimum wage.

"Increasing the minimum wage ensures families have money to spend at local businesses, and it's one of the best things we can do to kickstart New Mexico's economy," Udall said. "At today's minimum wage, too many New Mexico families work two or three jobs just to put food on the table and fill up the gas tank, yet they still can't make enough to climb out of poverty. Our nation was founded on the promise that - no matter your background - anyone who works hard can get ahead. It's time to raise the minimum wage to make sure we're keeping that promise so that all New Mexico families have a real chance at the American dream."

"Working full time at the current minimum wage leaves too many New Mexico families struggling to make ends meet -- this is especially true for women, who make up a disproportionate share of minimum wage workers today," Heinrich said. "Our economy and our workforce are stronger when we reward an honest day's work with fair wages. We must be unwavering in our commitment to restore the basic bargain on which this country was built, that if you work hard and play the rules you can get ahead. It's time to raise the minimum wage."

"At today's minimum wage, many full-time workers and their families still live below the poverty line. As a state and a nation, we can and we must do better if we are going to provide people with opportunities to pull themselves up and out of poverty with hard work and determination," **Lujan** said. "An increase in the minimum wage is not only good for workers, it's good for businesses as it increases worker morale and contributes to a decrease in employee turnover. It also puts more money in the pockets of consumers, helping small businesses in our communities grow. It's time to give workers in New Mexico a raise."

"A strong, thriving middle class is the key to jumpstarting New Mexico's economy and ensuring our future success. But at today's minimum wage, New Mexico workers are denied the opportunity to enter the middle class - in fact, it's a daily struggle just to stay out of poverty and provide for their families," **Lujan** Grisham said. "Raising the minimum wage will give a much-needed shot in the arm to our recovery, help reduce our state's vast income inequality gap and expand economic opportunity for New Mexico families. Hardworking New Mexicans deserve a raise."

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage1pm-140215-30TagarumaMar-4638962 30TagarumaMar

LOAD-DATE: February 15, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

February 14, 2014 Friday 9:40 PM EST

NM Dem Congressional Delegation Supports NM Minimum Wage Increase

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 497 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M. (1st CD), issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced their enthusiastic support for increasing New Mexico's minimum wage.

The New Mexico state legislature is currently debating a measure to raise the minimum wage and provide for annual inflation increases to strengthen the economy and help lift more families into the

middle class. Udall, Heinrich, **Lujan** and **Lujan** Grisham also support raising the federal minimum wage.

"Increasing the minimum wage ensures families have money to spend at local businesses, and it's one of the best things we can do to kickstart New Mexico's economy," Udall said. "At today's minimum wage, too many New Mexico families work two or three jobs just to put food on the table and fill up the gas tank, yet they still can't make enough to climb out of poverty. Our nation was founded on the promise that - no matter your background - anyone who works hard can get ahead. It's time to raise the minimum wage to make sure we're keeping that promise so that all New Mexico families have a real chance at the American dream."

"Working full time at the current minimum wage leaves too many New Mexico families struggling to make ends meet -- this is especially true for women, who make up a disproportionate share of minimum wage workers today," Heinrich said. "Our economy and our workforce are stronger when we reward an honest day's work with fair wages. We must be unwavering in our commitment to restore the basic bargain on which this country was built, that if you work hard and play the rules you can get ahead. It's time to raise the minimum wage."

"At today's minimum wage, many full-time workers and their families still live below the poverty line. As a state and a nation, we can and we must do better if we are going to provide people with opportunities to pull themselves up and out of poverty with hard work and determination," **Lujan** said. "An increase in the minimum wage is not only good for workers, it's good for businesses as it increases worker morale and contributes to a decrease in employee turnover. It also puts more money in the pockets of consumers, helping small businesses in our communities grow. It's time to give workers in New Mexico a raise."

"A strong, thriving middle class is the key to jumpstarting New Mexico's economy and ensuring our future success. But at today's minimum wage, New Mexico workers are denied the opportunity to enter the middle class - in fact, it's a daily struggle just to stay out of poverty and provide for their families," **Lujan** Grisham said. "Raising the minimum wage will give a much-needed shot in the arm to our recovery, help reduce our state's vast income inequality gap and expand economic opportunity for New Mexico families. Hardworking New Mexicans deserve a raise."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TacordaCheng-140215-4638850 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: February 15, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

285 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 13, 2014

N.M. Dem Congressional Delegation Supports N.M. Minimum Wage Increase;
Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 497 words

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan** andMichelle **Lujan** Grisham announced their enthusiastic support for increasing New Mexico's minimum wage.

The New Mexico state legislature is currently debating a measure to raise the minimum wage and provide for annual inflation increases to strengthen the economy and help lift more families into the middle class. Udall, Heinrich, **Lujan** and **Lujan** Grisham also support raising the federal minimum wage.

"Increasing the minimum wage ensures families have money to spend at local businesses, and it's one of the best things we can do to kickstart New Mexico's economy," Udall said. "At today's minimum wage, too many New Mexico families work two or three jobs just to put food on the table and fill up the gas tank, yet they still can't make enough to climb out of poverty. Our nation was founded on the promise that - no matter your background - anyone who works hard can get ahead. It's time to raise the minimum wage to make sure we're keeping that promise so that all New Mexico families have a real chance at the American dream."

"Working full time at the current minimum wage leaves too many New Mexico families struggling to make ends meet -- this is especially true for women, who make up a disproportionate share of minimum wage workers today,"Heinrich said. "Our economy and our workforce are stronger when we reward an honest day's work with fair wages. We must be unwavering in our commitment to restore the basic bargain on which this country was built, that if you work hard and play the rules you can get ahead. It's time to raise the minimum wage."

"At today's minimum wage, many full-time workers and their families still live below the poverty line. As a state and a nation, we can and we must do better if we are going to provide people with opportunities to pull themselves up and out of poverty with hard work and determination," **Lujan** said. "An increase in the minimum wage is not only good for workers, it's good for businesses as it increases worker morale and contributes to a decrease in employee turnover. It also puts more money in the pockets of consumers, helping small businesses in our communities grow. It's time to give workers in New Mexico a raise."

"A strong, thriving middle class is the key to jumpstarting New Mexico's economy and ensuring our future success. But at today's minimum wage, New Mexico workers are denied the opportunity to enter the middle class - in fact, it's a daily struggle just to stay out of poverty and provide for their families," **Lujan** Grisham said. "Raising the minimum wage will give a much-needed shot in the arm to our recovery, help reduce our state's vast income inequality gap and expand economic opportunity for New Mexico families. Hardworking New Mexicans deserve a raise."

Read this original document at: http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/press-releases/nm-dem-congressional-delegation-supports-nm-minimum-wage-increase

LOAD-DATE: February 14, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

February 12, 2014 Wednesday 1:13 AM EST

New Mexico Dems: Congressman Ben Ray Lujan Rejects Republican Bill that Undermines Medicare to Address Military Retiree Pensions

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 349 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted yesterday against a House Republican proposal that undermines Medicare and pits seniors against military retirees. The legislation addresses a provision in the budget agreement that was passed by Congress in December that reduced the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to pensions for military retirees - but it does so by extending sequester cuts to Medicare.

"I support action to restore the full cost of living adjustment for military retirees who have spent a career serving their country, but it's disappointing that House Republicans offered a bill that cut Medicare to pay for it," Congressman **Lujan** said. "We need a solution that does not pick winners and losers between military retirees and our nation's seniors."

Lujan voted for the budget agreement that rolled back last year's devastating sequester cuts that had resulted in Head Start centers shutting down, workers being furloughed, and cuts to the national labs that rippled through the New Mexico's economy. In January, **Lujan** supported the omnibus appropriations bill to fund the government that took steps to address the pension issue by repealing the COLA cut for disabled military retirees and survivors. The legislation also included important funding to address the backlog of veterans claims through the VA.

"During Congress' efforts to pass spending bills last month, we were able to address part of this problem in a bipartisan manner, ensuring that disabled military retirees would receive their full COLA," **Lujan** added. "It's disappointing that instead of once again working together to solve this problem that so many of us agree should be addressed, House Republicans choose legislation that weakens Medicare and our commitment to New Mexico's seniors."

Lujan is a cosponsor of the Military Retirement Restoration Act that repeals the cuts to COLAs and is fully paid for by closing tax loopholes for offshore corporations.

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage4psi-140213-30VitinMar-4636265

LOAD-DATE: February 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

287 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 11, 2014

LUJAN REJECTS HOUSE REPUBLICAN BILL THAT UNDERMINES MEDICARE TO ADDRESS MILITARY RETIREE PENSIONS; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 356 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted today against a House Republican proposal that undermines Medicare and pits seniors against military retirees. The legislation addresses a provision in the budget agreement that was passed by Congress in December that reduced the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to pensions for military retirees - but it does so by extending sequester cuts to Medicare.

"I support action to restore the full cost of living adjustment for military retirees who have spent a career serving their country, but it's disappointing that House Republicans offered a bill that cut Medicare to pay for it," Congressman **Lujan** said. "We need a solution that does not pick winners and losers between military retirees and our nation's seniors."

Lujan voted for the budget agreement that rolled back last year's devastating sequester cuts that had resulted in Head Start centers shutting down, workers being furloughed, and cuts to the national labs that rippled through the New Mexico's economy. In January, **Lujan** supported the omnibus appropriations bill to fund the government that took steps to address the pension issue by repealing the COLA cut for disabled military retirees and survivors. The legislation also included important funding to address the backlog of veterans claims through the VA.

"During Congress' efforts to pass spending bills last month, we were able to address part of this problem in a bipartisan manner, ensuring that disabled military retirees would receive their full COLA," **Lujan** added. "It's disappointing that instead of once again working together to solve this problem that so many of us agree should be addressed, House Republicans choose legislation that weakens Medicare and our commitment to New Mexico's seniors."

Lujan is a cosponsor of the Military Retirement Restoration Act that repeals the cuts to COLAs and is fully paid for by closing tax loopholes for offshore corporations.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-rejects-house-republican-bill-that-undermines-medicare-to-address-military-retiree-pensions/

LOAD-DATE: February 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

February 11, 2014 Tuesday 2:13 AM EST

Lujan Rejects House Republican Bill That Undermines Medicare to Address Military Retiree Pensions

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 349 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted today against a House Republican proposal that undermines Medicare and pits seniors against military retirees. The legislation addresses a provision in the budget agreement that was passed by Congress in December that reduced the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to pensions for military retirees - but it does so by extending sequester cuts to Medicare.

"I support action to restore the full cost of living adjustment for military retirees who have spent a career serving their country, but it's disappointing that House Republicans offered a bill that cut Medicare to pay for it," Congressman **Lujan** said. "We need a solution that does not pick winners and losers between military retirees and our nation's seniors."

Lujan voted for the budget agreement that rolled back last year's devastating sequester cuts that had resulted in Head Start centers shutting down, workers being furloughed, and cuts to the national labs that rippled through the New Mexico's economy. In January, **Lujan** supported the omnibus appropriations bill to fund the government that took steps to address the pension issue by repealing the COLA cut for disabled military retirees and survivors. The legislation also included important funding to address the backlog of veterans claims through the VA.

"During Congress' efforts to pass spending bills last month, we were able to address part of this problem in a bipartisan manner, ensuring that disabled military retirees would receive their full COLA," **Lujan** added. "It's disappointing that instead of once again working together to solve this

problem that so many of us agree should be addressed, House Republicans choose legislation that weakens Medicare and our commitment to New Mexico's seniors."

Lujan is a cosponsor of the Military Retirement Restoration Act that repeals the cuts to COLAs and is fully paid for by closing tax loopholes for offshore corporations.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140212-4634551 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: February 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 7, 2014

LUJAN: WITH PRESIDENT'S SIGNATURE TODAY, FARM BILL TO HELP NEW MEXICO COMMUNITIES; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 527 words

Santa Fe, NM - With President Barack Obama scheduled to sign the bipartisan Farm Bill into law this afternoon, Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted the important impact the legislation will have on communities in New Mexico.

"Farmers and ranchers in New Mexico have waited a long time for this day. With the President's signature on a new Farm Bill, those in the agricultural sector who contribute greatly to New Mexico's economy, while honoring our culture and history, will receive important assistance that will help in their efforts to produce the many crops - from chiles to pecans - that make New Mexico so special, "Congressman **Lujan** said. "In addition, the legislation includes an important provision that will help farmers and ranchers care for the acequias that are essential to their livelihood. By enabling Acequia and Community Ditch Associations to finally compete for federal grants, they will have an opportunity to receive funds that will help maintain the health of their acequias."

During debate on the House Farm Bill last year, **Lujan** offered an amendment to enable Acequia Community Ditch Associations to apply for federal funds within the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). The amendment, which was adopted by a voice vote, would remove burdensome roadblocks to improve conservation practices and manage scare water resources, thereby strengthening the acequias that provide irrigation for local farmers. **Lujan's** efforts, along with the support of the New Mexico delegation, helped secure language in the bill that is similar to the

amendment and will allow Acequia and Community Ditch Associations to form partnerships and apply for federal grants through EQIP as well as a number of other federal programs.

"We greatly appreciate the work of our congressional delegation to improve acequia eligibility for conservation programs," said Paula Garcia, Executive Director of the New Mexico Acequia Association. "Investment in agriculture will expand the availability of locally grown food and support the livelihood of farmers and ranchers in New Mexico's acequia communities. Particularly during this time of drought, conservation practices are vital for farmers and ranchers."

Among a number of provisions in the Farm Bill that will benefit New Mexico is one year of funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) Program. Local governments that contain nontaxable federal lands and provide vital government services, such as public safety, housing, social services and transportation are eligible for the PILT program. PILT compensates these jurisdictions - which provide significant support for national parks, wildlife refuges and recreation areas - for their support and foregone tax revenue from these federal lands. Last year, New Mexico received more than $34 million through the program. In addition, the bill will help farmers' markets and specialty crop producers, providing important funds for chiles, pecans, and other fruits and vegetables.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-with-presidents-signature-today-farm-bill-to-help-new-mexico-communities/

LOAD-DATE: February 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

290 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

February 7, 2014 Friday

LUJAN: WITH PRESIDENT'S SIGNATURE TODAY, FARM BILL TO HELP NEW MEXICO COMMUNITIES

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 515 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

With President Barack Obama scheduled to sign the bipartisan Farm Bill into law this afternoon, Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted the important impact the legislation will have on communities in New Mexico.

"Farmers and ranchers in New Mexico have waited a long time for this day. With the President's signature on a new Farm Bill, those in the agricultural sector who contribute greatly to New Mexico's economy, while honoring our culture and history, will receive important assistance that will help in their efforts to produce the many crops - from chiles to pecans - that make New Mexico so special, "Congressman **Lujan** said. "In addition, the legislation includes an important provision that will help farmers and ranchers care for the acequias that are essential to their livelihood. By enabling Acequia and Community Ditch Associations to finally compete for federal grants, they will have an opportunity to receive funds that will help maintain the health of their acequias."

During debate on the House Farm Bill last year, **Lujan** offered an amendment to enable Acequia Community Ditch Associations to apply for federal funds within the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). The amendment, which was adopted by a voice vote, would remove burdensome roadblocks to improve conservation practices and manage scare water resources, thereby strengthening the acequias that provide irrigation for local farmers. **Lujan's** efforts, along with the support of the New Mexico delegation, helped secure language in the bill that is similar to the amendment and will allow Acequia and Community Ditch Associations to form partnerships and apply for federal grants through EQIP as well as a number of other federal programs.

"We greatly appreciate the work of our congressional delegation to improve acequia eligibility for conservation programs," said Paula Garcia, Executive Director of the New Mexico Acequia Association. "Investment in agriculture will expand the availability of locally grown food and support the livelihood of farmers and ranchers in New Mexico's acequia communities. Particularly during this time of drought, conservation practices are vital for farmers and ranchers."

Among a number of provisions in the Farm Bill that will benefit New Mexico is one year of funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) Program. Local governments that contain nontaxable federal lands and provide vital government services, such as public safety, housing, social services and transportation are eligible for the PILT program. PILT compensates these jurisdictions - which provide significant support for national parks, wildlife refuges and recreation areas - for their support and foregone tax revenue from these federal lands. Last year, New Mexico received more than $34 million through the program. In addition, the bill will help farmers' markets and specialty crop producers, providing important funds for chiles, pecans, and other fruits and vegetables.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: February 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

February 7, 2014 Friday 10:33 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: Congressman Ben Ray Lujan Signs on to Net Neutrality

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 328 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** has announced that he has signed on as a cosponsor to legislation to protect consumers and innovation online. **Lujan** joins Representatives Henry Waxman and Anna Eshoo, authors of legislation in the House, as well as a number of his colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee as a cosponsor of H.R. 3982, the Open Internet Preservation Act. A companion bill will be introduced in the Senate by Senator Ed Markey and includes the support of New Mexico Senator Tom Udall.

The legislation is a response to a decision by the D.C. Circuit Court last month to strike down the Federal Communications Commission's Open Internet Order that had prevented broadband providers from blocking or discriminating against content online. The bill restores these rules until the FCC takes new, final action in the Open Internet proceeding.

"A free and open Internet has spawned countless innovations that have impacted our lives for the better and spurred economic growth. It is essential that we keep the innovative spirit alive by ensuring that we have a system that does not block access to content on the web," Congressman **Lujan** said. "The decision by the D.C. Circuit Court threatens to undermine the freedom of the Internet by allowing restrictions that impede users' ability to harness the Internet's full potential. As the FCC works on replacement rules, this legislation will make it clear that the Internet will remain open for all users."

The full text of the bill is available online here[http://democrats.energycommerce.house.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Bill-Text-Waxman-Eshoo-Open-Internet-Preservation-Act-2014-1-24.pdf]. A bill summary is available online here[http://democrats.energycommerce.house.gov/sites/default/files/documents/HR-3982-Open-Internet-Bill-Summary-2014-1-24.pdf].

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage1pm-140208-30TagarumaMar-4631027 30TagarumaMar

LOAD-DATE: February 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

February 7, 2014 Friday 10:00 PM EST

Rep. Sarbanes Introduces Bill to Reform Congressional Election Financing

BYLINE: by KAREN NARAG, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 700 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7 -- Rep. John Sarbanes, D-Md., has introduced legislation (H.R. 20) to "reform the financing of Congressional elections by broadening participation by small dollar donors."

The bill was introduced on Feb. 5 and has 128 co-sponsors. Co-sponsors are Reps. Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., Ron Barber, D-Ariz., Joyce Beatty, D-Ohio, Ami Bera, D-Calif., Timothy H. Bishop, D-N.Y., Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., Suzanne Bonamici, D-Ore., Robert A. Brady, D-Pa., Bruce L. Braley, D-Iowa, John C. Carney, D-Del., Matt Cartwright, D-Pa., Joaquin Castro, D-Texas, David N. Cicilline, D-R.I., Yvette D. Clarke, D-N.Y., Wm.

Lacy Clay Jr., D-Mo., Emanuel Cleaver, D-Mo., James E. Clyburn, D-S.C., Steve Cohen, D-Tenn., John Conyers Jr., D-Mich., Jim Cooper, D-Tenn., Joe Courtney, D-Conn., Joseph Crowley, D-N.Y., Elijah E. Cummings, D-Md., Susan A. Davis, D-Calif., Peter A. DeFazio, D-Ore., John Delaney, D-Md., Rosa L. DeLauro, D-Conn., Suzan DelBene, D-Wash., Theodore Deutch, D-Fla., John D. Dingell, D-Mich., Lloyd Doggett, D-Texas, Donna F. Edwards, D-Md., Keith Ellison, D-Minn., Eliot L. Engel, D-N.Y., Anna G. Eshoo, D-Calif., Elizabeth Esty, D-Conn., Sam Farr, D-Calif., Lois Frankel, D-Fla., Marcia L. Fudge, D-Ohio, Tulsi Gabbard, D-Hawaii, Joe Garcia, D-Fla., Alan Grayson, D-Fla., Gene Green, D-Texas, Al Green, D-Texas, Raul M. Grijalva, D-Ariz., Luis V. Gutierrez, D-Ill., Alcee L Hastings, D-Fla., James A. Himes, D-Conn., Rush D. Holt, D-N.J., Michael M. Honda, D-Calif., Steven Horsford, D-Nev., Steny H. Hoyer, D-Md., Jared Huffman, D-Calif., Steve Israel, D-N.Y., Sheila Jackson-Lee, D-Texas, Hakeem Jeffries, D-N.Y., Henry C. Johnson, D-Ga., Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-Texas, Walter B. Jones, R-N.C., Marcy Kaptur, D-Ohio, Robin Kelly, D-Ill., Derek Kilmer, D-Wash., Ron Kind, D-Wis., Ann Kirkpatrick, D-Ariz., Ann McLane Kuster, D-N.H., James R. Langevin, D-R.I., John B. Larson, D-Conn., Barbara Lee, D-Calif., John Lewis, D-Ga., David Loebsack, D-Iowa, Zoe Lofgren, D-Calif., Alan Lowenthal, D-Calif., **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., Dan Maffei, D-N.Y., Sean Patrick Maloney, D-N.Y., Carolyn B. Maloney, D-N.Y., Doris Matsui, D-Calif., Betty McCollum, D-Minn., Jim McDermott, D-Wash., James P. McGovern, D-Mass., Grace Meng, D-N.Y., Michael H. Michaud, D-Maine, George Miller, D-Calif., Gwen Moore, D-Wis., James P. Moran, D-Va., Patrick Murphy, D-Fla., Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., Rick Nolan, D-Minn., Eleanor Holmes Norton, D-D.C., Beto O'Rourke, D-Texas, Frank Pallone Jr., D-N.J., Bill Pascrell Jr., D-N.J., Donald M. Payne Jr., D-N.J., Ed Perlmutter, D-Colo., Scott Peters, D-Calif., Gary C. Peters, D-Mich., Chellie Pingree, D-Maine, Mark Pocan, D-Wis., Jared Polis, D-Colo., Mike Quigley, D-Ill., Charles B. Rangel, D-N.Y., Bobby L. Rush, D-Ill., Linda T. Sanchez, D-Calif., Janice D. Schakowsky, D-Ill., Allyson Y. Schwartz, D-Pa., Robert C. Scott, D-Va., Jose E. Serrano, D-N.Y., Carol Shea-Porter, D-N.H., Brad Sherman, D-Calif., Albio Sires, D-N.J., Louise McIntosh Slaughter, D-N.Y., Adam Smith, D-Wash., Jackie Speier, D-Calif., Eric Swalwell, R-Calif., Mark Takano, D-Calif., John F. Tierney, D-Mass., Paul Tonko, D-N.Y., Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., Juan C. Vargas, D-Calif., Nydia M. Velazquez, D-N.Y., Timothy Walz, D-Minn., Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., Henry A. Waxman, D-Calif., Peter Welch, D-Vt., John A. Yarmuth, D-Ky., Julia Brownley, D-Calif., and Kathy Castor, D-Fla.

The legislation was referred to the House Administration; Energy and Commerce; and Ways and Means Committees.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/LegislativeData.php?&n=BillText. For more information about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information about Targeted News Service products and services, please contact: Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://targetednews.com.

22Narag 0207-kn-1150801

LOAD-DATE: February 7, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

February 7, 2014 Friday 8:35 PM EST

Lujan: With President's Signature Today, Farm Bill to Help New Mexico Communities

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 525 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

With President Barack Obama scheduled to sign the bipartisan Farm Bill into law this afternoon, Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted the important impact the legislation will have on communities in New Mexico.

"Farmers and ranchers in New Mexico have waited a long time for this day. With the President's signature on a new Farm Bill, those in the agricultural sector who contribute greatly to New Mexico's economy, while honoring our culture and history, will receive important assistance that will help in their efforts to produce the many crops - from chiles to pecans - that make New Mexico so special, "Congressman **Lujan** said. "In addition, the legislation includes an important provision that will help farmers and ranchers care for the acequias that are essential to their livelihood. By enabling Acequia and Community Ditch Associations to finally compete for federal grants, they will have an opportunity to receive funds that will help maintain the health of their acequias."

During debate on the House Farm Bill last year, **Lujan** offered an amendment to enable Acequia Community Ditch Associations to apply for federal funds within the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). The amendment, which was adopted by a voice vote, would remove burdensome roadblocks to improve conservation practices and manage scare water resources, thereby strengthening the acequias that provide irrigation for local farmers.

Lujan's efforts, along with the support of the New Mexico delegation, helped secure language in the bill that is similar to the amendment and will allow Acequia and Community Ditch Associations to form partnerships and apply for federal grants through EQIP as well as a number of other federal programs.

"We greatly appreciate the work of our congressional delegation to improve acequia eligibility for conservation programs," said Paula Garcia, Executive Director of the New Mexico Acequia Association. "Investment in agriculture will expand the availability of locally grown food and support the livelihood of farmers and ranchers in New Mexico's acequia communities. Particularly during this time of drought, conservation practices are vital for farmers and ranchers."

Among a number of provisions in the Farm Bill that will benefit New Mexico is one year of funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) Program. Local governments that contain nontaxable federal lands and provide vital government services, such as public safety, housing, social services and transportation are eligible for the PILT program. PILT compensates these jurisdictions - which provide significant support for national parks, wildlife refuges and recreation areas - for their support and foregone tax revenue from these federal lands. Last year, New Mexico received more than $34 million through the program. In addition, the bill will help farmers' markets and specialty crop producers, providing important funds for chiles, pecans, and other fruits and vegetables.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30FurigayJane-140208-4630755 30FurigayJane

LOAD-DATE: February 7, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

294 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Federal News Service

February 6, 2014 Thursday

Press Conference with Representative Henry Waxman (D-CA); Representative Julia Brownley (D-CA); Representative Lois Capps (D-CA); Representative Lloyd Doggett (D-TX); Representative Ben Lujan (D-NM); Representative Scott Peters (D-CA); Representative Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) Subject: "Climate Change and Environmental Issues Facing Congress and the Country in the Coming Year" Location: HVC Studio B, Capitol Visitor Center, Washington, D.C. Time: 9:50 a.m. EST Date: Wednesday, February 6, 2014

SECTION: PRESS CONFERENCE OR SPEECH

LENGTH: 5115 words

Press Conference with Representative Henry Waxman (D-CA); Representative Julia Brownley (D-CA); Representative Lois Capps (D-CA); Representative Lloyd Doggett (D-TX); Representative Ben **Lujan** (D-NM); Representative Scott Peters (D-CA); Representative Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) Subject: "Climate Change and Environmental Issues Facing Congress and the Country in the Coming Year" Location: HVC Studio B, Capitol Visitor Center, Washington, D.C. Time: 9:50 a.m. EST Date: Wednesday, February 6, 2014

REPRESENTATIVE CHRIS VAN HOLLEN (D-MD): Good morning, everybody. No, I'm not Henry Waxman.

And I want to say at the outset, we're all gathered here as part of the Safe Climate Caucus.

I think Henry Waxman is going to join us as soon as possible. But I speak on behalf of all of us and members of Congress in the House and the Senate, as well as all Americans, when we say that the country, and in fact the world and the planet, owe Henry Waxman a great debt of gratitude for the incredible work he's done in a whole range of areas in the United States Congress, but for the purposes of today, all his incredible work when it comes to addressing climate issues, clean energy issues.

So we salute him for his work and, because he's not able to join us right now but we didn't want to keep you waiting any longer, I'm going to read the statement that Henry Waxman had prepared. And then I'm going to introduce my colleagues.

So here's what Henry will say: Thank you for joining us today. (Laughter.) One year ago a group of members from Congress gathered to announce the beginning of a new caucus, the Safe Climate Caucus, that would focus on addressing the growing threat to our planet from climate change. Our members came from all over the country and represented diverse constituencies, yet we shared a common understanding: that climate change is real, that it poses a major threat to our planet and that Congress should be part of the solution.

We made a commitment to have our members speak on the House floor every single day that the House was in session and we kept at it day after day. Over the past year, we spoke on the floor for 117 consecutive days, delivering over 140 speeches about climate change. We talked about scientific issues showing the tremendous risks of climate change. We called for action after catastrophic, severe weather events. We lauded new clean energy in our districts as a way to promote economic growth while cutting pollution.

The House Republican leadership prevented action to address climate change, but they could not silence us. In his State of the Union address last week, President Obama declared 2014 a year of action. He reminded the nation that the debate is settled. Quote, "climate change is a fact." The president is right. This is a year of action, and that is why, in 2014, the members of the Safe Climate Caucus are redoubling our commitment to action. We will continue to speak out on the floor of the House, but we will also be writing weekly op-eds and posting videos on YouTube.

The Huffington Post has agreed to run an op-ed from one of our members every week the House is in session. Every week, one of our members is going to make a video for YouTube on the threat of climate change and solutions that can make America stronger.

And of course, we will continue to speak on the House floor every week. We'll be doing more this year, but our mission remains unchanged. We will continue to shine a light on an issue that may be the most important issue facing our children and grandchildren: the future of the planet.

Republicans many deny the science and ignore the threat, but we won't. We will be speaking out, writing op-eds and posting YouTubes, as I said, to raise awareness, build public support and encourage strong action by the administration.

We want to thank all the members in the Safe Climate Caucus. It's different from other Congressional caucuses because of the premium we place on action. Our members have made this effort a reality, and I want to give each of them an opportunity to discuss why this issue is so important.

And now, before I introduce one of our members, I just want to say a quick word.

Lloyd and I -- Lloyd, who I'm going to introduce in a minute -- were at a breakfast this morning with the head of the state of Connecticut's Green Bank. And there are now 11 states in the country -- Henry Waxman. All right! All right. How are you?

I was directed by your team to read your statement. But why don't I have Henry come forward and say a few words right now.

REPRESENTATIVE HENRY WAXMAN (D-CA): Thank you. Where are you in my statement? (Laughter.)

REP. VAN HOLLEN: Well, I had just finished your statement, I was saying a few words, and then I was going to introduce Lloyd. But why don't you step forward.

REP. WAXMAN: Well, thank you very much, Congressman Van Hollen. And I'm pleased to see so many of my colleagues here in the Safe Climate Caucus.

We've organized this caucus to speak out about the threat of climate change and the ignorance, intentional, of the Republicans, who don't want to know about the danger or acknowledge the science. And therefore, we've been stopped from any action in the House of Representatives to deal with this serious threat.

So each of us has taken a turn every day to speak on the House floor about climate change. We cannot set the agenda of the committees. We can't call the scientists before the Congress. The Republicans are doing nothing, but we will not be silenced.

We are going to move, however, to a new strategy in expressing how to draw attention to the climate change issue. What we're going to be doing is all of us in the Safe Climate Caucus will take our turns, not on the House floor, but doing an op-ed that will appear every day in the Huntington (sic\Huffington) Post. They've agreed to run an op-ed from one of our members every week the House is in session. And our members as well will make videos for YouTube on the threat of climate change and the solutions that can strengthen our nation.

We will be doing more of this this year than we have. Republicans may deny the science, ignore the threat, but we won't. So I want to thank my colleagues for being here, and particularly for Congressman Van Hollen, who should have told me that there's traffic when you come from -- (laughter) -- Bethesda to the Capitol and you shouldn't figure that everything is going to move smoothly to get here on time. But I apologize to everybody for my lateness, but I thank everybody for being here.

And I now want to turn the speaking over to --

REP. VAN HOLLEN: Well, let me introduce Lloyd. I was just going to --

REP. WAXMAN: Yeah, to Congressman Van Hollen, who is now our master's of ceremony. (Laughter.)

REP. VAN HOLLEN: No, no, I don't want to hang on that rope. But listen, I -- thank you. Thank you, Henry, again. And I swear at my congressmen every day about the traffic coming in as well. (Laughter.)

So let me -- let me just -- I was mentioning that this morning some of us were at a breakfast by the head of the Connecticut Green Bank. And I mention that because this group is organized for action. And as Congressman Waxman said, in the House the Republican leadership has refused to allow us

to take any kind of legislative action. But what we can do is continue to push the discussion forward, not just at the national level but also at the state level. And the states are moving.

And the tragedy of this is that we could do so much more if the federal government would also move. The states and the people in this country are way ahead of this House Republican Congress. And the danger for the country is that if we continue to lag behind at the national level, folks around the world who recognize the potential for investing in green energy and green jobs will gain a competitive edge.

So this has always been a win-win. We can put more people back to work, we can gain a more competitive edge in the international economy and we can protect our climate. And one person who has been out there along with Henry Waxman, speaking out every day, pushing this issue forward is our good friend Lloyd Doggett from Texas. And he can talk to you a little bit about some of the activities that he's been engaged in and all of us are going to continue to work.

So, Lloyd, thank you for your leadership.

LLOYD DOGGETT: Thank you, Chris. And, Henry, thank you not only for leading our caucus but leading our country on so many critical issues.

In a sense Texas is the leader in greenhouse gas production and perhaps in climate change denying. I feel a special responsibility to speak out in this caucus on what I view as the most critical environmental issue that we face today, not only in Texas but in the entire world.

I look at my young granddaughters and think, in their lifetime Texas is on schedule to be consumed by more of the Sonoran Desert at the same time we have substantial receding of our coastlines, and by one estimate lose about a third of Galveston Island.

We, at the same time, are in store for more of the severe droughts that we've experienced recently -- erratic weather, more exposure to the spread of tropical diseases. The evidence of climate change is really all around us. I think that the choice is clear in how to address it.

At some point along this decline, America must have new green technology. We can develop that technology here or we can wait to buy it from some other place. It is a matter of running a new green energy, green job economy or getting run over by it.

I believe that this House majority is determined to prevent the Congress from recognizing the reality all around us and to remain inactive, and our caucus is determined to keep the issue on the forefront, as it must be.

I'm pleased to be a member because this caucus is about what is right for our health, for our economy and for our national security and to participate with people like Doris Matsui, who was there as we attempted to deal with this issue previously on the committee and remained such an important leader in the fight to get action on climate change. Doris?

REPRESENTATIVE DORIS MATSUI (D-CA): Thank you, Lloyd. And thank you, Lloyd, and thank you, Henry Waxman, for your continued leadership. Over 40 years, Henry has been the go-to person on many issues, whether it'd be health care, technology, energy environment. And in this particular effort, we are a band here of people who understand how important it is for us to really understand the effects of climate change.

I'm from California, and I think all of you know that we are experiencing a drought that we've never seen before, certainly not in our lifetimes. I'm from Sacramento, California, and we -- my district has two great rivers. I sit at the confluence of two great rivers. But even with that there is still not enough water. It hasn't rained. This has been a record year in the sense of a record that we don't like. We've had the lowest rainfall in Sacramento since the Gold Rush. That's a long time. It's a long time. And we're looking ahead trying to find some solutions here.

But if you also look at the fact that we have drought and we have fires, last year was also a dry year, with a record number of forest fires. We're on -- we're on now, on this -- on the -- (inaudible) -- even more this year. And that's not a record that we like.

I have grandchildren, and it's really amazing how much they know already. Anna (sp) is 10, Robbie (sp) is 7. They ask me all the time. They're studying the environment. They see what's happening. So here we are. Many of us have children and grandchildren. We are planning for the future, and we need to do that today. And our little band here will continue to work. We are getting more and more people involved.

And I would tell you it is happening from the ground up now, from the cities, neighborhoods, the states. They are all understanding because they know what is happening. So I am pleased to be involved in this safe climate caucus because we need to ensure that the future is there for our children and grandchildren.

And with that I would like to introduce to you **Ben Ray Lujan,** who is a wonderful member of the Energy and Commerce Committee and quite the shining light of the new members.

REPRESENTATIVE **BEN RAY LUJAN** (D-NM): Thank you, Doris. Thank you so very much.

Good morning, everyone. And first, let me say what a tremendous honor it's been to be able to work with Chairman Waxman. It's going to be fun working with Henry through the remainder of this Congress but also in making sure we continue to seek his advice and counsel with responsibilities that we all have. His distinguished record and service to our country on so many issues, especially when it comes to protecting our environment, is really an example to us all.

And as we expound the efforts of the safe climate caucus, I want to focus on one specific area. Doris talked about this quite a bit. Water. All across the West, severe droughts are impacting our communities. If you haven't been out there, we invite you to come out. When many of us think about drought, we think about food production generally with our farmers and our ranchers. But we're seeing tourism that's being impacted right now this winter with low snowfalls, where ski areas and communities that depend on this economic activity are feeling the pain.

This lack of snow is going to turn into a lack of snowmelt. It's funny our science works, isn't it? Many Western communities, it's essential for drinking water. And lower water flows are going to result in a concern with hydroelectric power generation meeting its obligations, especially for me in the Rocky Mountain West with our friends in Nevada and Arizona. We heard from Doris about the concerns in California. This is real. This is an economic impact that we have to pay attention to.

So our economy across the board is going to fill the impact of climate change as drought conditions continue to drip more and more and our country. No longer can our Republican colleagues look at this with their eyes shut. We know that the Earth is not flat, and we know that climate change is real. And I certainly hope that our Republican colleagues began to look at the literature and understand the importance that it's time to act.

So by being led by Ranking Member Waxman, we're going to turn up the volume on this. And you're going to be hearing from us, and we look forward to working with you in this area.

It's my honor now to introduce someone that I have looked up to, I have learned quite a bit from. He has been a leading progressive voice as well for the Congress, for the country and for working people across America, and that's our Progressive Caucus co-chairman, Representative Keith Ellison.

REPRESENTATIVE KEITH ELLISON (D-MN): Thanks, Ben Ray.

And then also let me add my voice to the many who thank Chairman Waxman. Chairman Waxman has been a hero to me, and thank you for pulling us all together today.

You know, climate change affects everybody on the planet and disrupts life systems all over the planet. But for some of our citizens, the bite is a little bit harder and disproportionate. And that's why I think we should use this 20th anniversary of the executive order on environmental justice that's coming up next week to really highlight how climate change affects vulnerable communities. This executive order called for a decrease in the disproportionate levels of pollution communities face and increase climate resiliency of low-income and minority communities.

Just a few stats to set the table, extreme weather events like Superstorm Sandy and Katrina destroy substandard housing and leave many communities with nowhere to turn; you see the catastrophic events and its effects on the newsreel. Sixty eight percent of African Americans live within 30 miles of a coal plant. African Americans, Hispanics, Asians are exposed to greater air toxin -- toxic concentrations than whites in many metropolitan areas of our -- around the United States. And heat waves increase the risk of heat island effects in our urban areas, disproportionately hitting low-income and even seniors in vulnerable populations.

Bottom line is, we've got to address this growing challenge of unsafe climate more than ever. The debate is over; the time for action is now, and that's why I'm proud to be a member of the Safe Climate Caucus and calling for action now.

Now, you know, I'm proud to introduce Scott Peters, who is a man of action himself, came to Congress to actually bring scientific understanding and knowledge to the way we live our lives and to the fight around a safe climate. I give you Scott Peters, California 53rd (sic: 52nd).

REPRESENTATIVE SCOTT PETERS (D-CA): Thank you, Keith. And again, thanks to Henry for all of your leadership over these many years, and I'm sure we'll all miss you, miss that. But we'll have -- at least do our part to fill the hole you're leaving us, so thank you.

Climate change is a top issue facing this generation. I practiced environmental law for about 15 years before I entered public service. And clearly, that's the -- that's the issue of the day in environmental law, as well. In San Diego, we face sea level rise, ocean acidification, more intense wildfires and obviously, drought, which is the big discussion point of this week.

I'm honored to have been selected to be the task force chair on climate for our sustainability caucus, honored to be a member of the Safe Climate Caucus, as well.

And I'm working on a few initiatives, one is to see if we can't reduce the effects of super pollutants, which are sort-lived climate pollutants, black carbon, methane and hydrochloric carbons, which have a very powerful short-term impact, but don't persist as long. If we can get those out of the mix, we can have a huge impact now. But I'm also not giving up on this Congress. I'm looking at ways where we can develop agreement even in a particularly partisan atmosphere.

Two examples, one is we've introduced a bill called the STRONG Act , which is going to help provide resiliency to communities on the ground for every dollar we spend on preparedness, we can save $4 on cleanup, and part of that's the FEMA budget.

And then also, we're looking for ways -- what Gabby Giffords used to work on in the Armed Services Committee, where I'm a member -- we're looking for ways to support the military's interest in investing in alternative energy, both the Navy and the Marines are interested in investing in biofuels as an alternative to jet fuel, and also with solar energy. I never met anyone who was a bigger fan of solar energy than the commandant of the Marines who makes great use of those technologies on the battlefield.

So we're looking forward to continuing those efforts. We'll -- you know, we'll fight where we need to; we'll try to agree where we can. But this is a critical issue and I want to thank Henry again for your leadership. Thanks for the group here, including me.

And now, I'm happy to introduce my freshman colleague from Ventura, California, who has led on this issue, not just here in Congress, but also in the history of serving in the California legislature, Julia Brownley.

REPRESENTATIVE JULIA BROWNLEY (D-CA): Good morning.

It is my privilege to be here this morning. I'm one of the newer members of the caucus and very excited about making a contribution to the caucus.

And I too, as all of my colleagues have done, want to really begin by thanking Congressman Waxman for his extraordinary leadership on climate change. His legacy of responsible environmental stewardship, including the Clean Air Act, will guide us certainly for many, many years to come. And Henry has been my congressman for a very, very long time, and I can speak for so many in California about their gratitude in his leadership.

Climate change is real, through, as already mentioned, wildfires, sea level rise, drought. Certainly in California, climate change impacts all of us, and it is certainly impacting my county, Ventura County. It threatens our economy, our food supply, our health and certainly our future, our children's future, our grandchildren's future.

Congress must -- must act to curb this growing threat to communities across our great country. And I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Safe Climate Caucus to protect our communities and preserve our land and waters for future generations.

And now it is my honor to introduce my colleague, my cohort from the freshman class from Wisconsin who has been an environmental crusader for much of his life way before he came to Congress. Wisconsin is grateful for his leadership, a great friend, Congressman Mark Pocan.

REPRESENTATIVE MARK POCAN (D-WI): Well, thank you very much, Julia.

And I want to add one final voice to the chorus to say thank you so much to Henry Waxman for your career. Hopefully what you see is a commitment of more people who want to pick up and try to take off and help on the voice that you've tried to have on climate for so long, and we're very committed to that.

I come from the state of Wisconsin. Senator Gaylord Nelson is from Wisconsin, who's the founder of Earth Day. It's not just for that tradition, but it's for our economy. And Wisconsin -- a big part of our economy is tourism, our wonderful green and open spaces that people come and visit. It is just absolutely crucial that we can make sure we're able to keep that economy going.

Climate change is very real, but so are climate change deniers. In fact, we work with a whole bunch of them. (Chuckles.) And scientists agree that our planet is warming, and it can cause serious harm across the globe. The effects of climate change are undeniable, and their consequences are unavoidable without action. And that requires action from Congress.

So I'm very proud to be a part of the Safe Climate Caucus, to make sure that I continue the work that we need to do to talk about the issue, to make sure that we're illustrating the problems of climate change, and eventually to make sure that we can actually pass laws that will improve not only the climate for this country but for the entire planet. And I'm just very proud to be a part of this caucus.

Thank you, Henry.

REP. WAXMAN: We're happy to entertain questions members of the press may have.

Yes.

Q: (Off mic) -- State Department -- (off mic) -- position that the administration has to reject that in order to properly address climate change and -- or is that almost kind of a distraction -- (off mic) --

REP. WAXMAN: I hope the president of the United States will say no to the Keystone pipeline agreement that the Canadians want us to go along with. They will triple the amount of tar sands oil, which will add enormously to our greenhouse gases and our climate change problem. It seems to me

the argument that's being advanced is it's going to happen anyway because if we don't take that oil, it will still be developed and transported.

I don't believe that. And it's like the argument, we ought to sell somebody some very dangerous weapon because they're going to buy it anyway and therefore we ought to get the benefit from it.

We won't even get the benefit from the Keystone pipeline. It will allow the Canadian tar sands oil, the dirtiest possible oil, to be transported through the United States to the Gulf and then sent on to other places around the world, most likely China, for its commercial sale.

So I hope we will reject that pipeline, and it's up to Secretary Kerry and the president, who said that it's up to him, that he'll make the call.

Well, we're going to have to back him on a lot of calls that he's going to be making because, since Congress is not able to act on climate change at the moment, he is going to move forward with a whole agenda of actions through the EPA, the Department of Energy, Department of State, other governmental agencies to use existing law to reduce our greenhouse gases. And I think through that process, we could achieve the reductions the president committed to in the last international discussions.

But two things we need to do beyond that. One is not let the Keystone pipeline go forward because that's going to add to greenhouse gases. And secondly, the president is going to make decisions that will require approval by the Congress, but we are going to have to stand here in the Congress and back him up. And I think the American people will support his actions.

Yes.

Q: Congressman, following up on that, would you want this new initiative with the op-eds and YouTube videos and -- (off mic) -- to not mention Keystone, or will this group avoid the Keystone topic because some Democrats favor it?

REP. WAXMAN: This group is all about being able to speak up and talk truth to power. The power in the House right now is a Republican control that will not allow the Congress to do its usual mechanisms of hearings to get another point of view, which is the point of view of those of us who are concerned and the overwhelming scientific consensus concerned about what's happening with the climate change. So I wouldn't want this group to take the position that we're not going to let people during their presentations say anything one way or the other about another issue, especially one that is related to the climate change matter.

And this group that stands behind me -- (laughter) -- is going to be there to speak out.

Yes.

Q: (Off mic) -- climate change legislation -- (off mic) -- I was wondering what exactly you hope to achieve in the new strategy. And do you think you guys will -- (off mic)? And if not, you know, what -- how do you see -- (off mic)?

REP. WAXMAN: Yeah, I've been very careful in saying very precisely that Congress is not going to act at the present time. But the present time can be changed even with some of the present members, when the public pressure grows. The American people aren't going to buy this argument that if their Republican leaders say there's no such thing as climate change and if they're Republicans they should believe that position and deny science, which is not a political point of view but conclusions based on evidence. So I think the American people, as they see one climate disaster following another, with the nightly news dominated almost every single night by a climate issue disaster, that they're not going to wake up and say to their representatives, how can you deny this? How can you insist on ignoring what is going on? So I think the pressure on the -- on the Congress will grow as the -- as the public opinion starts demanding some action. And so I think the Congress will get to a point where we will start acting. But in the meantime, we have to rely on the president to do much of what

we could do by law, in ways that I think would even be more conducive to educing the climate threats. But in the meantime, the president has authority to take a lot of actions on his own, and we need to support those actions.

Yes.

Q: (Off mic.)

REP. WAXMAN: I'm hopeful that there's going to be some movement on some things that we can do, and energy efficiency is one that looks like there's more of a consensus behind it. I don't think it's related to my announcement that I'm retiring. It's been moving along, and now in the Senate they're getting close and we've been talking in the House as well how to do at least the -- some improvement in energy efficiency.

But let me illustrate the problem we have with the fact that last week the Republican majority in the Energy and Commerce Committee reported out a bill to prevent EPA from being able to regulate climate pollutants, especially carbon emissions. They said that they're not going to allow, under the Clean Air Act, the actions by the EPA, because they're going to change the Clean Air Act itself. And what we said to the Republicans is, this bill denies climate change happening; it ignores its -- the problem by saying, there is no problem, or even those who might acknowledge a problem, they have absolutely no solution.

So we ask them: If you're going to keep EPA from regulating, and you're not going to be for a tax on carbon, you're not going to be for a cap-and-trade program, you're not going to be for any regulation, what is your answer? What do you have to offer to stop this threat?

And of course we have the deafening silence of the Republicans on this question.

So we -- we're not going to meet their silence by our silence and inaction. We'll do whatever we can to advance this issue.

And I can say one thing about my years in Congress. Time is on our side to change these policies, but we don't have a lot of time when it comes to the issue of climate change.

Last question, Mr. Potts (sp).

Q: Yeah. So one of nice things about a little bit more bipartisanship is there was a spending bill that was finally passed, but is there any sort of concern that with the revised appropriations process, that House Republicans might start taking whacks at EPA's spending that would decrease its ability to, you know, have oversight over these programs and regulations that it's trying to implement?

REP. WAXMAN: Well, the Republicans, especially the right- wingers, take the point of view that they don't want government, they want to shrink it, they want to eliminate it, and therefore they take the agencies that regulate to protect public health and safety and workers' protection, and they try to gut the laws, and if they can't gut the laws, they try to undercut the agencies' abilities to do things by defunding them or underfunding them, and then when something terrible happens, they say, see how government didn't respond to the problem?

That -- this is something we always have to watch out for and push back on. And we will -- we will certainly match them on that issue.

But the essential point is that I think more and more Republicans are going to look for ways to work with Democrats in order to get anything done. They haven't accomplished much of anything since they've been in power.

And we put out a report in the beginning of this Congress showing in our committee that the only proposals that became law were those proposals where we worked together on a bipartisan basis.

We're willing to work on a bipartisan basis on good policy, and we'll want to see movement for legislation that can be put into effect. But otherwise, we will fight back where they give ridiculous proposals like trying to stop regulation of coal-burning power plants, which is the leading source of greenhouse gases in our country.

Thank you all very much.

(C) 2014 Federal News Service

LOAD-DATE: February 7, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Transcript

Copyright 2014 Federal News Service, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

295 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

February 6, 2014 Thursday

Luj án seeks re-election

BYLINE: Bernie Dotson Staff writer city@gallupindependent.com

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 10

LENGTH: 119 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE

SANTA FE - U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, DN.M., filed with the New Mexico Secretary of State's office Tuesday to run for reelection to the U.S. House of Representatives, Joseph Casados, a spokesman for **Luján**, said.

Luján has represented New Mexico's 3rd Congressional District since 2008. **Luján** was last reelected in 2012 with more than 60 percent of the vote.

Luján's mother Carmen **Luján** filed on his behalf since he was in Washington on legislative business, Casados said. Carmen **Luján** filed 3,000 nominating petition signatures on behalf of the congressman, which spanned all 16 counties in New Mexico's 3rd Congressional District, which includes McKinley, Bernalillo, Curry, Los Alamos, Sandoval and Santa Fe counties.

LOAD-DATE: February 11, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

States News Service

February 6, 2014 Thursday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON SENATE REPUBLICANS ONCE AGAIN BLOCKING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE EXTENSION

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 256 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after Senate Republicans once again voted to block action on a three-month extension of unemployment insurance. The Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act, which is fully paid for and includes a provision to prohibit millionaires from receiving benefits, fell one vote short of the 60 votes needed to invoke cloture.

"For more than a month, long-term unemployed workers in New Mexico have been losing emergency unemployment insurance that has helped them make ends meet while they continue their search for work. More than 7,400 people across our state are worrying how they will get by if Congressional Republicans continue to stand in the way of an emergency extension.

"Time and again, Senate Republicans have blocked attempts to move forward with legislation that extends this important safety net, while Republicans in the House have refused to even act. Nearly 9,000 New Mexicans are still at risk of losing unemployment insurance over the next five months if Congressional Republicans continue to act as a roadblock to an extension.

"With nearly three job seekers for every job opening and our economy in New Mexico still struggling to recover, now is not the time to stand idly by. Extending unemployment insurance will help those hit hardest by the recession while generating economic activity that provides a boost to local businesses."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: February 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

US Official News

February 6, 2014 Thursday

Washington: PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS -- (House of Representatives - February 05, 2014)

LENGTH: 1455 words

DATELINE: Washington

The Library of Congress, The Government of USA has issued the following news release:

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. SARBANES (for himself, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. BARBER, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BERA of California, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. COOPER, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. ESTY, Mr. FARR, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. GARCIA, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HIMES, Mr. HOLT, Mr. HONDA, Mr. HORSFORD, Mr. HOYER, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JONES, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. KILMER, Mr. KIND, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. **BEN RAY LUJÁN** of New Mexico, Ms. MICHELLE **LUJAN** GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. MAFFEI, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. MENG, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MORAN, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. NADLER, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. PETERS of Michigan, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Mr. POCAN, Mr. POLIS, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUSH, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. SIRES, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. TONKO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. WALZ, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ,

[Page: H1658] GPO's PDF

Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. YARMUTH, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida):

H.R. 20. A bill to reform the financing of Congressional elections by broadening participation by small dollar donors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SIMPSON (for himself and Mr. SCHRADER):

H.R. 3992. A bill to provide for wildfire suppression operations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Budget, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, and Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BENTIVOLIO (for himself and Mr. BENISHEK):

H.R. 3993. A bill to provide for a 15% reduction in the rates of pay of Members of Congress for pay periods occurring during a year if a Federal budget deficit existed during the most recent fiscal year; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah (for himself and Mr. HORSFORD):

H.R. 3994. A bill to improve the control and management of invasive species that threaten and harm Federal lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa:

H.R. 3995. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the deduction for mortgage insurance premiums; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas (for himself, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. LONG, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. YODER, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Mr. YOHO):

H.R. 3996. A bill to prohibit the closure or reduced operation of military commissary stores and exchange stores before January 1, 2017; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. HIGGINS (for himself, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee):

H.R. 3997. A bill to amend title VII of the Social Security Act to require the President to transmit the annual budget of the Social Security Administration without revisions to Congress, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. MICHELLE **LUJAN** GRISHAM of New Mexico:

H.R. 3998. A bill to authorize the Administrator of General Services to convey a parcel of real property in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to the Amy Biehl High School Foundation; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 3999. A bill to amend the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 and title 5, United States Code, to allow employees to take, as additional leave, parental involvement leave to participate in or attend their children's and grandchildren's educational and extracurricular activities, and to clarify that leave may be taken for routine family medical needs and to assist elderly relatives, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, and House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MESSER:

H.R. 4000. A bill to allow States to let Federal funds for the education of disadvantaged children follow low-income children to the accredited or otherwise State-approved public school, private school, or supplemental educational services program they attend; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, Agriculture, Energy and Commerce, and Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. MILLER of Michigan:

H.R. 4001. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Army to carry out certain activities to prevent the interbasin transfer of aquatic invasive species between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. MULLIN (for himself, Mr. COLE, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska):

H.R. 4002. A bill to revoke the charter of incorporation of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma at the request of that tribe, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. NORTON (for herself, Mr. WOLF, Mr. MORAN, and Ms. EDWARDS):

H.R. 4003. A bill to designate the Civil War Defenses of Washington National Historical Park comprised of certain National Park System lands, and by affiliation and cooperative agreements other historically significant resources, located in the District of Columbia, Virginia, and Maryland, that were part of the Civil War defenses of Washington and related to the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864, to study ways in which the Civil War history of both the North and South can be assembled, arrayed, and conveyed for the benefit of the public, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. WAXMAN (for himself, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, and Mr. SCHIFF):

H.R. 4004. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into enhanced-use leases for certain buildings of the Department of Veterans Affairs at the West Los Angeles Medical Center, California; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. WATERS (for herself, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. SIRES, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. BASS, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. RANGEL):

H. Res. 474. A resolution honoring the 210th anniversary of Haiti's independence; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

For more information please visit: http://thomas.loc.gov

LOAD-DATE: February 6, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

February 6, 2014 Thursday

Washington: PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

LENGTH: 1475 words

DATELINE: Washington

United States Congress has issued the following proceedings and debate details:

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. SARBANES (for himself, Ms. Pelosi, Mr. Barber, Mrs. Beatty, Mr. Bera of California, Mr. Bishop of New York, Mr. Blumenauer, Ms. Bonamici, Mr. Brady of Pennsylvania, Mr. Braley of Iowa, Mr. Carney, Mr. Cartwright, Mr. Castro of Texas, Mr. Cicilline, Ms. Clarke of New York, Mr. Clay, Mr. Cleaver, Mr.

Clyburn, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Conyers, Mr. Cooper, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Crowley, Mr. Cummings, Mrs. Davis of California, Mr. DeFazio, Mr. Delaney, Ms. DeLauro, Ms. DelBene, Mr. Deutch, Mr. Dingell, Mr. Doggett, Ms. Edwards, Mr. Ellison, Mr. Engel, Ms. Eshoo, Ms. Esty, Mr. Farr, Ms. Frankel of Florida, Ms. Fudge, Ms. Gabbard, Mr. Garcia, Mr. Grayson, Mr. Gene Green of Texas, Mr. Al Green of Texas, Mr. Grijalva, Mr. Gutierrez, Mr. Hastings of Florida, Mr. Himes, Mr. Holt, Mr. Honda, Mr. Horsford, Mr. Hoyer, Mr. Huffman, Mr. Israel, Ms. Jackson Lee, Mr. Jeffries, Mr. Johnson of Georgia, Ms. Eddie Bernice Johnson of Texas, Mr. Jones, Ms. Kaptur, Ms. Kelly of Illinois, Mr. Kilmer, Mr. Kind, Mrs. Kirkpatrick, Ms. Kuster, Mr. Langevin, Mr. Larson of Connecticut, Ms. Lee of California, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Loebsack, Ms. Lofgren, Mr. Lowenthal, Mr. **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico, Ms. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham of New Mexico, Mr. Maffei, Mr. Sean Patrick Maloney of New York, Mrs. Carolyn B. Maloney of New York, Ms. Matsui, Ms. McCollum, Mr. McDermott, Mr. McGovern, Ms. Meng, Mr. Michaud, Mr. George Miller of California, Ms. Moore, Mr. Moran, Mr. Murphy of Florida, Mr. Nadler, Mr. Nolan, Ms. Norton, Mr. O'Rourke, Mr. Pallone, Mr. Pascrell, Mr. Payne, Mr. Perlmutter, Mr. Peters of California, Mr. Peters of Michigan, Ms. Pingree of Maine, Mr. Pocan, Mr. Polis, Mr. Quigley, Mr. Rangel, Mr. Rush, Ms. Linda T. Sanchez of California, Ms. Schakowsky, Ms.

Schwartz, Mr. Scott of Virginia, Mr. Serrano, Ms. Shea-Porter, Mr. Sherman, Mr. Sires, Ms. Slaughter, Mr. Smith of Washington, Ms. Speier, Mr. Swalwell of California, Mr. Takano, Mr. Tierney, Mr. Tonko, Mr. Van Hollen, Mr. Vargas, Ms. Velazquez, Mr. Walz, Ms. Wasserman Schultz,

[[Page H1658]]

Mr. Waxman, Mr. Welch, Mr. Yarmuth, Ms. Brownley of California, and Ms. Castor of Florida):
H.R. 20. A bill to reform the financing of Congressional elections by broadening participation by small dollar donors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.
By Mr. SIMPSON (for himself and Mr. Schrader):
H.R. 3992. A bill to provide for wildfire suppression operations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Budget, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, and Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.
By Mr. BENTIVOLIO (for himself and Mr. Benishek):
H.R. 3993. A bill to provide for a 15% reduction in the rates of pay of Members of Congress for pay periods occurring during a year if a Federal budget deficit existed during the most recent fiscal year; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.
By Mr. BISHOP of Utah (for himself and Mr. Horsford):
H.R. 3994. A bill to improve the control and management of invasive species that threaten and harm Federal lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.
By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa:
H.R. 3995. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the deduction for mortgage insurance premiums; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas (for himself, Mr. Crenshaw, Mrs. Miller of Michigan, Mr. Huizenga of Michigan, Mr. Luetkemeyer, Mr. Long, Mr. Whitfield, Mr. Huelskamp, Mr. Yoder, Mr. Garamendi, and Mr. Yoho):
H.R. 3996. A bill to prohibit the closure or reduced operation of military commissary stores and exchange stores before January 1, 2017; to the Committee on Armed Services.
By Mr. HIGGINS (for himself, Mr. Serrano, and Mr.

Duncan of Tennessee):
H.R. 3997. A bill to amend title VII of the Social Security Act to require the President to transmit the annual budget of the Social Security Administration without revisions to Congress, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Ms. MICHELLE **LUJAN** GRISHAM of New Mexico:
H.R. 3998. A bill to authorize the Administrator of General Services to convey a parcel of real property in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to the Amy Biehl High School Foundation; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.
By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:
H.R. 3999. A bill to amend the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 and title 5, United States Code, to allow employees to take, as additional leave, parental involvement leave to participate in or attend their children's and grandchildren's educational and extracurricular activities, and to clarify that leave may be taken for routine family medical needs and to assist elderly relatives, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, and House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.
By Mr. MESSER:
H.R. 4000. A bill to allow States to let Federal funds for the education of disadvantaged children follow low-income children to the accredited or otherwise State-approved public school, private school, or supplemental educational services program they attend; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, Agriculture, Energy and Commerce, and Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.
By Mrs. MILLER of Michigan:
H.R. 4001. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Army to carry out certain activities to prevent the interbasin transfer of aquatic invasive species between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.
By Mr. MULLIN (for himself, Mr. Cole, and Mr. Young of Alaska):
H.R. 4002. A bill to revoke the charter of incorporation of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma at the request of that tribe, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.
By Ms. NORTON (for herself, Mr. Wolf, Mr. Moran, and Ms. Edwards):
H.R. 4003. A bill to designate the Civil War Defenses of Washington National Historical Park comprised of certain National Park System lands, and by affiliation and cooperative agreements other historically significant resources, located in the District of Columbia, Virginia, and Maryland, that were part of the Civil War defenses of Washington and related to the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864, to study ways in which the Civil War history of both the North and South can be assembled, arrayed, and conveyed

for the benefit of the public, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.
By Mr. WAXMAN (for himself, Ms. Brownley of California, and Mr. Schiff):
H.R. 4004. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into enhanced-use leases for certain buildings of the Department of Veterans Affairs at the West Los Angeles Medical Center, California; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.
By Ms. WATERS (for herself, Mr. Engel, Mr. Smith of New Jersey, Mr. Sires, Mr. Meeks, Ms. Bass, Ms. Lee of California, Ms. Clarke of New York, Ms. Wilson of Florida, Mr. Conyers, and Mr. Rangel):
H. Res. 474. A resolution honoring the 210th anniversary of Haiti's independence; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

For more information please visit: http://beta.congress.gov

LOAD-DATE: February 6, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

299 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

February 5, 2014 Wednesday

Luján cosponsors net neutrality bill

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 188 words

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D-03) is cosponsoring a House bill to prevent broadband providers from blocking or discriminating against content online.

The New Mexican Democrat is one of several representatives on the Energy and Commerce Committee backing H.R. 3982, the Open Internet Preservation Act. A companion bill is being drafted in the Senate and has the backing of Sen. Tom Udall.

"A free and open Internet has spawned countless innovations that have impacted our lives for the better and spurred economic growth," **Luján** said in a statement. "It is essential that we keep the

innovative spirit alive by ensuring that we have a system that does not block access to content on the Web."

The legislation is a response to a decision by the D.C. Circuit Court last month to strike down the Federal Communications Commission's Open Internet Order. The bill restores these rules until the FCC takes new, final action in the Open Internet proceeding.

To read the bill, click here.

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: February 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

300 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

February 5, 2014 Wednesday

Candidates' primary bids official; Incumbents find out who they will be up against

BYLINE: James Monteleone Journal Staff Writer

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C1

LENGTH: 526 words

SANTA FE - The field for New Mexico's 1st Congressional District race narrowed Tuesday as candidates for congressional and state offices filed paperwork to qualify for the June primary election ballot.

Former Albuquerque City Councilor Mike McEntee, a Republican who announced in October a bid for the central New Mexico U.S. House seat represented by Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., said he had withdrawn.

"The timing simply was not right, and I have no regrets," McEntee said.

McEntee's exit means the Republican nomination to challenge **Lujan** Grisham in the November general election will be decided between Corrales business owner Mike Frese and retired Army officer Richard Priem of Albuquerque.

Lujan Grisham, first elected in 2012, drew no Democratic primary opposition Tuesday.

Meanwhile, 3rd Congressional District Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, seeking a fourth term, drew an unannounced primary election challenge from Bernalillo County Assistant District Attorney Robert Blanch of Albuquerque.

The winner of that race will go on to face Republican candidate Jefferson Byrd, a Tucumcari rancher who fell short in a 2012 bid for the seat against **Luján**.

In the race for governor, all five Democratic candidates who previously had announced plans to seek the party's nomination filed election paperwork to qualify for the primary elec- tion ballot.

The Democratic governor hopefuls are state Attorney General Gary King of Mori-arty, state Sen. Linda Lopez of Albuquerque, state Sen. Howie Morales of Silver City, longtime government administrator Lawrence Rael of Albuquerque and businessman Alan Webber of Santa Fe.

Republican Gov. Susana Martinez made her re-election bid official Tuesday. No Republican candidate filed to challenge her in the GOP primary.

However, Republicans are lining up for a primary fight for the U.S. Senate seat now held by Democratic Sen. Tom Udall. Albuquerque business owner Allen Weh and Las Cruces attorney David Clements filed for the GOP nomination to take on Udall. Udall did not draw a primary opponent.

In the southern New Mexico 2nd Congressional District, La Luz lawyer Leslie Endean-Singh and Carlsbad lawyer Roxanne "Rocky" Lara will seek the Democratic Party nomination to challenge Republican Rep. Steve Pearce, who filed to seek a sixth term.

Other candidates filing Tuesday included:

Attorney general: Democrat Hector Balderas of Albuquerque; Republicans James Baiamonte of Albuquerque and Susan Riedel of Las Cruces

Treasurer: Democrats Tim Eichenberg of Albuquerque, Patrick Padilla of Tijeras and John Wertheim of Albuquerque; Republican Rick Lopez of Santa Fe.

Secretary of state: Democrat Maggie Toulouse Oliver of Albuquerque; Republican incumbent Dianna Duran of Tularosa.

Auditor: Democrat Tim Keller of Albuquerque; Republican Robert Aragon of Albuquerque

Lt. governor: Democrats Debra Haaland of Albuquerque and Marie Julienne of Albuquerque; Republican incumbent John Sanchez of Albuquerque.

Land commissioner: Democratic incumbent Ray Powell of Los Ranchos de Albuquerque; Republican Aubrey Dunn of Capitan.

Appeals Court judge: Democrat Kerry Kiernan of Albuquerque; Republican incumbent Miles Hanisee of Albuquerque.

LOAD-DATE: February 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 5, 2014

LUJAN ANNOUNCES FIRST ANNUAL CONGRESSIONAL APP COMPETITION FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 342 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced details today for the first annual Congressional Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Academic Competition, "The House Student App Challenge." High school students from the Third District can compete by creating and exhibiting their software application, or "app," for mobile, tablet, or computer devices on a platform of their choice. The winning entry from each participating Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year.

"The House Student App Challenge gives students the opportunity to engage their creativity and spark an interest in the STEM education fields. Instead of just using the latest app or playing the latest video game, this contest challenges students to build it," Congressman **Lujan** said. "New Mexico has a rich history of innovation in technology and it is exciting to see the next generation of innovators build upon that legacy. I wish all of the contestants the best of luck and look forward to seeing their apps."

The "House Student App Challenge" is open to all high school students in New Mexico's Third Congressional District. Students entering the competition must submit their app's source code online during the Competition Submission Period, which is open until 11:59 PM Eastern Daylight Time on APRIL 30TH, 2014, as well as provide a YouTube or VIMEO video demo explaining their app and what they learned through this competition process.

Throughout the competition period, participating students will be provided opportunities to engage with various STEM educational partners located within the community to mentor and assist them with their app development. Additional details, including information on how students can register for the contest, is available at www.**lujan**.house.gov/blog/house-student-app-challenge.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-announces-first-annual-congressional-app-competition-for-high-school-students/

LOAD-DATE: February 6, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

February 5, 2014

LUJAN SIGNS ON TO NET NEUTRALITY LEGISLATION; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 324 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** announced today that he has signed on as a cosponsor to legislation to protect consumers and innovation online. **Lujan** joins Representatives Henry Waxman and Anna Eshoo, authors of legislation in the House, as well as a number of his colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee as a cosponsor of H.R. 3982, the Open Internet Preservation Act. A companion bill will be introduced in the Senate by Senator Ed Markey and includes the support of New Mexico Senator Tom Udall.

The legislation is a response to a decision by the D.C. Circuit Court last month to strike down the Federal Communications Commission's Open Internet Order that had prevented broadband providers from blocking or discriminating against content online. The bill restores these rules until the FCC takes new, final action in the Open Internet proceeding.

"A free and open Internet has spawned countless innovations that have impacted our lives for the better and spurred economic growth. It is essential that we keep the innovative spirit alive by ensuring that we have a system that does not block access to content on the web," Congressman **Lujan** said. "The decision by the D.C. Circuit Court threatens to undermine the freedom of the Internet by allowing restrictions that impede users' ability to harness the Internet's full potential. As the FCC works on replacement rules, this legislation will make it clear that the Internet will remain open for all users."

The full text of the bill is available online here http://democrats.energycommerce.house.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Bill-Text-Waxman-Eshoo-Open-Internet-Preservation-Act-2014-1-24.pdf. A bill summary is available online here http://democrats.energycommerce.house.gov/sites/default/files/documents/HR-3982-Open-Internet-Bill-Summary-2014-1-24.pdf.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/**lujan**-signs-on-to-net-neutrality-legislation/

LOAD-DATE: February 6, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

February 5, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN ANNOUNCES FIRST ANNUAL CONGRESSIONAL APP COMPETITION FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 329 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced details today for the first annual Congressional Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Academic Competition, "The House Student App Challenge." High school students from the Third District can compete by creating and exhibiting their software application, or "app," for mobile, tablet, or computer devices on a platform of their choice. The winning entry from each participating Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year.

"The House Student App Challenge gives students the opportunity to engage their creativity and spark an interest in the STEM education fields. Instead of just using the latest app or playing the latest video game, this contest challenges students to build it," Congressman **Lujan** said. "New Mexico has a rich history of innovation in technology and it is exciting to see the next generation of innovators build upon that legacy. I wish all of the contestants the best of luck and look forward to seeing their apps."

The "House Student App Challenge" is open to all high school students in New Mexico's Third Congressional District. Students entering the competition must submit their app's source code online during the Competition Submission Period, which is open until 11:59 PM Eastern Daylight Time on APRIL 30TH, 2014, as well as provide a YouTube or VIMEO video demo explaining their app and what they learned through this competition process.

Throughout the competition period, participating students will be provided opportunities to engage with various STEM educational partners located within the community to mentor and assist them with their app development. Additional details, including information on how students can register for the contest, is available at www.**lujan**.house.gov/blog/house-student-app-challenge.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: February 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

States News Service

February 5, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN SIGNS ON TO NET NEUTRALITY LEGISLATION

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 257 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** announced today that he has signed on as a cosponsor to legislation to protect consumers and innovation online. **Lujan** joins Representatives Henry Waxman and Anna Eshoo, authors of legislation in the House, as well as a number of his colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee as a cosponsor of H.R. 3982, the Open Internet Preservation Act. A companion bill will be introduced in the Senate by Senator Ed Markey and includes the support of New Mexico Senator Tom Udall.

The legislation is a response to a decision by the D.C. Circuit Court last month to strike down the Federal Communications Commission's Open Internet Order that had prevented broadband providers from blocking or discriminating against content online. The bill restores these rules until the FCC takes new, final action in the Open Internet proceeding.

"A free and open Internet has spawned countless innovations that have impacted our lives for the better and spurred economic growth. It is essential that we keep the innovative spirit alive by ensuring that we have a system that does not block access to content on the web," Congressman **Lujan** said. "The decision by the D.C. Circuit Court threatens to undermine the freedom of the Internet by allowing restrictions that impede users' ability to harness the Internet's full potential. As the FCC works on replacement rules, this legislation will make it clear that the Internet will remain open for all users."

LOAD-DATE: February 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

February 5, 2014 Wednesday 2:32 AM EST

Lujan Signs on to Net Neutrality Legislation

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 326 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** announced today that he has signed on as a cosponsor to legislation to protect consumers and innovation online. **Lujan** joins Representatives Henry Waxman and Anna Eshoo, authors of legislation in the House, as well as a number of his colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee as a cosponsor of H.R. 3982, the Open Internet Preservation Act. A companion bill will be introduced in the Senate by Senator Ed Markey and includes the support of New Mexico Senator Tom Udall.

The legislation is a response to a decision by the D.C. Circuit Court last month to strike down the Federal Communications Commission's Open Internet Order that had prevented broadband providers from blocking or discriminating against content online. The bill restores these rules until the FCC takes new, final action in the Open Internet proceeding.

"A free and open Internet has spawned countless innovations that have impacted our lives for the better and spurred economic growth. It is essential that we keep the innovative spirit alive by ensuring that we have a system that does not block access to content on the web," Congressman **Lujan** said. "The decision by the D.C. Circuit Court threatens to undermine the freedom of the Internet by allowing restrictions that impede users' ability to harness the Internet's full potential. As the FCC works on replacement rules, this legislation will make it clear that the Internet will remain open for all users."

The full text of the bill is available online here (http://democrats.energycommerce.house.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Bill-Text-Waxman-Eshoo-Open-Internet-Preservation-Act-2014-1-24.pdf). A bill summary is available online here (http://democrats.energycommerce.house.gov/sites/default/files/documents/HR-3982-Open-Internet-Bill-Summary-2014-1-24.pdf).

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140206-4628416 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: February 6, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

February 5, 2014 Wednesday 2:31 AM EST

Lujan Announces First Annual Congressional App Competition for High School Students

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 338 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced details today for the first annual Congressional Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Academic Competition, "The House Student App Challenge." High school students from the Third District can compete by creating and exhibiting their software application, or "app," for mobile, tablet, or computer devices on a platform of their choice. The winning entry from each participating Congressional district will be displayed as part of an exhibit in the United States Capitol for one year.

"The House Student App Challenge gives students the opportunity to engage their creativity and spark an interest in the STEM education fields. Instead of just using the latest app or playing the latest video game, this contest challenges students to build it," Congressman **Lujan** said. "New Mexico has a rich history of innovation in technology and it is exciting to see the next generation of innovators build upon that legacy. I wish all of the contestants the best of luck and look forward to seeing their apps."

The "House Student App Challenge" is open to all high school students in New Mexico's Third Congressional District. Students entering the competition must submit their app's source code online during the Competition Submission Period, which is open until 11:59 PM Eastern Daylight Time on APRIL 30TH, 2014, as well as provide a YouTube or VIMEO video demo explaining their app and what they learned through this competition process.

Throughout the competition period, participating students will be provided opportunities to engage with various STEM educational partners located within the community to mentor and assist them with their app development. Additional details, including information on how students can register for the contest, is available at www.**lujan**.house.gov/blog/house-student-app-challenge.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140206-4628411 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: February 6, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Associated Press State & Local

February 4, 2014 Tuesday 11:58 PM GMT

5 Democrats in race to unseat Martinez

SECTION: POLITICAL NEWS; STATE AND REGIONAL

LENGTH: 421 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) - Five Democrats have officially entered the race to unseat Republican Gov. Susana Martinez.

New Mexico Attorney General Gary King, Santa Fe businessman Alan Weber, longtime government worker Lawrence Rael of Albuquerque and state Sens. Howie Morales of Silver City and Linda Lopez of Albuquerque Tuesday turned in the petitions and paperwork required to qualify for the Democratic Party's June primary ballot.

No one has filed to run against Martinez in the GOP primary.

But a lively Republican primary could be shaping up for U.S. Senate. Former New Mexico GOP Chairman Allen Weh and former Dona Ana County Republican Party Chairman David Clements are vying for the nomination to run against Democrat Tom Udall. It's Udall's first bid for re-election since winning the seat six years ago after the retirement of longtime Republican Sen. Pete Domenici.

State Auditor Hector Balderas was the only Democrat seeking to replace King as attorney general. Susan Riedel, a former deputy to Martinez when she was district attorney in Las Cruces, and Albuquerque lawyer James Baiamonte filed for the GOP ballot.

Two Albuquerque Democrats, Debra Haaland and Marie Julienne, are seeking the nomination to run against Lt. Gov. John Sanchez.

In Albuquerque's 1st Congressional District, two Republicans are vying to run against Democratic Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham -- Richard Priem and Michael Frese.

In southern New Mexico's 2nd Congressional District, Leslie Endean-Singh of La Luz and Carlsbad attorney Roxanne "Rocky" Lara filed for the Democratic nomination to run against incumbent Republican Rep. Steve Pearce.

One Democrat, Albuquerque Assistant District Attorney Robert Blanch, and a Republican rancher, Jefferson Byrd of Tucumcari, have set their sights on the 3rd Congressional District seat held by Democratic Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**.

In other statewide offices, Capitan Republican attorney Aubrey Dunn filed to run against Democratic Land Commissioner Ray Powell; Albuquerque Democratic Sen. Tim Keller and Republican Robert Aragon are running for state auditor; and Bernalillo County Clerk Maggie Toulouse Oliver is running as a Democrat for secretary of state against Republican incumbent Dianna Duran.

Three Democrats have filed to run for state treasurer: Tim Eichenberg, Patrick Padilla and John Wertheim. Rick Lopez of Santa Fe was the only Republican candidate.

For the Court of Appeals, Miles Hanisee of Albuquerque was unopposed for the Republican nomination, and Kerry Kiernan of Albuquerque was the only Democrat.

LOAD-DATE: February 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

308 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

February 1, 2014 Saturday

NM delegation encouraged by GOP immigration reform proposal

BYLINE: Michael Coleman Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: LEGISLATURE; Pg. A4

LENGTH: 545 words

WASHINGTON - Members of New Mexico's congressional delegation said they were encouraged by a proposal put forth by House Republican leaders this week to give illegal immigrants a chance to earn citizenship over the next decade.

The immigration reform "principles" unveiled Thursday at the House GOP's annual retreat on Maryland's Eastern Shore represent a significant breakthrough in the long-standing, failed congressional negotiations about how best to reform the nation's immigration laws. Democratic leaders in Washington, as well as rank-and-file Democratic delegates from New Mexico, voiced cautious optimism about the proposals.

"I'm hopeful that the House Republicans' (plan) means the door is open to a productive conversation, and that the House and Senate will be able to come together this year and pass an immigration bill that meets the real needs in our nation," said Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M.

Rep. Steve Pearce, the New Mexico delegation's only Republican, represents the state's sprawling border with Mexico. Pearce has long occupied a unique position on the immigration issue among members of the House GOP caucus. Like many Republicans, he opposes providing "amnesty" to people already in the country illegally. But Pearce advocates a greatly expanded guest worker program that would allow illegal immigrants a chance to become legitimate guests who could work in the U.S. as long as they pay taxes and return home occasionally.

"We are encouraged by the contents of these principles," Pearce spokesman Eric Layer said. "Immigration reform has long been a top priority and we are glad to see this moving forward. At the

same time, Congressman Pearce's own views and positive proposals on how to best solve immigration issues - formed by years of communication with New Mexicans - are steady."

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., said she was glad the House Republican leadership "has finally outlined a set of immigration reform principles." She stressed that a so-called path to citizenship for the nation's estimated 11 million illegal immigrants is crucial to a bipartisan deal.

"As a nation of immigrants, citizenship has always been a key feature of who we are as Americans and it should be a key component of immigration reform," **Lujan** Grisham said. "It's time for House Republicans to side with a majority of the American people, in addition to countless business, faith and community leaders, and finally enact comprehensive immigration reform."

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., called the proposals "an important first step."

"There are some important differences between Republicans' principles and the bipartisan bill in the House that reflects the Congressional Hispanic Caucus' priorities," **Luján** said. "But all parties need to work together and I look forward to working with my Republican colleagues to find a way forward."

Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., said he was "especially pleased" with the GOP's willingness to discuss citizenship for young people brought to the United States by illegal immigrant parents.

"New Mexicans are eager for a solution, DREAM Act students deserve a solution and our economy requires a solution," Heinrich said. "The Senate has taken action, and it's time for the House to do the same and pass accountable immigration reform."

LOAD-DATE: February 3, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

States News Service

January 31, 2014 Friday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON THE PRESIDENT'S STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 289 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement tonight after President Obama delivered his State of the Union Address.

"Tonight, President Obama spoke of the great promise of America and the essential role that a vibrant middle class plays in enabling our nation to achieve its full potential. In declaring a time of action and signaling his determination to move our country forward, President Obama made it clear that the challenges facing our country and the American people can't wait.

"With New Mexico facing high levels of poverty, too many hungry children, and so many of our friends and neighbors looking for work, the delays and gridlock of the past must remain in the past. Last year was the least productive Congressional session of all time. We cannot afford to have a repeat of that this year. Rather than waste time trying to repeal the Affordable Care Act and hold the debt limit hostage, House Republicans need to work with President Obama so that we can find common ground and make progress on jobs and the economy - not govern from one manufactured crisis to the next.

"President Obama offered a number of important proposals that will build a stronger middle class and provide opportunities to hard-working Americans, from raising the minimum wage for federal contract workers to making college more affordable and accessible. These efforts are welcomed; however they are not a substitute for Congressional action. President Obama is taking action because Congress has failed to act. Congress must no longer turn a blind eye to the struggles of working people and the poor in America."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: January 31, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

310 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

January 30, 2014 Thursday 11:55 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: Congressional Hispanic Caucus on the 5th Anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 620 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Yesterday, Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) Chairman Ruben Hinojosa (TX-15) and CHC Members released the following statements on the fifth anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, a critical law championing the principle of equal pay for women.

"Women deserve to be paid fairly for the work they do. When we talk about women, these are our mothers, wives, sisters and daughters who are the backbone of our economy and who make up nearly half of our labor force. As a father, I want my daughters to earn more than the 77 cents women currently make. Women in our country deserve better and on this anniversary, let us stand up and help them succeed," said CHC Chairman Ruben Hinojosa (TX-15).

"Five years ago today, President Obama signed his first bill into law. With the stroke of a pen, he and the Democratic Congress that sent him the legislation sent a powerful message that we will fight for fairness in the workplace and an agenda that supports women and their families. We still have work to do to ensure equal pay for equal work, but we remain committed to this effort and will continue our call for fair and just treatment for all," said CHC First Vice Chair **Ben Ray Lujan** (NM-03).

"Five years ago today, President Obama signed into law the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, critical legislation ensuring women can fight against pay discrimination in court. But with women making only 77 cents for every dollar men earn - and Hispanic women making even less - it's clear that we must do more to empower women in the workplace. That means passing the Paycheck Fairness Act. That means enhancing the Family and Medical Leave Act to include paid sick leave. And that means expanding access to child care for working families. At a time when women serve as the sole or co-breadwinner in two-thirds of American families, equal pay for equal work shouldn't be just a suggestion; it should be the law of the land," said CHC Whip Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01).

"There are turning points on the road to justice and equality in America. Passing the Lilly Ledbetter Act was a significant one. But passing legislation is only one part of the fight for equal pay and equal rights and we all have a responsibility to make sure the economic growth that enriches so many Americans is also lifting up the middle-class, the working-class, and our whole society, regardless of gender, orientation, or ethnicity," said CHC Immigration Task Force Chair Luis Gutierrez (IL-04).

"I was pleased to join Lilly Ledbetter, Leader Pelosi and colleagues at today's Steering and Policy Committee hearing on equal pay. As the President said in his State of the Union address, 'When women succeed, America succeeds.' The way to ensure women will succeed is by raising the minimum wage and guaranteeing equal pay for equal work. This is a particularly important issue for minority and immigrant women, who are paid even more disproportionately than white women," said CHC Health Task Force Chair Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA-40).

"The law that bears Lilly Ledbetter's name means my two daughters have the chance to compete in the workplace just like their brothers, receiving the same reward for the same job well done. We cannot be a nation which fails to pay the same wage, for the same quality of work, in the same job to a certain group of our citizens, based strictly on their gender. That is unacceptable for a nation based on equality, that prides itself on giving every American an equal opportunity," said CHC Financial Services, Manufacturing and Commerce Task Force Chair Tony Cardenas (CA-29).

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage4psi-140131-30VitinMar-4620945

LOAD-DATE: January 31, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

January 29, 2014 Wednesday

NM delegates split on talk; Use of executive power an issue

BYLINE: Michael Coleman Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. A2

LENGTH: 510 words

WASHINGTON - New Mexico's congressional Democrats said they hoped Republicans would embrace some of President Obama's proposals to expand the middle class, while the delegation's lone Republican said he viewed the entire speech "with a jaded eye."

Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., said Tuesday night that Republicans and Democrats agree the middle class needs help. Deciding how to deliver it should not be so contentious, he said.

"What stood out to me was the emphasis on middle class families and what they need," he said of the State of the Union speech. "He really hit on some action areas we need to get done: Ensuring a fair minimum wage, helping workers train for and find jobs, making college affordable for all Americans and extending emergency unemployment insurance."

Udall a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said he backed Obama on opposing additional sanctions on Iran, at least until an interim six-month agreement is given time to work.

Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., said he was appalled by the president's insistence that he would use his executive powers to circumvent Republican opposition in Congress.

"My reaction is one of anger," Pearce said. "He's removing the voice of the people? No debate? He doesn't have the constitutional right to simply ignore the people in the House and the Senate. I found that extraordinarily offensive."

Asked if there was anything in the speech he could envision supporting, Pearce said he doubted Obama would operate in good faith on any issues.

"I looked at it with a jaded eye," he said. "I've heard it so many times."

Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., said he was encouraged by the president's vow to use an executive order to boost the minimum wage under new federal contracts to $10.10 an hour, from $7.25. "Those are the kinds of things that are well within his power as the president and will be embraced by the American people," Heinrich said.

Heinrich said he also backs the president's decision to step up use of executive decision-making.

"As long as it's within the context of what executive powers are, I think the American people expect him to not just sit around and wait for the Congress to send him bills," he said.

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., said he was encouraged to hear Obama's call for more technology transfer, or moving government-funded research and development into the marketplace. **Luján** said New Mexico's nuclear laboratories and high-tech military installations are in prime positions to contribute.

"House Republicans need to work with President Obama so that we can find common ground and make progress on jobs and the economy, not govern from one crisis to the next," **Luján** said.

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., said she appreciated the president's comments about equality for women in the workplace. She noted two proposals that might attain rare bipartisan traction.

"He made a big push for immigration reform, and I really appreciate him mentioning infrastructure bills," she said. "I think we can get those things done and those are the kinds of things that spur economic growth."

LOAD-DATE: January 29, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

312 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 29, 2014

Lujan Grisham, CHC on the 5th Anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act; Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 628 words

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, U.S. Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, Whip of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), and CHC Members released the following statements on the fifth anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, a critical law championing the principle of equal pay for women:

"Five years ago today, President Obama signed into law the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, critical legislation ensuring women can fight against pay discrimination in court. But with women making only 77 cents for every dollar men earn - and Hispanic women making even less - it's clear that we must do more to empower women in the workplace. That means passing the Paycheck Fairness Act. That means enhancing the Family and Medical Leave Act to include paid sick leave. And that means expanding access to child care for working families. At a time when women serve as the sole or co-breadwinner in two-thirds of American families, equal pay for equal work shouldn't be just a suggestion; it should be the law of the land," said CHC Whip Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01).

"Women deserve to be paid fairly for the work they do. When we talk about women, these are our mothers, wives, sisters and daughters who are the backbone of our economy and who make up nearly half of our labor force. As a father, I want my daughters to earn more than the 77 cents women currently make. Women in our country deserve better and on this anniversary, let us stand up and help them succeed," said CHC Chairman Ruben Hinojosa (TX-15).

"Five years ago today, President Obama signed his first bill into law. With the stroke of a pen, he and the Democratic Congress that sent him the legislation sent a powerful message that we will fight for fairness in the workplace and an agenda that supports women and their families. We still have work to do to ensure equal pay for equal work, but we remain committed to this effort and will continue our call for fair and just treatment for all," said CHC First Vice Chair **Ben Ray Lujan** (NM-03).

"There are turning points on the road to justice and equality in America. Passing the Lilly Ledbetter Act was a significant one. But passing legislation is only one part of the fight for equal pay and equal rights and we all have a responsibility to make sure the economic growth that enriches so many Americans is also lifting up the middle-class, the working-class, and our whole society, regardless of gender, orientation, or ethnicity," said CHC Immigration Task Force Chair Luis Gutierrez (IL-04).

"I was pleased to join Lilly Ledbetter, Leader Pelosi and colleagues at today's Steering and Policy Committee hearing on equal pay. As the President said in his State of the Union address, 'When women succeed, America succeeds.' The way to ensure women will succeed is by raising the minimum wage and guaranteeing equal pay for equal work. This is a particularly important issue for minority and immigrant women, who are paid even more disproportionately than white women," said CHC Health Task Force Chair Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA-40).

"The law that bears Lilly Ledbetter's name means my two daughters have the chance to compete in the workplace just like their brothers, receiving the same reward for the same job well done. We cannot be a nation which fails to pay the same wage, for the same quality of work, in the same job to a certain group of our citizens, based strictly on their gender. That is unacceptable for a nation based on equality, that prides itself on giving every American an equal opportunity," said CHC Financial Services, Manufacturing and Commerce Task Force Chair Tony Cardenas (CA-29).

Read this original document at: http://lujangrisham.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/**lujan**-grisham-chc-on-the-5th-anniversary-of-the-lilly-ledbetter-fair-pay

LOAD-DATE: January 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 29, 2014

LUJAN: FARM BILL INCLUDES IMPORTANT FUNDING FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES AND SUPPORT FOR ACEQUIAS; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 474 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted today in support of a new Farm Bill that makes reforms and extends programs for five years that support ranchers, farmers, and dairy producers. The Farm Bill conference report passed with bipartisan support by a vote of 251 to 166. The bill included provisions that **Lujan** has long supported and worked hard to see were included in the final version, including funding for an additional year of the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program and language that enables Acequia and Community Ditch Associations to compete for federal funds.

"The Farm Bill has been years in the making, and finally passing this legislation is a big step forward that will help farmers, ranchers, and dairy producers in New Mexico - especially as many in our community face challenging drought conditions," **Lujan** said. "I am pleased this legislation includes a provision I worked on that will open up opportunities for Acequia and Community Ditch Associations to apply for federal funds. These funds can help farmers and ranchers tend to the health of the acequias that are essential to their livelihood and the culture of New Mexico."

During debate on the House Farm Bill last year, **Lujan** offered an amendment to enable Acequia Community Ditch Associations to apply for federal funds within the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). The amendment, which was adopted by a voice vote, would remove burdensome roadblocks to improve conservation practices and manage scare water resources, thereby strengthening the acequias that provide irrigation for local farmers. **Lujan's** efforts, along with the support of the New Mexico delegation, helped secure language in the bill that is similar to the amendment and will allow Acequia and Community Ditch Associations to form partnerships and apply for federal grants through EQIP as well as a number of other federal programs.

Lujan did express strong disappointment with the level of funding for nutrition programs that was included in the bill. The legislation cuts $8 billion from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by closing a loophole that impacts one-third of states, of which New Mexico is not one, but does not put the money back into the program.

"While these changes reform the food assistance program, I would have preferred that the savings were reinvested to support families that are struggling to put food on the table," **Lujan** added. "Even though the funding level in this bill far exceeds what House Republicans advocated for when they moved to slash $39 billion last year, we cannot abandon our efforts to combat hunger in our communities."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-farm-bill-includes-important-funding-for-rural-communities-and-support-for-acequias/

LOAD-DATE: January 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 29, 2014

CHC on Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act Anniversary

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 693 words

Congressional Hispanic Caucus

The Honorable Ruben Hinojosa, Chair

-For Immediate Release-

January 29, 2014

Contact: Jasmine Mora CHC Communications Director 202-225-2410

CHC ON THE 5TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LILLY LEDBETTER FAIR PAY ACT

Washington, DC- Today, Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) Chairman Ruben Hinojosa (TX-15) and CHC Members released the following statements on the fifth anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, a critical law championing the principle of equal pay for women.

"Women deserve to be paid fairly for the work they do. When we talk about women, these are our mothers, wives, sisters and daughters who are the backbone of our economy and who make up nearly half of our labor force. As a father, I want my daughters to earn more than the 77 cents women currently make. Women in our country deserve better and on this anniversary, let us stand up and help them succeed," said CHC Chairman Ruben Hinojosa (TX-15).

"Five years ago today, President Obama signed his first bill into law. With the stroke of a pen, he and the Democratic Congress that sent him the legislation sent a powerful message that we will fight for fairness in the workplace and an agenda that supports women and their families. We still have work to do to ensure equal pay for equal work, but we remain committed to this effort and will continue our call for fair and just treatment for all," said CHC First Vice Chair **Ben Ray Lujan** (NM-03).

"Five years ago today, President Obama signed into law the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, critical legislation ensuring women can fight against pay discrimination in court. But with women making only 77 cents for every dollar men earn - and Hispanic women making even less - it's clear that we must do more to empower women in the workplace. That means passing the Paycheck Fairness Act. That means enhancing the Family and Medical Leave Act to include paid sick leave. And that means expanding access to child care for working families. At a time when women serve as the sole or co-breadwinner in two-thirds of American families, equal pay for equal work shouldn't be just a suggestion; it should be the law of the land," said CHC Whip Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01).

"There are turning points on the road to justice and equality in America. Passing the Lilly Ledbetter Act was a significant one. But passing legislation is only one part of the fight for equal pay and equal rights and we all have a responsibility to make sure the economic growth that enriches so many Americans is also lifting up the middle-class, the working-class, and our whole society, regardless of gender, orientation, or ethnicity," said CHC Immigration Task Force Chair Luis Gutierrez (IL-04).

"I was pleased to join Lilly Ledbetter, Leader Pelosi and colleagues at today's Steering and Policy Committee hearing on equal pay. As the President said in his State of the Union address, 'When women succeed, America succeeds.' The way to ensure women will succeed is by raising the minimum wage and guaranteeing equal pay for equal work. This is a particularly important issue for

minority and immigrant women, who are paid even more disproportionately than white women," said CHC Health Task Force Chair Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA-40).

"The law that bears Lilly Ledbetter's name means my two daughters have the chance to compete in the workplace just like their brothers, receiving the same reward for the same job well done. We cannot be a nation which fails to pay the same wage, for the same quality of work, in the same job to a certain group of our citizens, based strictly on their gender. That is unacceptable for a nation based on equality, that prides itself on giving every American an equal opportunity," said CHC Financial Services, Manufacturing and Commerce Task Force Chair Tony Cardenas (CA-29).

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), founded in December 1976, is organized as a Congressional Member organization, governed under the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives. The CHC is dedicated to voicing and advancing, through the legislative process, issues affecting Hispanics in the United States, Puerto Rico and U.S. Territories.

LOAD-DATE: January 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COH

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

315 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

January 29, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN: FARM BILL INCLUDES IMPORTANT FUNDING FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES AND SUPPORT FOR ACEQUIAS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 458 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted today in support of a new Farm Bill that makes reforms and extends programs for five years that support ranchers, farmers, and dairy producers. The Farm Bill conference report passed with bipartisan support by a vote of 251 to 166. The bill included provisions that **Lujan** has long supported and worked hard to see were included in the final version, including funding for an additional year of the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program and language that enables Acequia and Community Ditch Associations to compete for federal funds.

"The Farm Bill has been years in the making, and finally passing this legislation is a big step forward that will help farmers, ranchers, and dairy producers in New Mexico - especially as many in our

community face challenging drought conditions," **Lujan** said. "I am pleased this legislation includes a provision I worked on that will open up opportunities for Acequia and Community Ditch Associations to apply for federal funds. These funds can help farmers and ranchers tend to the health of the acequias that are essential to their livelihood and the culture of New Mexico."

During debate on the House Farm Bill last year, **Lujan** offered an amendment to enable Acequia Community Ditch Associations to apply for federal funds within the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). The amendment, which was adopted by a voice vote, would remove burdensome roadblocks to improve conservation practices and manage scare water resources, thereby strengthening the acequias that provide irrigation for local farmers. **Lujan's** efforts, along with the support of the New Mexico delegation, helped secure language in the bill that is similar to the amendment and will allow Acequia and Community Ditch Associations to form partnerships and apply for federal grants through EQIP as well as a number of other federal programs.

Lujan did express strong disappointment with the level of funding for nutrition programs that was included in the bill. The legislation cuts $8 billion from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by closing a loophole that impacts one-third of states, of which New Mexico is not one, but does not put the money back into the program.

"While these changes reform the food assistance program, I would have preferred that the savings were reinvested to support families that are struggling to put food on the table," **Lujan** added. "Even though the funding level in this bill far exceeds what House Republicans advocated for when they moved to slash $39 billion last year, we cannot abandon our efforts to combat hunger in our communities."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: January 31, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

January 29, 2014 Wednesday 12:03 AM EST

Lujan: Farm Bill Includes Important Funding for Rural Communities and Support for Acequias

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 468 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted today in support of a new Farm Bill that makes reforms and extends programs for five years that support ranchers, farmers, and dairy producers. The Farm Bill conference report passed with bipartisan support by a vote of 251 to 166. The bill included provisions that **Lujan** has long supported and worked hard to see were included in the final version, including funding for an additional year of the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program and language that enables Acequia and Community Ditch Associations to compete for federal funds.

"The Farm Bill has been years in the making, and finally passing this legislation is a big step forward that will help farmers, ranchers, and dairy producers in New Mexico - especially as many in our community face challenging drought conditions," **Lujan** said. "I am pleased this legislation includes a provision I worked on that will open up opportunities for Acequia and Community Ditch Associations to apply for federal funds. These funds can help farmers and ranchers tend to the health of the acequias that are essential to their livelihood and the culture of New Mexico."

During debate on the House Farm Bill last year, **Lujan** offered an amendment to enable Acequia Community Ditch Associations to apply for federal funds within the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). The amendment, which was adopted by a voice vote, would remove burdensome roadblocks to improve conservation practices and manage scare water resources, thereby strengthening the acequias that provide irrigation for local farmers. **Lujan's** efforts, along with the support of the New Mexico delegation, helped secure language in the bill that is similar to the amendment and will allow Acequia and Community Ditch Associations to form partnerships and apply for federal grants through EQIP as well as a number of other federal programs.

Lujan did express strong disappointment with the level of funding for nutrition programs that was included in the bill. The legislation cuts $8 billion from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by closing a loophole that impacts one-third of states, of which New Mexico is not one, but does not put the money back into the program.

"While these changes reform the food assistance program, I would have preferred that the savings were reinvested to support families that are struggling to put food on the table," **Lujan** added. "Even though the funding level in this bill far exceeds what House Republicans advocated for when they moved to slash $39 billion last year, we cannot abandon our efforts to combat hunger in our communities."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TagarumaMar-140130-4619002 30TagarumaMar

LOAD-DATE: January 30, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

317 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

January 28, 2014 Tuesday

Diné Council Winter Session;
Naize focuses on energy accomplishments

BYLINE: Kathy Helms navajo1@gallupindependent.com, DINÉ BUREAU

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1

LENGTH: 882 words

DATELINE: WINDOW ROCK

WINDOW ROCK - A five-minute break after Vice President Rex Lee Jim 's delivery of the State of the Nation address Monday resulted in the 22nd Navajo Nation Council losing quorum, heading off any potential discussion on the removal of Speaker Johnny Naize from his current position.

Naize was scheduled to deliver the "Speaker's Report," but submitted a written report instead, focusing on Council's accomplishments in the energy field, Fort Wingate land negotiations with the Zuni Tribe, health care and gaming, among other issues.

Naize's written speech did not mention the action to remove him as speaker, which is expected to come up Tuesday. Instead, he focused on Council's hard work in the face of challenges and reminded them of the tradition that binds them. His report concluded with him expressing his "sincere gratitude" for delegates' dedication and his suggestion that they get the rest they need and "take some time to enjoy life."

"Each one of us has made the choice to help our people with the resources available to us. ... My fellow colleagues, I am confident that with all that we have endured to this point, I can say we did it together and that moving forward, Diné people have a better future due to the actions of this Council."

Energy

Reflecting on 2013, Naize said energy continues to be a topic of great interest to the Navajo Nation government and people.

"The development of energy has had a tremendous impact to our economy, livelihood and basic governmental functions," he said. "The 22nd Navajo Nation Council has faced many challenges in its tenure thus far and no greater challenges than those concerning the continuation of our energy resources, which entails the tax revenue, royalties, and jobs associated with them.

"We can hold our heads high with the knowledge that we have increased our

Nation's resources and secured employment for hundreds of Diné people with the many actions we have taken on their behalf," he stated.

NTEC

The Dec. 30 closing on Navajo Transitional Energy Co.'s purchase of BHP Billi-ton's Navajo Mine, the coal supply agreement with Arizona Public Service Co., and APS' decision to move forward with its purchase of Units 4 and 5 of the Four Corners Power Plant represented the culmination of years of hard work, late hours, long weekends and tedious negotiations, Naize said.

"The 22nd Navajo Nation Council and each of its standing committees have put forth a tremendous effort in responding to the difficult deadlines forced on us by this tedious negotiation process," he stated. "All the early morning meetings, work sessions, committee and Council meetings have paid off and we can finally say that the Navajo Nation owns and controls our largest natural resource."

Fort Wingate

Negotiations with the Zuni Tribe on dividing lands at the Fort Wingate Military Depot were near completion as of July, but a few months later, members of Iyanbito and Churchrock chapters expressed concern with the outcome of the negotiations, Naize said.

Delegate Edmund Yazzie wanted to ensure that his communities were heard as the negotiated land division is brought to conclusion, so a letter was sent to U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** Jr., D-N. M., requesting that he visit the impacted chapters to provide information. Naize said they remain hopeful that **Lujan** will meet with community members.

In the meantime, on Jan. 8, **Luján** and Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N. M., co-sponsored the bill H.R. 3822, the Fort Wingate Land Division Act of 2014, which seeks to divide the land according to what was negotiated July 8 in Washington. The bill has been assigned to the Committee on Natural Resources but has not been heard yet.

Health Care

Naize said he is continuing to monitor and help in whatever way he can to improve the overall health care system on the Navajo Nation. Recently, Delegate Dwight Witherspoon introduced a resolution to create a Navajo Department of Health. During a Jan. 3 work session in Flagstaff, Delegate Leonard Tsosie recommended they create a task force to address concerns within the proposed legislation.

In response, Naize said he initiated draft legislation to create the "Department of Health Creation Task Force" to review the bill and develop it to the best interest of Navajo. Naize said he asked Tsosie to sponsor the task force resolution to address the concerns with Witherspoon's resolution and expects the task force to remain in effect until Spring Session.

Other issues

Naize recapped the work that has been done on the Navajo Nation's proposed gaming compact with New Mexico, and also said he is in the process of creating a cooperative agreement for conducting the Cobell Land Buy-Back Program on Navajo.

Naize stated he is continuing to work on the creation of the Veterans Act and has offered his recommendations for improving the document through dialogue with the Navajo Department of Veteran Affairs.

Additionally, Naize said he is having his staff monitor and develop meetings with the Arizona Governor's Office concerning a compact to receive capital expense funding for Navajo Technical University.

Finally, the Human Rights Commission has been working with Council to advocate for the United States to acknowledge the rights of Indigenous peoples. Another trip to Switzerland is planned for March, Naize stated.

LOAD-DATE: January 31, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: The Navajo Nation Council Chambers fill up for day one of the Winter Session in Window Rock Monday. Adron Gardner/Independent Navajo Council Winter session Navajo Nation Council Speaker Johnny Naize presides over day one of the Winter Session in Window Rock Monday. A vote to remove Naize from his speakership was set for Tuesday. Adron Gardner/Independent Navajo Nation Council Delegate Jonathan Nez, right, listens during day one of the Council's Winter Session in Window Rock Monday. Adron Gardner/Independent

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

January 27, 2014 Monday

Luján: Problems for the unemployed worsening

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 282 words

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D-03) said that a new report shows nearly 72,000 people are losing unemployment insurance every week because Congress has failed to approve an extension for those benefits.

Luján said The analysis by House Ways and Means Committee Democrats found that more than 1.6 million Americans, including 7,492 New Mexicans have lost coverage since the end of December.

"It was disappointing that once again Republicans recessed the House without addressing expiring unemployment insurance that is leaving families in New Mexico out in the cold," **Luján** said in a statement. "I hope that a week at home talking to their constituents - hearing the stories of people who want to work and provide for their families but are struggling in an economy that has yet to fully recover - will move Republicans to action when the House returns."

Economists have found unemployment benefits to be one of the most effective job creation strategies available during a period of high joblessness, **Luján** said. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that extending unemployment insurance for another year would save 200,000 jobs.

"Opposition to an extension of these benefits ignores the fact that in the current economic climate there are nearly three job seekers for every job opening," **Luján** added. "Last year, in what was the least productive session of all time, House Republicans failed to offer an agenda to create jobs, and now they want to deny vital assistance to our friends and neighbors who are struggling to find work."

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: January 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 27, 2014

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS $3.7 MILLION AIMED AT TURNING AROUND LOWEST PERFORMING SCHOOLS IN NEW MEXICO; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 273 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted today that New Mexico has been selected to receive funding under the U.S. Department of Education's School Improvement Grant (SIG) Program. A grant of $3,754,213 will help in the effort to turn around persistently low achieving schools in the state.

"There is no better investment we can make in our young New Mexicans than providing them with a good education. We have the responsibility to ensure that our children have proper support and attend high quality schools," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Unfortunately, recent studies about the well-being of our children show that New Mexico ranks at the bottom or near the bottom in a number of categories. Turning around the lowest achieving schools in our communities represents an important step forward in the effort to provide our children with a brighter future. This grant will help these schools better support their students with the goal of giving every child the opportunity to succeed through education."

The SIG program awards grants to state educational agencies that award subgrants to school districts demonstrating the greatest need for the funds as well as the strongest commitment to providing adequate resources to substantially raise student achievement in their lowest-performing schools. New Mexico is one of seven states receiving these grants, along with Colorado, Indian, Kansas, Massachusetts, Utah, and Washington.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-highlights-37-million-aimed-at-turning-around-lowest-performing-schools-in-new-mexico/

LOAD-DATE: January 28, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

January 27, 2014 Monday

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS $3.7 MILLION AIMED AT TURNING AROUND LOWEST PERFORMING SCHOOLS IN NEW MEXICO

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 257 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted today that New Mexico has been selected to receive funding under the U.S. Department of Education's School Improvement Grant (SIG) Program. A grant of $3,754,213 will help in the effort to turn around persistently low achieving schools in the state.

"There is no better investment we can make in our young New Mexicans than providing them with a good education. We have the responsibility to ensure that our children have proper support and attend high quality schools," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Unfortunately, recent studies about the well-being of our children show that New Mexico ranks at the bottom or near the bottom in a number of categories. Turning around the lowest achieving schools in our communities represents an important step forward in the effort to provide our children with a brighter future. This grant will help these schools better support their students with the goal of giving every child the opportunity to succeed through education."

The SIG program awards grants to state educational agencies that award subgrants to school districts demonstrating the greatest need for the funds as well as the strongest commitment to providing adequate resources to substantially raise student achievement in their lowest-performing schools. New Mexico is one of seven states receiving these grants, along with Colorado, Indian, Kansas, Massachusetts, Utah, and Washington.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: January 31, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

January 27, 2014 Monday 3:27 AM EST

New Mexico Dems: Congressman Ben Ray Lujan: More than 1.6 Million Americans Have Lost Unemployment Insurance Including 7,400 in New Mexico

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 386 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted a new report on how many Americans have seen their unemployment insurance run out since December 28 of last year. The analysis by House Ways and Means Committee Democrats found that more than 1.6 million Americans, including 7,492 New Mexicans have lost these important benefits. Without Congressional action, on average, nearly 72,000 people are losing unemployment insurance every week.

"It was disappointing that once again Republicans recessed the House without addressing expiring unemployment insurance that is leaving families in New Mexico out in the cold," Congressman **Lujan** said. "I hope that a week at home talking to their constituents - hearing the stories of people who want to work and provide for their families but are struggling in an economy that has yet to fully recover - will move Republicans to action when the House returns next week."

House Republicans have blocked multiple efforts by House Democrats to bring legislation to the floor that would extend unemployment insurance that supports families during a time of need and supports small businesses that feel the impact when families have to cut back on basic necessities. In the Senate, Republicans have also voted to block action on an extension, including a proposal to scale back the program substantially and offset the costs.

With every dollar of unemployment compensation spent creating $1.52 in additional economic activity, economists have found unemployment benefits to be one of the most effective job creation strategies available during a period of high joblessness. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has estimated that extending unemployment insurance for another year would save 200,000 jobs.

"Opposition to an extension of these benefits ignores the fact that in the current economic climate there are nearly three job seekers for every job opening," **Lujan** added. "Last year, in what was the least productive session of all time, House Republicans failed to offer an agenda to create jobs, and now they want to deny vital assistance to our friends and neighbors who are struggling to find work."

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage1pm-140128-30TagarumaMar-4615909 30TagarumaMar

LOAD-DATE: January 28, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

January 27, 2014 Monday 12:03 AM EST

Lujan Highlights $3.7 Million Aimed at Turning Around Lowest Performing Schools in New Mexico

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 266 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted today that New Mexico has been selected to receive funding under the U.S. Department of Education's School Improvement Grant (SIG) Program. A grant of $3,754,213 will help in the effort to turn around persistently low achieving schools in the state.

"There is no better investment we can make in our young New Mexicans than providing them with a good education. We have the responsibility to ensure that our children have proper support and attend high quality schools," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Unfortunately, recent studies about the well-being of our children show that New Mexico ranks at the bottom or near the bottom in a number of categories. Turning around the lowest achieving schools in our communities represents an important step forward in the effort to provide our children with a brighter future. This grant will help these schools better support their students with the goal of giving every child the opportunity to succeed through education."

The SIG program awards grants to state educational agencies that award subgrants to school districts demonstrating the greatest need for the funds as well as the strongest commitment to providing adequate resources to substantially raise student achievement in their lowest-performing schools. New Mexico is one of seven states receiving these grants, along with Colorado, Indian, Kansas, Massachusetts, Utah, and Washington.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TagarumaMar-140128-4615353 30TagarumaMar

LOAD-DATE: January 28, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 24, 2014

LUJAN: MORE THAN 1.6 MILLION AMERICANS HAVE NOW LOST UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE INCLUDING 7,400 IN NEW MEXICO; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 392 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted a new report on how many Americans have seen their unemployment insurance run out since December 28 of last year. The analysis by House Ways and Means Committee Democrats found that more than 1.6 million Americans, including 7,492 New Mexicans have lost these important benefits. Without Congressional action, on average, nearly 72,000 people are losing unemployment insurance every week.

"It was disappointing that once again Republicans recessed the House without addressing expiring unemployment insurance that is leaving families in New Mexico out in the cold," Congressman **Lujan** said. "I hope that a week at home talking to their constituents - hearing the stories of people who want to work and provide for their families but are struggling in an economy that has yet to fully recover - will move Republicans to action when the House returns next week."

House Republicans have blocked multiple efforts by House Democrats to bring legislation to the floor that would extend unemployment insurance that supports families during a time of need and supports small businesses that feel the impact when families have to cut back on basic necessities. In the Senate, Republicans have also voted to block action on an extension, including a proposal to scale back the program substantially and offset the costs.

With every dollar of unemployment compensation spent creating $1.52 in additional economic activity, economists have found unemployment benefits to be one of the most effective job creation strategies available during a period of high joblessness. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has estimated that extending unemployment insurance for another year would save 200,000 jobs.

"Opposition to an extension of these benefits ignores the fact that in the current economic climate there are nearly three job seekers for every job opening," **Lujan** added. "Last year, in what was the least productive session of all time, House Republicans failed to offer an agenda to create jobs, and now they want to deny vital assistance to our friends and neighbors who are struggling to find work."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-more-than-16-million-americans-have-now-lost-unemployment-insurance-including-7400-in-new-mexico/

LOAD-DATE: January 27, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

January 24, 2014 Friday 2:29 AM EST

Lujan: More Than 1.6 Million Americans Have Now Lost Unemployment Insurance Including 7,400 in New Mexico

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 384 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted a new report on how many Americans have seen their unemployment insurance run out since December 28 of last year. The analysis by House Ways and Means Committee Democrats found that more than 1.6 million Americans, including 7,492 New Mexicans have lost these important benefits. Without Congressional action, on average, nearly 72,000 people are losing unemployment insurance every week.

"It was disappointing that once again Republicans recessed the House without addressing expiring unemployment insurance that is leaving families in New Mexico out in the cold," Congressman **Lujan** said. "I hope that a week at home talking to their constituents - hearing the stories of people who want to work and provide for their families but are struggling in an economy that has yet to fully recover - will move Republicans to action when the House returns next week."

House Republicans have blocked multiple efforts by House Democrats to bring legislation to the floor that would extend unemployment insurance that supports families during a time of need and supports small businesses that feel the impact when families have to cut back on basic necessities. In the Senate, Republicans have also voted to block action on an extension, including a proposal to scale back the program substantially and offset the costs.

With every dollar of unemployment compensation spent creating $1.52 in additional economic activity, economists have found unemployment benefits to be one of the most effective job creation strategies available during a period of high joblessness. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has estimated that extending unemployment insurance for another year would save 200,000 jobs.

"Opposition to an extension of these benefits ignores the fact that in the current economic climate there are nearly three job seekers for every job opening," **Lujan** added. "Last year, in what was the least productive session of all time, House Republicans failed to offer an agenda to create jobs, and now they want to deny vital assistance to our friends and neighbors who are struggling to find work."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140125-4614212 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: January 25, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

325 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

January 23, 2014 Thursday

Luj án's staff holding mobile office hours

BYLINE: Bernie Dotson Staff writer city@gallupindependent.com

SECTION: LOCAL; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 115 words

DATELINE: GALLUP

GALLUP - Staff of the area office of Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N. M., will hold mobile office hours Thursday, Brian Lee, field representative for **Luján**, said.

"In addition to open office hours at district offices, staff also holds mobile office hours for residents who need assistance with casework, but may not have the means or time to travel to one of **Luján's** six district offices," Lee said.

Lee said staff will be on hand to assist residents who have questions regarding Social Security benefits, immigration applications, veterans' services and other federal programs. The mobile office hours are scheduled 10 a.m. to noon. The location is the Gallup Community Pantry, 1130 Hasler Valley Road.

LOAD-DATE: January 28, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

326 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

January 20, 2014 Monday

LUJAN HONORS THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 331 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today celebrating the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. **Lujan** will honor Dr. King at a community event in Santa Fe today.

"Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr had purpose. Dr. King understood purpose. In sermons and speeches, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke of a "Beloved Community' - a community that was founded on love, respect, and hope. A community that rejected darkness and discrimination, hate and racism, poverty and hunger.

"He reminded us that, "darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that.' And he believed that we could achieve this great "Dream,' this attainable "Dream' - but only if we - brother and sister, friend and foe - would come together in common purpose to shine that bright light and cast out this evil darkness.

"Upon accepting the Nobel Peace Prize, Dr. King said, "I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture of their minds, and dignity, equality, and freedom for their spirits.'

"Dr. King had the courage to stand up for his convictions, to shine the light of truth on the harsh injustices of his time, and to call upon our better angels to build a community and a country that allowed all its people - regardless of race, gender, or creed - to achieve their full potential.

"He told us, "our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.' Let us heed his call with the courage to stand up for our convictions. Let us not be silent any longer. We must join together - brother and sister, friend and foe - with a common purpose and shine a bright light on the injustices plaguing our society.

"Let Dr. King's example and enduring legacy inspire and drive us to action, and may we draw strength from his unwavering commitment to his dream of a beloved community."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: January 31, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

January 20, 2014 Monday 11:20 PM EST

Lujan Honors the Life and Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 338 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today celebrating the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. **Lujan** will honor Dr. King at a community event in Santa Fe today.

"Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr had purpose. Dr. King understood purpose. In sermons and speeches, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke of a 'Beloved Community' - a community that was founded on love, respect, and hope. A community that rejected darkness and discrimination, hate and racism, poverty and hunger.

"He reminded us that, 'darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that.' And he believed that we could achieve this great 'Dream,' this attainable 'Dream' - but only if we - brother and sister, friend and foe - would come together in common purpose to shine that bright light and cast out this evil darkness.

"Upon accepting the Nobel Peace Prize, Dr. King said, 'I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture of their minds, and dignity, equality, and freedom for their spirits.'

"Dr. King had the courage to stand up for his convictions, to shine the light of truth on the harsh injustices of his time, and to call upon our better angels to build a community and a country that allowed all its people - regardless of race, gender, or creed - to achieve their full potential.

"He told us, 'our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.' Let us heed his call with the courage to stand up for our convictions. Let us not be silent any longer. We must join together - brother and sister, friend and foe - with a common purpose and shine a bright light on the injustices plaguing our society.

"Let Dr. King's example and enduring legacy inspire and drive us to action, and may we draw strength from his unwavering commitment to his dream of a beloved community."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140122-4609043

LOAD-DATE: January 22, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

January 17, 2014 Friday 11:28 PM EST

AG Wins Injunction Against Valley Meat

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 299 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Attorney General issued the following news release:

State District Court Judge Matthew Wilson today granted Attorney General Gary King's motion for a preliminary injunction against Valley Meat Company, preventing the opening of a proposed horse slaughterhouse until the AG's lawsuit is resolved.

"The judge's decision allows our lawsuit to continue while preventing the immediate killing of horses for human consumption," says AG King. "I still strongly believe that Valley Meat's proposal for commercial horse slaughter posed a serious danger to consumers and to our environment."

With the close scrutiny of horse slaughter that the Attorney General's lawsuit has prompted, the U.S. Congress has approved, and the President has signed, an appropriations bill that restores the long-standing prohibition on funding for federal inspection of horse slaughterhouses - which effectively bans commercial horse slaughter nationwide.

Attorney General King is especially grateful to U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, and Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan**, for their supportive efforts to de-fund the federal inspections.

Numerous other individuals and groups have helped accomplish this important result, particularly Front Range Equine Rescue, which first discovered Valley Meat's plans to get into the horse meat business and has worked tirelessly ever since to stop those operations, and Animal Protection of New Mexico, which has led the fight for equine protection in our state.

ORDER ATTACHED

https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=forums&srcid=MTY5ODY5Njc0MjQyOTUzODAxNDYBMDUwNjg1ODk2NTIyODk2ODk2ODEBeG1zMHNRdTZyaElKATQBbm1hZy5nb3YBdjI

Contact: Phil Sisneros, 505/222-9174

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30FurigayJof -140201-4622849 30FurigayJof

LOAD-DATE: February 2, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

January 17, 2014 Friday 9:28 PM EST

New Mexico Dem: Congressman Ben Ray Lujan Calls on Speaker Boehner to Keep the House in Session Until Unemployment is Extended

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 593 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District joined with 113 of his Democratic colleagues today on a letter calling on House Speaker John Boehner and Majority Leader Eric Cantor to keep the House in session until an extension of unemployment insurance is passed. At a time when more than 6,700 New Mexicans and 1.3 million Americans have seen their unemployment insurance run out, the House is scheduled to recess for a district work period next week.

"The American people expect their elected representatives to work until the job is done. Unfortunately, Republicans leaders of the House have no agenda to get people back to work or address the expiration of unemployment insurance for thousands of our friends and neighbors in New Mexico," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Rather than closing down the House next week, Republican leaders should stay in Washington and do the job the American people sent us here to do. As long as families are living with the stress of worrying what they are going to do when they are still unable to find a job and unemployment insurance is cut off, the House should remain in session and work on a solution that extends the safety net during this difficult economic time."

In addition to the 6,700 New Mexicans who have already lost unemployment insurance, 9,000 more individuals across the state will lose federal unemployment benefits over the next six months without Congressional action.

Below is the text of the letter:

Dear Speaker Boehner and Leader Cantor,

On December 28, 1.3 million Americans immediately lost all of their unemployment insurance when the Emergency Unemployment Compensation program expired. While this number grows higher with every week of Congressional inaction, the House of Representatives is scheduled to recess for district work period today for 10 days. This is unacceptable. Another 100,000 Americans will lose their benefits during this break while the families who lost their benefits right after Christmas will continue struggling to put food on the table, heat their homes, and pay their bills weeks after they lost this lifeline.

The Emergency Unemployment Compensation program is an investment with a proven economic return, and it is the right thing to do for American families. Every dollar spent on unemployment benefits generates $1.55 or more in economic activity. These benefits have also keep hundreds of thousands of American children out of poverty.

In the almost three weeks since the December 28 deadline, over 200,000 more Americans have exhausted their state benefits and are now unable to receive assistance under the expired federal program. The number grows higher every day. Approximately 72,000 Americans will lose their unemployment benefits every week - the equivalent of one person every 8 seconds.

There are legitimate policy discussions to be had about exactly how we should extend federal unemployment insurance, but we cannot find common ground when the House of Representatives is not in session and when this legislation is not even being considered in the House. The clock is ticking. This is why we urge you to cancel the pending district work period and keep the House of Representatives in session until both the House and Senate have sent legislation to the President to extend emergency federal unemployment benefits. Thank you for your consideration and we stand ready to work with you on this critical issue.

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage4psi-140118-30VitinMar-4606255

LOAD-DATE: January 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

330 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

January 16, 2014 Thursday

NM representatives not happy with budget bill

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 396 words

The House members from New Mexico said they weren't pleased with provisions in the federal appropriations bill, but took different directions when it came to voting.

The bill was passed 359-67 by the House Thursday and is expected to receive a vote in the Senate this week.

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D-3) voted for the bill, even though it didn't include some items he supported.

"This bill represents a compromise that on the whole will benefit New Mexico. While there are certainly aspects of it that I do not support, the funding bill addresses a number of priorities that are important to the people of New Mexico and our economy," **Luján** said in a statement. "I am, however disappointed, that funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program was not included, and as work on the Farm Bill continues, I encourage conference negotiators to include PILT funding in that bill."

Rep. Steve Pearce (R-2) voted against the bill and also cited the PILT funding as a reason for his decision.

"Today's vote was a difficult one," Pearce said in a statement. "While today's legislation includes increased funding for many key New Mexico projects and resolved some issues with last month's budget agreement, it also slashes vital funding that New Mexico counties rely on, and it keeps the nation on a dangerous path of debt and insolvency. We must not sacrifice the long-term health of the nation for temporary gains."

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (D-1) also voted for the bill, although she didn't like everything in it.

"Today, the House of Representatives took a monumental step forward by passing bipartisan legislation to fund the government through the end of the fiscal year. It ensures that we avoid another disastrous government shutdown, rolls back some of sequestration's harmful cuts and provides greater certainty for New Mexico families and businesses," **Lujan** Grisham said in a statement. "Still, this bill falls incredibly short, especially in terms of addressing the challenges facing middle class families and vulnerable populations. It is completely unacceptable that this legislation fails to extend emergency unemployment insurance for nearly 7,000 New Mexico jobseekers who are struggling to make ends meet."

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: January 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

331 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 16, 2014

LUJAN CALLS ON SPEAKER BOEHNER TO KEEP THE HOUSE IN SESSION UNTIL UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE IS EXTENDED; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 844 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District joined with 113 of his Democratic colleagues today on a letter calling on House Speaker John Boehner and Majority Leader Eric Cantor to keep the House in session until an extension of unemployment insurance is passed. At a time when more than 6,700 New Mexicans and 1.3 million Americans have seen their unemployment insurance run out, the House is scheduled to recess for a district work period next week.

"The American people expect their elected representatives to work until the job is done. Unfortunately, Republicans leaders of the House have no agenda to get people back to work or address the expiration of unemployment insurance for thousands of our friends and neighbors in New Mexico," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Rather than closing down the House next week, Republican leaders should stay in Washington and do the job the American people sent us here to do. As long as families are living with the stress of worrying what they are going to do when they are still unable to find a job and unemployment insurance is cut off, the House should remain in session and work on a solution that extends the safety net during this difficult economic time."

In addition to the 6,700 New Mexicans who have already lost unemployment insurance, 9,000 more individuals across the state will lose federal unemployment benefits over the next six months without Congressional action.

Below is the text of the letter:

January 16, 2014

Dear Speaker Boehner and Leader Cantor,

On December 28, 1.3 million Americans immediately lost all of their unemployment insurance when the Emergency Unemployment Compensation program expired. While this number grows higher with every week of Congressional inaction, the House of Representatives is scheduled to recess for district work period today for 10 days. This is unacceptable. Another 100,000 Americans will lose their benefits during this break while the families who lost their benefits right after Christmas will continue struggling to put food on the table, heat their homes, and pay their bills weeks after they lost this lifeline.

The Emergency Unemployment Compensation program is an investment with a proven economic return, and it is the right thing to do for American families. Every dollar spent on unemployment benefits generates $1.55 or more in economic activity. These benefits have also keep hundreds of thousands of American children out of poverty.

In the almost three weeks since the December 28 deadline, over 200,000 more Americans have exhausted their state benefits and are now unable to receive assistance under the expired federal program. The number grows higher every day. Approximately 72,000 Americans will lose their unemployment benefits every week - the equivalent of one person every 8 seconds.

There are legitimate policy discussions to be had about exactly how we should extend federal unemployment insurance, but we cannot find common ground when the House of Representatives is not in session and when this legislation is not even being considered in the House. The clock is ticking. This is why we urge you to cancel the pending district work period and keep the House of

Representatives in session until both the House and Senate have sent legislation to the President to extend emergency federal unemployment benefits. Thank you for your consideration and we stand ready to work with you on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Gary Peters

Ron Barber

John Barrow

Joyce Beatty

Xavier Beccera

Tim Bishop

Suzanne Bonamici

Bruce Braley

Julia Brownley

G.K. Butterfield

John Carney

Matt Cartwright

Kathy Castor

Joaquin Castro

Judy Chu

David Cicilline

Yvette Clarke

Gerry Connolly

John Conyers

Jim Cooper

Jim Costa

Joe Crowley

Danny Davis

John Delaney

Rosa DeLauro

Suzan DelBene

Ted Deutch

John Dingell

Donna Edwards

Keith Ellison

Eliot Engel

William Enyart

Anna Eshoo

Elizabeth Esty

Sam Farr

Bill Foster

Marcia Fudge

John Garamendi

Joe Garcia

Al Green

Raul Grijalva

Luis Gutierrez

Janice Hahn

Alcee Hastings

Denny Heck

Brian Higgins

Jim Himes

Rush Holt

Steven Horsford

Steny Hoyer

Jared Huffman

Steve Israel

Sheila Jackson Lee

Marcy Kaptur

Dan Kildee

Derek Kilmer

Ron Kind

Anne Kirkpatrick

Jim Langevin

Rick Larsen

Sander Levin

David Loebsack

Zoe Lofgren

Nita Lowey

Ben Ray Lujan,

Michelle **Lujan** Grisham

Stephen Lynch

Dan Maffei

Carolyn Maloney

Sean Patrick Maloney

Betty McCollum

James McGovern

Gregory Meeks

Grace Meng

Michael Michaud

Gwen Moore

Jim Moran

Patrick Murphy

Grace Napolitano

Eleanor Holmes Norton

Beto O'Rourke

Frank Pallone

Scott Peters

Pedro Pierluisi,

Chellie Pingree

Mark Pocan

Jared Polis

Mike Quigley

Tim Ryan

Linda Sanchez

Loretta Sanchez

Jan Schakowsky

Adam Schiff

Brad Schneider

Allyson Schwartz

Jose Serrano

Terri Sewell

Carol Shea-Porter

Kyrsten Sinema

Albio Sires

Eric Swalwell

Mark Takano

Mike Thompson

John Tierney

Dina Titus

Paul Tonko

Niki Tsongas

Chris Van Hollen

Juan Vargas

Nydia Velazquez

Maxine Waters

Henry Waxman

Peter Welch

John Yarmuth

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-calls-on-speaker-boehner-to-keep-the-house-in-session-until-unemployment-insurance-is-extended/

LOAD-DATE: January 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

January 16, 2014 Thursday

VOTES FOR GOVERNMENT FUNDING PACKAGE THAT ROLLS BACK SEQUESTER CUTS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 336 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted today for the omnibus appropriations bill that funds the government for fiscal year 2014. As a result of the budget deal that was passed in December, the appropriations bill rolls back the sequester cuts that have negatively impacted New Mexico.

"For too long Congress has had to legislate from one crisis to the next as House Republicans shutdown the government and used the appropriations process to make extreme demands," Congressman **Lujan** said. "With this legislation, we can move forward and address other critical issues facing our country. In addition, this measure takes significant steps to roll back the devastating sequester cuts that have harmed New Mexico and prevent a new round of even deeper cuts."

The Consolidated Appropriations Act is comprised of the 12 appropriations bills that fund all aspects of the federal government.

"This bill represents a compromise that on the whole will benefit New Mexico. While there are certainly aspects of it that I do not support, the funding bill addresses a number of priorities that are important to the people of New Mexico and our economy," **Lujan** added. "It provides vital funds for environmental cleanup at Los Alamos National Laboratory - going beyond the President's budget request. It also restores substantial funding for education that was cut through the sequester,

including the full restoration of Head Start funding that will enable more children in New Mexico to access this important program. In addition, it repeals a cut to the cost-of-living adjustment for disabled military retirees and survivors and provides funding to address the backlog of veterans claims through the VA. I am, however disappointed, that funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program was not included, and as work on the Farm Bill continues, I encourage conference negotiators to include PILT funding in that bill."

LOAD-DATE: January 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

333 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

January 16, 2014 Thursday

LUJAN CALLS ON SPEAKER BOEHNER TO KEEP THE HOUSE IN SESSION UNTIL UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE IS EXTENDED

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 826 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District joined with 113 of his Democratic colleagues today on a letter calling on House Speaker John Boehner and Majority Leader Eric Cantor to keep the House in session until an extension of unemployment insurance is passed. At a time when more than 6,700 New Mexicans and 1.3 million Americans have seen their unemployment insurance run out, the House is scheduled to recess for a district work period next week.

"The American people expect their elected representatives to work until the job is done. Unfortunately, Republicans leaders of the House have no agenda to get people back to work or address the expiration of unemployment insurance for thousands of our friends and neighbors in New Mexico," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Rather than closing down the House next week, Republican leaders should stay in Washington and do the job the American people sent us here to do. As long as families are living with the stress of worrying what they are going to do when they are still unable to find a job and unemployment insurance is cut off, the House should remain in session and work on a solution that extends the safety net during this difficult economic time."

In addition to the 6,700 New Mexicans who have already lost unemployment insurance, 9,000 more individuals across the state will lose federal unemployment benefits over the next six months without Congressional action.

Below is the text of the letter:

January 16, 2014

Dear Speaker Boehner and Leader Cantor,

On December 28, 1.3 million Americans immediately lost all of their unemployment insurance when the Emergency Unemployment Compensation program expired. While this number grows higher with every week of Congressional inaction, the House of Representatives is scheduled to recess for district work period today for 10 days. This is unacceptable. Another 100,000 Americans will lose their benefits during this break while the families who lost their benefits right after Christmas will continue struggling to put food on the table, heat their homes, and pay their bills weeks after they lost this lifeline.

The Emergency Unemployment Compensation program is an investment with a proven economic return, and it is the right thing to do for American families. Every dollar spent on unemployment benefits generates $1.55 or more in economic activity. These benefits have also keep hundreds of thousands of American children out of poverty.

In the almost three weeks since the December 28 deadline, over 200,000 more Americans have exhausted their state benefits and are now unable to receive assistance under the expired federal program. The number grows higher every day. Approximately 72,000 Americans will lose their unemployment benefits every week - the equivalent of one person every 8 seconds.

There are legitimate policy discussions to be had about exactly how we should extend federal unemployment insurance, but we cannot find common ground when the House of Representatives is not in session and when this legislation is not even being considered in the House. The clock is ticking. This is why we urge you to cancel the pending district work period and keep the House of Representatives in session until both the House and Senate have sent legislation to the President to extend emergency federal unemployment benefits. Thank you for your consideration and we stand ready to work with you on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Gary Peters

Ron Barber

John Barrow

Joyce Beatty

Xavier Beccera

Tim Bishop

Suzanne Bonamici

Bruce Braley

Julia Brownley

G.K. Butterfield

John Carney

Matt Cartwright

Kathy Castor

Joaquin Castro

Judy Chu

David Cicilline

Yvette Clarke

Gerry Connolly

John Conyers

Jim Cooper

Jim Costa

Joe Crowley

Danny Davis

John Delaney

Rosa DeLauro

Suzan DelBene

Ted Deutch

John Dingell

Donna Edwards

Keith Ellison

Eliot Engel

William Enyart

Anna Eshoo

Elizabeth Esty

Sam Farr

Bill Foster

Marcia Fudge

John Garamendi

Joe Garcia

Al Green

Raul Grijalva

Luis Gutierrez

Janice Hahn

Alcee Hastings

Denny Heck

Brian Higgins

Jim Himes

Rush Holt

Steven Horsford

Steny Hoyer

Jared Huffman

Steve Israel

Sheila Jackson Lee

Marcy Kaptur

Dan Kildee

Derek Kilmer

Ron Kind

Anne Kirkpatrick

Jim Langevin

Rick Larsen

Sander Levin

David Loebsack

Zoe Lofgren

Nita Lowey

Ben Ray Lujan,

Michelle **Lujan** Grisham

Stephen Lynch

Dan Maffei

Carolyn Maloney

Sean Patrick Maloney

Betty McCollum

James McGovern

Gregory Meeks

Grace Meng

Michael Michaud

Gwen Moore

Jim Moran

Patrick Murphy

Grace Napolitano

Eleanor Holmes Norton

Beto O'Rourke

Frank Pallone

Scott Peters

Pedro Pierluisi,

Chellie Pingree

Mark Pocan

Jared Polis

Mike Quigley

Tim Ryan

Linda Sanchez

Loretta Sanchez

Jan Schakowsky

Adam Schiff

Brad Schneider

Allyson Schwartz

Jose Serrano

Terri Sewell

Carol Shea-Porter

Kyrsten Sinema

Albio Sires

Eric Swalwell

Mark Takano

Mike Thompson

John Tierney

Dina Titus

Paul Tonko

Niki Tsongas

Chris Van Hollen

Juan Vargas

Nydia Velazquez

Maxine Waters

Henry Waxman

Peter Welch

John Yarmuth

# # #

LOAD-DATE: January 18, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

January 16, 2014 Thursday 12:01 AM EST

New Mexico Dems: New Mexico's Congressional Democrats Announce Federal Drought Assistance Available for Farmers and Ranchers

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 721 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

New Mexico's Democratic Congressional delegation, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan**, and Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham have announced that 27 counties in New Mexico will qualify for emergency loan assistance from the Farm Service Agency (FSA) due to losses caused by the ongoing drought. A full list of counties is included below.

The designation makes producers, farmers and ranchers in these counties eligible for Farm Service Agency (FSA) emergency loans, provided eligibility requirements are met. Funds are available for up to a maximum of $500,000 and may be used to restore or replace essential property; pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year; pay essential family living expenses; reorganize the farming operation; and refinance certain debts.

The counties were declared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as "primary natural disaster areas" after suffering from droughts of severe, extreme and exceptional intensity during the growing season for eight or more consecutive weeks; or as "contiguous counties" because of they were nearby and considered to face similar circumstances.

"New Mexico farmers and ranchers continue to face great challenges due to the prolonged drought and I am glad the USDA continues to recognize the need for federal disaster assistance in our affected counties," Udall said. "We need to do all we can to support farm operators, especially in rural communities, who continue to be devastated by consecutive years of drought. Assistance like the FSA's emergency loan program is one important way we can do this. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I'm proud to fight for the emergency assistance for farmers and ranchers, along with many other resources for our agricultural community."

"Farmers and ranchers help drive the economy and have shaped our state's history, as many growers in New Mexico come from families that have cultivated land for generations," Heinrich said. "These disaster declarations are a good first step to ensure they receive the necessary federal resources they need to recover from last year's natural disasters."

"Severe drought conditions across New Mexico are leaving farmers and ranchers throughout the state struggling, impacting their livelihoods as well as our economy," **Lujan** said. "The disaster declaration by the Secretary of Agriculture will make important resources available to help farmers make ends meet during this difficult time. It is also vital that Congress completes work on a new farm bill that takes steps to help farmers and ranchers better endure severe drought conditions."

"As years of severe drought continue to inflict harm on New Mexico's farmers and ranchers as well as our economy, it is important that we employ every tool possible to support those who are struggling due to factors completely outside of their control," **Lujan** Grisham said. "This federal disaster declaration will allow our state's farm operators to get the assistance they need. As a member of the House Agriculture Committee, I will continue working to pass a farm bill that includes crucial programs to support farmers and ranchers suffering from drought and natural disasters."

Through the FSA emergency loan program, farm operators can borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses. To qualify, they must have suffered at least a 30 percent loss in crop production or a physical loss to livestock, livestock products, real estate or chattel property.

Farm operators have eight months following the date of the disaster declaration to apply and are encouraged to do so through their local Farm Service Agency office. For a list of offices by county in New Mexico, click here or call 505-761-4900

More information about the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Emergency Loan Program's can be found here.

The counties in New Mexico now eligible for assistance through the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Emergency Loan Program are:

Bernalillo

Chaves

Colfax

DeBaca

Dona Ana

Curry

Eddy

Guadalupe

Harding

Lea

Lincoln

Los Alamos

Mora

Otero

Quay

Rio Arriba

Roosevelt

Sandoval

San Juan

San Miguel

Santa Fe

Sierra

Socorro

Taos

Torrance

Union

Valencia

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage4psi-140117-30VitinMar-4604676

LOAD-DATE: January 17, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

335 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 15, 2014

N.M. Delegation Announces Federal Drought Assistance Available for Farmers and Ranchers; Rep. Steve Pearce (R-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 822 words

WASHINGTON - Today U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Lujan**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced that 27 counties in New Mexico will qualify for emergency loan assistance from the Farm Service Agency (FSA) due to losses caused by the ongoing drought. A full list of counties is included below.

The designation makes producers, farmers and ranchers in these counties eligible for Farm Service Agency (FSA) emergency loans, provided eligibility requirements are met. Funds are available for up to a maximum of $500,000 and may be used to restore or replace essential property; pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year; pay essential family living expenses; reorganize the farming operation; and refinance certain debts.

The counties were declared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as "primary natural disaster areas" after suffering from droughts of severe, extreme and exceptional intensity during the growing season for eight or more consecutive weeks; or as "contiguous counties" because of they were nearby and considered to face similar circumstances.

"New Mexico farmers and ranchers continue to face great challenges due to the prolonged drought and I am glad the USDA continues to recognize the need for federal disaster assistance in our affected counties," Udall said. "We need to do all we can to support farm operators, especially in rural communities, who continue to be devastated by consecutive years of drought. Assistance like the FSA's emergency loan program is one important way we can do this. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I'm proud to fight for the emergency assistance for farmers and ranchers, along with many other resources for our agricultural community."

"Farmers and ranchers help drive the economy and have shaped our state's history, as many growers in New Mexico come from families that have cultivated land for generations," Heinrich said.

"These disaster declarations are a good first step to ensure they receive the necessary federal resources they need to recover from last year's natural disasters."

"Agriculture is a vital part of New Mexico's economy, and this year's drought has imposed enormous hardships on our farmers and ranchers," Pearce said. "Today's announcement was the right decision, and will provide much-needed relief. I look forward to continuing to work closely with farmers and ranchers across southern New Mexico to make sure that they receive the support and resources they need."

"Severe drought conditions across New Mexico are leaving farmers and ranchers throughout the state struggling, impacting their livelihoods as well as our economy," **Lujan** said. "The disaster declaration by the Secretary of Agriculture will make important resources available to help farmers make ends meet during this difficult time. It is also vital that Congress completes work on a new farm bill that takes steps to help farmers and ranchers better endure severe drought conditions."

"As years of severe drought continue to inflict harm on New Mexico's farmers and ranchers as well as our economy, it is important that we employ every tool possible to support those who are struggling due to factors completely outside of their control," **Lujan** Grisham said. "This federal disaster declaration will allow our state's farm operators to get the assistance they need. As a member of the House Agriculture Committee, I will continue working to pass a farm bill that includes crucial programs to support farmers and ranchers suffering from drought and natural disasters."

Through the FSA emergency loan program, farm operators can borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses. To qualify, they must have suffered at least a 30 percent loss in crop production or a physical loss to livestock, livestock products, real estate or chattel property.

Farm operators have eight months following the date of the disaster declaration to apply and are encouraged to do so through their local Farm Service Agency office. For a list of offices by county in New Mexico, go to: http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=nmandagency=fsa or call 505-761-4900

More information about the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Emergency Loan Program's can be found here http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/newsReleases?area=newsroomandsubject=landingandtopic=pfsandnewstype=prfactsheetandtype=detailanditem=pf_20120716_farln_en_2012emln.html.

The counties in New Mexico now eligible for assistance through the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Emergency Loan Program are:

Bernalillo

Chaves

Colfax

DeBaca

Dona Ana

Curry

Eddy

Guadalupe

Harding

Lea

Lincoln

Los Alamos

Mora

Otero

Quay

Rio Arriba

Roosevelt

Sandoval

San Juan

San Miguel

Santa Fe

Sierra

Socorro

Taos

Torrance

Union

Valencia

Read this original document at: http://pearce.house.gov/press-release/nm-delegation-announces-federal-drought-assistance-available-farmers-and-ranchers

LOAD-DATE: January 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 15, 2014

LUJAN VOTES FOR GOVERNMENT FUNDING PACKAGE THAT ROLLS BACK SEQUESTER CUTS;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 349 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted today for the omnibus appropriations bill that funds the government for fiscal year 2014. As a result of the budget deal that was passed in December, the appropriations bill rolls back the sequester cuts that have negatively impacted New Mexico.

"For too long Congress has had to legislate from one crisis to the next as House Republicans shutdown the government and used the appropriations process to make extreme demands," Congressman **Lujan** said. "With this legislation, we can move forward and address other critical issues facing our country. In addition, this measure takes significant steps to roll back the devastating sequester cuts that have harmed New Mexico and prevent a new round of even deeper cuts."

The Consolidated Appropriations Act is comprised of the 12 appropriations bills that fund all aspects of the federal government.

"This bill represents a compromise that on the whole will benefit New Mexico. While there are certainly aspects of it that I do not support, the funding bill addresses a number of priorities that are important to the people of New Mexico and our economy," **Lujan** added. "It provides vital funds for environmental cleanup at Los Alamos National Laboratory - going beyond the President's budget request. It also restores substantial funding for education that was cut through the sequester, including the full restoration of Head Start funding that will enable more children in New Mexico to access this important program. In addition, it repeals a cut to the cost-of-living adjustment for disabled military retirees and survivors and provides funding to address the backlog of veterans claims through the VA. I am, however disappointed, that funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program was not included, and as work on the Farm Bill continues, I encourage conference negotiators to include PILT funding in that bill."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-votes-for-government-funding-package-that-rolls-back-sequester-cuts/

LOAD-DATE: January 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

January 15, 2014

N.M. Delegation Announces Federal Drought Assistance Available for NM Farmers and Ranchers; Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 788 words

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Lujan**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced that 27 counties in New Mexico will qualify for emergency loan assistance from the Farm Service Agency (FSA) due to losses caused by the ongoing drought. A full list of counties is included below.

The designation makes producers, farmers and ranchers in these counties eligible for Farm Service Agency (FSA) emergency loans, provided eligibility requirements are met. Funds are available for up to a maximum of $500,000 and may be used to restore or replace essential property; pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year; pay essential family living expenses; reorganize the farming operation; and refinance certain debts.

The counties were declared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as "primary natural disaster areas" after suffering from droughts of severe, extreme and exceptional intensity during the growing season for eight or more consecutive weeks; or as "contiguous counties" because of they were nearby and considered to face similar circumstances.

"New Mexico farmers and ranchers continue to face great challenges due to the prolonged drought and I am glad the USDA continues to recognize the need for federal disaster assistance in our affected counties," Udall said. "We need to do all we can to support farm operators, especially in rural communities, who continue to be devastated by consecutive years of drought. Assistance like the FSA's emergency loan program is one important way we can do this. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I'm proud to fight for the emergency assistance for farmers and ranchers, along with many other resources for our agricultural community."

"Farmers and ranchers help drive the economy and have shaped our state's history, as many growers in New Mexico come from families that have cultivated land for generations," Heinrich said. "These disaster declarations are a good first step to ensure they receive the necessary federal resources they need to recover from last year's natural disasters."

"Agriculture is a vital part of New Mexico's economy, and this year's drought has imposed enormous hardships on our farmers and ranchers," Pearce said. "Today's announcement was the right decision, and will provide much-needed relief. I look forward to continuing to work closely with farmers and ranchers across southern New Mexico to make sure that they receive the support and resources they need."

"Severe drought conditions across New Mexico are leaving farmers and ranchers throughout the state struggling, impacting their livelihoods as well as our economy," **Lujan** said. "The disaster declaration by the Secretary of Agriculture will make important resources available to help farmers make ends meet during this difficult time. It is also vital that Congress completes work on a new farm bill that takes steps to help farmers and ranchers better endure severe drought conditions."

"As years of severe drought continue to inflict harm on New Mexico's farmers and ranchers as well as our economy, it is important that we employ every tool possible to support those who are struggling due to factors completely outside of their control," **Lujan** Grisham said. "This federal disaster declaration will allow our state's farm operators to get the assistance they need. As a member of the

House Agriculture Committee, I will continue working to pass a farm bill that includes crucial programs to support farmers and ranchers suffering from drought and natural disasters."

Through the FSA emergency loan program, farm operators can borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses. To qualify, they must have suffered at least a 30 percent loss in crop production or a physical loss to livestock, livestock products, real estate or chattel property.

Farm operators have eight months following the date of the disaster declaration to apply and are encouraged to do so through their local Farm Service Agency office. For a list of offices by county in New Mexico, click here or call 505-761-4900

More information about the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Emergency Loan Program's can be found here.

The counties in New Mexico now eligible for assistance through the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Emergency Loan Program are:

Bernalillo

Chaves

Colfax

DeBaca

Dona Ana

Curry

Eddy

Guadalupe

Harding

Lea

Lincoln

Los Alamos

Mora

Otero

Quay

Rio Arriba

Roosevelt

Sandoval

San Juan

San Miguel

Santa Fe

Sierra

Socorro

Taos

Torrance

Union

Valencia

Read this original document at: http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/press-releases/nm-delegation-announces-federal-drought-assistance-available-for-nm-farmers-and-ranchers

LOAD-DATE: January 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

338 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Copyright 2014 CQ Transcriptions, LLC
All Rights Reserved
CQ Transcriptions

All materials herein are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of CQ Transcriptions. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.

REP. GREG WALDEN HOLDS A HEARING ON COMMUNICATIONS ACT UPDATE

January 15, 2014 Wednesday

EVENT DATE: **January 15, 2014**

TYPE: COMMITTEE HEARING

LOCATION: WASHINGTON, D.C.

COMMITTEE: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY

SPEAKER: REP. GREG WALDEN, CHAIRMAN

WITNESSES:
REP. GREG WALDEN, R-ORE. CHAIRMAN

REP. BOB LATTA, R-OHIO
REP. ANNA G. ESHOO, D-CALIF., RANKING MEMBER
REP. DORIS MATSUI, D-CALIF.
REP. FRED UPTON, R-MICH. EX OFFICIO
REP. MARSHA BLACKBURN, R-TENN.
REP. JOE L. BARTON, R-TEXAS EX OFFICIO
REP. HENRY A. WAXMAN, D-CALIF. EX OFFICIO
REP. MIKE DOYLE, D-PA.
WITNESSES: RICHARD WILEY, FORMER CHAIRMAN, FCC
REED HUNDT, FORMER CHAIRMAN, FCC
MICHAEL POWELL, FORMER CHAIRMAN, FCC
MICHAEL COPPS FORMER CHAIRMAN, FCC
REP. JOHN SHIMKUS, R-ILL.
REP. JOHN D. DINGELL, D-MICH.
REP. LEE TERRY, R-NEB.
REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M.
REP. LEONARD LANCE, R-N.J.
REP. BILLY LONG, R-MO.

TEXT:

WALDEN: I'll call to order the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, and thank our witnesses for being here for this first of what will be many hearings as we look to update the Communications Act.

Few sectors of our economy are equal to the communications and technology sector when it comes to innovation, investment in the American economy, and job creation. In these tough economic times, we as policy-makers should be committed to fostering this critical sector of the economy.

Yet the laws that regulate the industry are outdated at best, and some are affirmatively damaging. This is why Chairman Upton and I, along with members of this Subcommittee, have decided to undertake the difficult task of updating the Communications Act of 1934.

In the eight decades since its passage, Congresses have come and gone. Some have even made substantial, though targeted, changes to the law. But none have undertaken to rethink the act for the environment of convergence and innovation in which we live today.

It's time for our laws to reflect our modern technological landscape, one grounded in the networks and services of our past, and driven by our IP and mobile future.

Just yesterday, the D.C. Circuit issued its decision in the net neutrality case, striking down the rules ordered by the Federal Communications Commission. I for one was pleased to see the court remove the government from the business of making management judgments and give providers the freedom to make decisions that are pro- competitive and pro-consumer.

While this decision benefits consumers and providers alike by keeping the Internet free from government interference, the rationale highlights the ongoing confusion regarding regulation of different services.

This is yet another example of why it's vital that we take a hard look at the laws in this space and reconcile them with the realities of technology. The answer is not to subject new technology to outdated regulations, but rather to craft laws appropriate to innovative services and platforms.

As we embark on this effort, it should come as no surprise that I'm focused on ensuring that we engage in a transparent and collaborative process, not only (ph) with our colleagues here in the Congress, but also with the many stakeholders outside of these halls.

What we want is a dialogue. Last week, the Committee released the first of what will be a series of white papers seeking input from the public. And I hope that interested parties will take the opportunity to make their voices heard to us.

Today's witnesses provide a unique and valuable perspective on the Communications Act.

As Chairman of the agency tasked with carrying out Congress's will and implementing the Act, the four witnesses today have had a front row seat to witness the Act in the real world, to see where it works and where it doesn't. These Chairmen have varied experiences and viewpoints that in many ways represent the evolution of modern communications.

When Chairman Wiley led the agency, telephone service was a government-regulated monopoly. Consumers got their news from broadcast television and print newspapers and the Internet was still years away.

Sixteen years later, when Reed Hundt took the reins, the Internet was coming into full force and mobility was beginning to take off. Chairman Powell's tenure saw the convergence of services towards the bundled offerings we see today, as well as the deployment of broadband to Americans.

And in the four years since Michael Copps served as Acting Chairman, there have been dramatic changes to the way we communicate and the technology that powers our lives. For example, the title of today's hearing contains a hashtag. Twitter, then with no vowels in its name, had yet to be discovered by -- at South by Southwest.

Neither we nor the august panel before us can predict the future and what technological changes it will bring. But by learning the lessons of the past, we can do our best to create a legal and regulatory environment that will foster innovation and competition, encourage consumer choice and optimum services.

So again, I want to thank you for -- to our witnesses for this impressive panel. We look forward to hearing your testimony and we appreciate your public service.

With that, I would yield to the Vice-Chair of the Subcommittee, Mr. Latta, for any opening comments he may have.

LATTA: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you very much to our panel of distinguished witnesses for testifying before us today. I appreciate you all being here.

Since 1966, we have witnessed an unprecedented technological evolution in the communications industry. The rapid emergence of new and innovative technologies has fostered increased investment throughout the industry, and the development of a vibrant, competitive communications marketplace.

As we move into the future, it's important to examine the Communications Act to ensure that our public policy continues to encourage this kind of growth and innovation that is essential to fueling our economy.

Reforms to current law should reflect the technology we enjoy today and be able to adapt to the technology of tomorrow without further government intervention.

Our efforts should be dedicated to ensure that the laws governing the communications marketplace do not stifle current and future investment, innovation, economic growth, and consumer choice in this dynamic and converging digital age of communications.

I look forward to the testimony from our witnesses today. And again, Mr. Chairman, I thank you very much for holding this hearing.

WALDEN: Thank the gentleman for his comments.

Now I turn to the gentlelady from California, Ms. Eshoo, the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee, for her opening comments.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning to you, to all of the members, and the warmest welcome to each of the witnesses that are at the table.

Your combined public service is -- really stands as a hallmark of devoted service to our country, but also to move the country forward in one of its most important economic sectors. So welcome to you. It's wonderful to see all of you at the same time at the table.

With news of the court's net neutrality decision, today's hearing, I think, is a timely opportunity to hear from each one of you who have led the expert agency, the FCC, and combined, it represents over four decades of service. That is nothing short of extraordinary.

ESHOO: And each of you have had a hand in really I think changing our nation's communication and technology landscape. So not only kudos to you, thank you to you, but a recognition of what each one of you accomplished.

When Congress passed the Telecommunications Act of 1996, it was my second term in Congress, my first term on the committee, and there were just 11 references to the Internet -- the word "Internet" -- and only one mention of broadband across a 128-page bill.

Many proponents of updating the act have cited this as evidence that the act is outdated and unable to keep up with changes in technology.

But as Chairman Wheeler affirmed last week, the Communications Act continues to provide the FCC with ample authority to exercise its role in this new environment.

The court's decision yesterday I believe furthers this argument by upholding the FCC's existing authority to oversee broadband services. And I think that's very important for consumers across the country.

I make these points not to discourage the subcommittee's review of the act. I joined with the -- with the chairman to review this. I think that it's a worthy exercise.

But rather, we need to ensure that we know what problems we're trying to fix before undertaking a multi-year examination that include hearings, stakeholder meetings, white papers and the such.

Since the '96 act was enacted, hundreds of new entrants have emerged and more than $1.2 trillion has been invested by U.S. telecommunications companies.

I want this success story to be an unending one. And I think that is the goal of everyone on this wonderful subcommittee.

So, to that end, my goal throughout the subcommittee's review will be to see more competition, greater consumer choice and more innovation.

I am so proud, as the chairman was making his opening remarks, that so much of this has been born in my congressional district.

And so, innovation, innovation, innovation; and these goals were embedded in the '96 act and they remain just as important today.

At the same time, our process of examining the Communications Act should not derail, in my view, a more immediate update of our video laws -- a view shared by a majority of the witnesses at a September subcommittee hearing.

Recurring TV blackouts coupled with the rising cost of broadcast television programming with limited choice has left consumers frustrated and looking to Congress and the FCC for answers. I believe that working together at a bipartisan basis, we can make this happen in 2014.

So, Chairman Walden, thank you for holding today's hearing on the Communications Act. I welcome the review and I look forward to hearing the unique insights from the top experts from our country who have given so much in terms of their leadership in leading the expert agency.

And with that, 34 seconds to yield to Congressman Matsui.

MATSUI: Thank you, Ranking Member.

And I want to welcome all the former chairmen. We welcome you here for your ideas and experience that provide a basis for discussions moving forward.

As technology evolves, I believe it's important that we consider appropriate updates to the Communications Act that -- with goals that promote competition and innovation in the marketplace.

To that point, I am pleased that yesterday the D.C. Circuit affirmed the FCC's authority to oversee broadband services. In my opinion, that was the crux of the debate and the FCC's argument prevailed on the question of authority over broadband.

The FCC will need to exert its authority to ensure now that all Americans have access to a free and open Internet -- a competitive marketplace where checks and balances will fare (ph) well (ph) for all Americans.

I look forward to the hearing today and I yield back the balance of my time.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back the balance of her time.

The chair now recognizes the distinguished member from Michigan, the chairman of the full committee, Mr. Upton for opening comments.

UPTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Last month, you and I announced our plans for a comprehensive update to the Communications Act of 1934.

The changes in technology since the last update in '96 have been dramatic and existing laws have failed to keep pace with the vibrant and dynamic telecommunication industry.

Communications and technology sectors have consistently been areas of American leadership, innovative -- innovation and job creation, certainly. But the Communications Act is showing its age and our continued international leadership is, indeed, at stake.

Yesterday's net neutrality decision, while a victory for consumers in the economy, illustrates the uncertainty flowing from the current statutory and scheme and the need for this action.

It's time to revamp these laws to reflect the new competitive landscape in changing consumer expectations.

And as we begin the open process leading to a Comm Act update, we are looking for input -- yes, we are -- from all of the stakeholders in the communications and technology world. Where better to start than with our distinguished panel of former leaders of the FCC?

These leaders served during diverse times in the evolution of the communications sector and they've seen the market operate under the strong hand of the U.S. government and the challenges within divorcing the government from its heavy regulation of the communications sector from times before.

They've seen cable grow from its days as a struggling start-up. They've seen satellite services succeed in bringing competition to the video market and fail to find -- find success as a competitor to mobile phone service.

And they've seen the Internet grow from a DOD project to a tool for research universities and now as the commercial economic force that we know today.

Throughout the many nuanced iterations of the Communications Act, today's witnesses have firsthand seen the act at its finest and also when its inability to keep pace with technological innovation has impacted those vital economic issues.

So, I want to thank the witnesses for taking their time to share their experiences with us. We value, indeed, their expertise and welcome their thoughts on how we can ensure the Communications Act fosters our communications and technology sectors well into this century.

And I yield the balance of my time to Vice Chair...

BLACKBURN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And if I had my iPhone in my hand, I would hit "retweet" for everything that he has just said.

(LAUGHTER)

We do appreciate that you all are here. We do want to take advantage of the perspective that you have had.

Think about what has happened in the past 17 years since '96 and the changes that we have seen, not only in how we communicate but the rapidity of those communications and entertainment and how we access that -- how we take it with us, how we consume it.

So, we know that the pace of change means that we have to be very judicious and careful as we look at a rewrite.

We know that there are issues that are going to come on the plate that we're going to have to discuss also as we look at not only the Telecom rewrite but at the use of the virtual space -- privacy, data security; the way the virtual marketplace is used and the way our constituents want to have a toolbox to protect, as I call it, their virtual U (ph) online.

So, we appreciate your time -- your willingness to be with us this morning.

And I yield back to the chairman of the committee.

UPTON: Yield -- yield back. Or (ph)...

WALDEN: Did the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Barton, want to use some of that time?

BARTON: (OFF-MIKE) Yes (ph), if it's available.

WALDEN: It is.

BARTON: (OFF-MIKE) Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I've served on this committee since 1986. I've served with three of the four former chairmen -- Mr. Wylie preceded me.

We've had some agreements, we've had some disagreements. So, it's good to have all four of you gentlemen here today.

When I was chairman of the full committee, back in 1996, my committee introduced a bill we called the COPE Bill -- the -- the Communication Opportunity Promotion Enhancement Act of 2006.

It dealt with national franchising, net neutrality, public educational and governmental access, e-911 and what we now call VOIP. It passed this committee 42 to 12 and passed the House 321 to 101 but it didn't come up for a vote in the Senate.

I voted for the Telecommunications Act of '96 and the Cable Act of '92 and I hope this year to get to vote for another major bill that comes from the leadership of Mr. Upton, Mr. Walden, Mr. Waxman and Miss Eshoo.

This is a good thing to be doing and we're going to get some good information from you gentlemen and we appreciate you being here.

WALDEN: The gentleman's time's expired. I appreciate his comments.

We'll now go to the former chairman of the committee, Mr. Waxman, for opening comments.

WAXMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your convening this morning's hearing and launching the subcommittee's examination of potential updates to the Communications Act.

And I want to thank our distinguished panel for being here to help us think through these ideas. And I think I've been in Congress during the time that all of you have been the heads of the FCC.

Technology has changed at a blistering pace since the enactment of the 1996 Telecommunications Act 18 years ago. The communications and technology industries are a thriving sector of our economy.

As broadband plays an increasingly central role in the daily life of our nation, having a strong Federal Communications Commission to oversee its successful growth is more critical than ever.

Yesterday, the D.C. Court affirmed what never should have been in question: the FCC is the expert agency, charged by Congress to oversee broadband networks. In doing so, the court reaffirmed that the FCC has broad, flexible authority to regulate in the broadband and digital age. However, while the court recognized the FCC's jurisdiction, it also overturned the specific rules the commission had adopted in the open Internet order.

I believe the FCC now has an opportunity, as well as a duty, to exercise the authority the court recognized yesterday, and reinstate the no-blocking and non-discrimination rules.

An open Internet is critical to the continuing growth of this economic sector. The Internet is a vibrant platform for commerce, innovation, and free speech. Having enforceable, open Internet rules of the road means that consumers are in control of their experience online.

I am pleased that Chairman Walden has stated his intention to expeditiously adopt a new set of rules following the court's guidance. And I look forward to working with the chairman and my colleagues in Congress to make sure these pro-consumer, pro-competition policies will continue to guide the expansion of broadband services.

This subcommittee is now embarking on a journey to update the Communications Act. And regardless of the advancements in network architecture or transmission protocol, the principles of competition and consumer protection remain as sound today as they were in 1934.

I know Chairman Walden recognizes the importance of these values and the action of the FCC that it (ph) plans to take later this month to initiate technology transitions reflects that.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses about what Congress can do to help the FCC meet the challenges of the broadband and digital age.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to yield the balance of my time to Mr. Doyle.

DOYLE: Thank you, Mr. Waxman.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing. And thank you to this distinguished panel. It's good to see all of you here in front of the committee.

I just want to briefly concur with Mr. Waxman in light of yesterday's decision by the D.C. Circuit, that I want to encourage Chairman Walden to work quickly to ensure that the Internet remains an open platform for innovation, competition and economic growth, which the FCC now clearly has the authority to do.

I look forward to working with the commission and the stakeholders to put in place a robust framework that sustains an open Internet.

Mr. Waxman, I thank you for your courtesy, and I would yield back to you if someone else needs more time.

WAXMAN: Would (ph) -- would (ph) -- (inaudible) a minute.

If not, I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back the balance of his time.

We'll proceed now to our distinguished panel of witnesses, and begin with Chairman Richard Wiley, who was nominated by President Nixon, and served as chairman of the Federal Communications Commission from 1970 to 1977.

As chairman for most of the '70s, Chairman Wiley's tenure at the commission predates many of the major changes in the communications sector.

Chairman, we're glad to have you here today. Pull that microphone up close, and (inaudible) to go. Thank you for being here.

You need to push the button on the microphone there one time.

WILEY: Thank you very much, Chairman Walden, Ranking Member Eshoo, and other subcommittee members. Thank you for the invitation to testify today.

While I know it's not going to be self-evident, due to my youthful appearance, I've been involved for nearly 45 years in federal telecommunications policy. And from my own standpoint, what has occurred during that period is simply amazing.

When I was at the FCC in the 1970s, the average American enjoyed just three broadcast television stations, and one local and long- distance telephone provider. And the Department of Defense had just begun to explore a revolutionary computer project known as ARPANET.

But today, our citizens have access to hundreds of video channels delivered by countless providers and transmission technologies, dozens of voice and tech services, numerous wire line and wireless companies. And, of course, ARPANET have morphed into the Internet, which has become a universal medium of communications.

Interestingly, the bulk of this stunning technological metamorphosis has emerged since the 1996 Telecommunications Act was passed. That legislation significantly altered the rules governing virtually every aspect of communications. And the act's purpose was a simple in theory as it was

complex in implementation. That is, to provide for a pro-competitive, deregulatory national policy framework designed to accelerate the deployment of advanced services and open all telecom markets to competition.

To this end, the statute sought to eliminate cross-platform barriers and to encourage competition among service suppliers previously treated as monopolies or oligopolies.

Now, to the credit of the drafters, the 1996 Act helped to bring about the vibrant competition that consumers enjoy today in a variety of communication sectors, be it voice, data, or video. Whether delivered by twisted pair, co-axial cable, optical fiber, or the electromagnetic spectrum, myriad providers today are offering their customers suites of advanced services in a marketplace that really could not have been imagined 18 years ago.

In my view, where (ph) the statute, and, indeed, FCC implementation has succeeded is when a lighter regulatory touch has been applied to markets, such as mobile and information services. The result has been that these sectors have thrived. For example, in the robustly competitive wireless marketplace, there are now more wireless subscriber connections than the population of the United States. Just think of that.

And mobile broadband has spawned an entirely new industry, mobile aps -- one that is estimated to employ more than 500,000 developers and related jobs, and contributes billions to the economy.

A similar success story is unfolding the delivery of digital content, where seemingly unlimited video-streaming web sites have developed to compete against traditional MVPDs, offering an eagerly waiting public new ways to consume video.

This marketplace, I would suggest, is emerging because of innovation and competition, and not because of government regulation.

Conversely, where the government has been less effective in maintaining -- is in maintaining highly restrictive regulations on traditional industries, like, for example, wireline telephony and broadcasting. The end result has been to disadvantage these sectors, even though they may be providing services that are often equivalent to those offered by their less regulated competitors.

In the developing I.P.-centric world, all types of providers should be able to market all kinds of services, employing the same computer-oriented language that defines digital communications.

And yet, the 1996 act continues to regulate commutations markets differently based on the conduit used to reach the customer, as well as the geographic location where traffic originates and terminates.

Now, the underlying problem is not a failure of congressional or FCC vision. Instead, the reality is that a government has great difficulty in writing laws or promulgating regulations that can keep pace with advancing technology. And especially so in a dynamic and ever-changing industry like communications.

Thus, I would suggest that the objective of a statutory rewrite should not be to legislate premised on the current state of the marketplace, or even on predictions of what it may look like in the future. Instead, Congress may want to consider a flexible and technologically neutral framework that will be capable of adapting to technical invention and innovation, whatever that may prove to be.

In this regard, let me close by setting forth a few principles that might guide the drafting of a new statute.

First, the industry silos embedded in (ph) the 1996 act should be abolished. And instead, functionally equivalent services should be treated in the same manner regardless of who provides them, or how they are delivered to consumers.

Second, the traditional dichotomy between interstate and intrastate services should be eliminated, because regulatory classifications based on geographical end points no longer make sense in an I.P. environment.

Third, legislation should be focused on maintaining consumer protection and public safety regulations. Conversely, economic regulations should be considered in the case of non-competitive markets or in the event of demonstrated market failure.

And fourth, new regulations should be instituted with a lighter touch, as I said, accompanied by sunset provisions so that the rationale for continued government intervention can be reviewed on a regular basis.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to testify.

WALDEN: Chairman Wiley, thank you very much for your learned comments, we appreciate your counsel. We'll go now to Chairman Reed Hundt, who was nominated by President Clinton and served as chairman of the FCC from 1993 to 1997. Chairman Hunt's tenure at the commission saw the passage of the ominous budget reconciliation of '93, which granted the commission the authority to auction spectrum licenses, and the Telecommunications Act of '96, so Chairman Hundt, thanks for joining us today, we're looking forward to your comments as well.

HUNDT: Thank you Chairman Walden, thank you for inviting me. A good, good morning to Ranking Member Eshoo and to all the other members of this distinguished committee. I'm very proud that many of you have become lifelong friends and it's a pleasure to be here with you.

I also want to thank the D.C. Circuit for giving me a flashback to law school so that I was late last night scrambling to read the key case right before this class.

I have a feeling I'm not the only person here who -- who did that but I also want to note I didn't have any staff for classmates, so I apologize if I haven't read it correctly, but I thought that I would throw away my remarks and for whatever it's worth, offer you my reading of -- of the case.

In my view the D.C. Circuit has written first a very, very well- reasoned and very important case. There's no question that this reflects that circuit's experience in these topic areas and that they brought that experience to bear in a bipartisan way to express a view about how the United States ought to grant the authority to create the legal culture that governs broadband.

What have they said, I believe the court has vindicated the wisdom of Congress in the 1996 act. Specifically, the court has said that when Congress, in that act, in Section 706, conveyed to its expert agency, the, quote, "authority to enact measures encouraging the deployment of broadband infrastructure" unquote.

In doing that, according to the D.C. Circuit, Congress said to the FCC, "You will be our instrument for creating a flexible and a -- a supple legal culture that will change over time as the market changes and as technology changes.

But they can always be used to protect competition, to protect consumers, and fundamentally, to make sure that absolutely everybody in America is participating in the common medium of the internet, and that absolutely everybody in America is able to use it to publish their views and review all the views of everyone else."

Not all those words are in this decision, but almost all those words are actually in this decision. Section 1706 of course is just one part of the 1996 act but I know I don't have to remind many of the members here -- maybe I don't have to remind any of the members here -- that was passed by a very large bipartisan vote in the Senate and in the House.

We all were -- those of us who were in public service then -- remember being in the Library of Congress when President Clinton, the Democratic President passed this law that was passed by a

Senate controlled by the Republicans and a House controlled by the Republicans. And all came together and said, "We have a common vision".

And that is that there will be networks we did not know, technically speaking, what they would all look like, but there would be networks that would connect all of us to each other and to all of the resources of information that in fact would be utilized for entrepreneurship, for innovation, and for learning.

And I have to say, this is what's happened. Now, no one here thinks the government built these networks. No one thinks the FCC built these networks. But everyone should know that the legal culture that was created by Congress and its expert agency, through the terms of Republican and Democratic chairs, the legal culture is the legal culture that is regarded all around the world as the absolute best legal culture for governing the internet.

Any one of us knows 12 things that we think should be done differently, or maybe two dozen, but we ought to recognize just for a little while, that we as a country should pat our government on the back and say for the last 20 years, the legal culture that's been created that has governed the internet has really created the best possible environment for innovation, for entrepreneurship, for consumers.

That's what's actually happened, and this court has said, "And that law still exists". This court has said, "Already, Congress has enacted the law that gives the FCC the authority to protect competition and consumers".

And that authority, according to this court, lies in Section 1706, and the court also said that Congress can -- that the FCC can if it choose classify broadband as a common carrier. It could use either of these methods, it can use one of these methods, but it can accomplish the goals that are stated in the act and that have repeatedly been restated by this Congress.

The only thing the court said is, "If you're going to pass rules that look like common carrier rules and you're going to classify broadband as an information service, then you're going to be creating a contradiction that we won't permit".

You can't call it an information service and then pass rules that look like common carrier rules because if it quacks like a duck it's a duck.

So, that's why it was sent back. I read a lot of articles that said that this was a victory for Verizon. This is a victory for Congress. If it was a victory for Verizon, it was a Pyrrhic victory. It was the most perfect example of a Pyrrhic victory since Pyrrhus.

(LAUGHTER)

So I just wanna compliment this Congress on passing a supple law that has worked well, and that this court has just said still will permit you to achieve your goals through the expert agency.

Thank you.

WALDEN: Thank you Chairman Hundt. We appreciate your comments and your staying up all night to cram for our hearing.

(LAUGHTER)

Now turn to Chairman Michael Powell, who was nominated by George W. Bush and served as Chairman of the FCC from 2001 to 2005. During Mr. Powell's chairmanship, they saw a significant increase in the deployment of broadband to American homes as well as convergence of services toward the development of broadband -- toward the bundles of services that are common today, among many other things.

Chairman Powell, thank you for joining us today and please go ahead.

POWELL: Thank you Mr. Chairman, and as a former chairman, I'm happy to be sitting around with a bunch of these other chairmen offering as best we can our historic perspectives on how to prudently go about rewriting the act, should that be your intention.

And I'm pleased to be with Ranking Member Eshoo again and all the distinguished members of the committee.

I think it goes without saying, and all of us will say it in different ways, that the world has changed quite radically from 20 years ago in terms of markets and services, but don't ask us, ask your kids. Ask them to name three broadcast networks, if you will, ask them to do without the internet for a week, and for God's sakes, ask them to put their phone down at dinner and see what reaction you get. I think you will be convinced.

That transformation has taken place largely because of an enormous revolution in network architecture, in the form of the internet, which has unleashed a form of inter modal competition that heretofore wasn't really possible.

And it's really introduced an exciting world, and we should remember, gave birth to a host of companies and opportunities that never were envisioned before. The companies that are here, Google, Facebook, Amazon, Ebay, Twitter, Instagram -- you name it -- all able to be born and flourished because of this transformation.

I would say that any consideration of the act should start with not only cataloguing its ills, but cataloguing its successes, much as Reed was alluding to.

I think it's really important to note that over this period, we have seen the most stunning amount of investment in infrastructure and architecture, that we have ever seen.

We have reached 90 percent of Americans faster than any other technology in world history. Innovation and growth have continued at exponential rates, with broadband increasing over 19 times just in the last decade, doubling basically, increasing about 58 percent annually.

That's a stunning achievement and something we should make sure we keep going.

I -- so I think, you know, being guided by the old maxim of "Do no harm" is an important cautionary tale. As I thought about how you might think about architecting a new regime, I'm guided by the idea of the internet itself, which is the fundamental principle of simplicity as a design principle.

It has been a very, very powerful one in the internet and I think it -- it offers some guidance in this space as well. So I'd like to, toward that end, offer -- I'm gonna see Mr. Wiley's four principles and do him three better and offer you seven, as briefly as I can.

The first is, we've heard a lot about innovation. I do think the principal goal of the government should be to nurture that innovation. This is the kind of fomenting change we have never been able to harness as fully as we are today. Innovation has allowed us to bring completely new products and services and network changes to the market.

It's created a form of creative destruction that keeps the market energetic and keeps monopoly in check. And I think it's created new kinds of transparency for the American consumer through crowd sourcing and visibility. And we should study the conditions that go in to innovation and make sure we harness them. I think three are critical.

Innovations really do require freer markets. And a market that moves at Moore's law speed, the pace of adaptation transformation and change are incredibly fast. And there needs to be a constant and intense dialogue between producers and consumers. We should be careful to protect that.

Innovation requires risk taking. As we know, most new ventures fail. There has to be room in government policy for failure. There has to be room in government policy for encouraging taking

those risks. And innovation requires investing more than a trillion as Congressman Eshoo was talking about earlier since 1996, is stunning. But it requires a stable regulatory environment to provide that uncertainty because if investment slows innovation will slow with it.

The second rule of simplicity, I think, is once you've created a lighter regulatory environment, by trying to pursue the maxim of less is more, organize it better.

We certainly have heard about the challenges of silos and buckets. Clearly that had its place in another time when these technologies, applications and typed of companies were deeply intertwined, were not able to provide alternative services and other spaces. That day has moved on and we certainly crave a more unified, integrated kind of legal regime that doesn't make those sorts of distinctions.

In fact, as I heard mentioned today I think yesterday's court decision and the multiyear debate on net neutrality that illustrates the almost tortuous challenges sometimes of addressing a modern circumstance in using provisions of last century's rules. I think they're certainly widespread agreement on core principles around an open internet.

Yet the somewhat kludgy path we've had to follow in an effort to implement them has made the matter, I believe, infinitely more complex and controversial than necessary and the threat of radically upending the long-standing light regulatory foundation of broadband on which massive investment and growth have been built with good effect to implement one set of rules seems distressing. Any shift of that magnitude I do think would require Congress' -- the people's representatives to weigh in on.

A third principle give regulators the ability and obligation to address changing markets. As we've said the markets move drastically and the FCC often has limited ability to make those migrations. Yes, in places they have. There are other instances in which they've not been able to even when they concede that the fundamental circumstances are changed.

Fourth, the law should ensure competitive parity and technical neutrality. There is a hodgepodge of applications of statutes I could point out in which certain rules apply to one sector of a service and not to other sectors. This has really just been an outgrowth of the passage of years and the changing nature of companies. But there are many rules that apply to cable for example that don't apply to dbs for no discernible reason.

One very valuable thing the committee can do is prune through the statute to harmonize those differentiated treatments as best as possible.

Fifth, the FCC should police markets not create them. I think this is generally well understood but there is a role for a cop on the beat. What I don't think there should be is a master chef who believes it's the commission's objective to make markets or create the conditions and circumstances for them.

And finally, the last two, timeliness. If you're working in Moore's law you need timely and prompt decisions from the government.

Lastly and most importantly, the law still needs to preserve important societal values, and protect consumers from harm. And the FCC and the government will always have a sacred responsibility in that regard. Thank you for your time.

WALDEN: Chairman, thank you. Speaking of cops on the beat, we'll now go to Michael Copps, served as acting chairman of the federal communications commission from January to June 2009, and served as commissioner from 2001 to 2011.

Prior to joining the commission, Commissioner Copps worked right here on Capitol Hill, and the U.S. Department of Commerce. Commissioner Copps, Chairman Copps, thank you for being with us. And we look forward to your comments to round out our panel.

COPPS: Thank you Chairman Walden, Chairman Upton, Miss Eshoo and Mr. Waxman, Vice Chairman, Former Chairman, all the members of the committee, I'm delighted to be here.

We're here today to review whether the Communications Act needs to be updated or otherwise reformed. I've heard some say that simply because the act is old it must be obsolete. That no matter how well it has served us an act written 18 years ago cannot have relevance in today's altered world.

As someone only a little younger than the original act of 1934, I would raise a caution flag or two. The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were written long ago, too, yet we still find them critically relevant in our lives. While it is praiseworthy to ponder changes to the law, I would suggest firstly that the framework of the current statute remains in many ways strong.

And secondly, that the current act's provisions can still do much to improve our communications landscape. To enlarge economic and social opportunity for all of us, and to nourish the kind of civic dialogue upon which successful self-government inevitably rests.

In an ideal world most of us would welcome an up-to-the minute rewrite of the law to reflect how we believe it could be improved.

The last such revision in 1996 was born of a unique political moment that aligned a sufficient and sundry number of stake holders across sectors and constituencies who were able to negotiate a compromise statute that while far from perfect at least envisioned delivering to every American no matter who they are, where they live, or their particular circumstances of their individual lives, the most advanced communications technologies and services feasible at reasonable and comparable prices, replete with consumer protections, rights of privacy, assurances of public safety and utilizing competition to help achieve these goals.

Putting the statute to work to deliver these benefits was my mission at the FCC, working with some of the most amazing public servants anywhere.

Nowadays, I carry out my public interest mission in the nonprofit sector at Common Cause. In the immediate wake of the new law's passage, the commission indeed made important strides to carry out these congressional mandates.

But alas things changed.

Some of the very interests who helped negotiate the new Communications Act spent more time undermining the statute than implementing it. Such efforts continue to this day as we saw in yesterday's court decision that left unaddressed would seriously jeopardize the future of the open internet.

I appeared in front of this panel many times over the years to voice my dissent on commission decisions involving the reclassification of communications services, industry consolidation across both our telecom and media sectors, the elimination of policies that had long safeguarded the public interest, and the heavy toll thereby exacted on consumer choices, consumer prices and slowing the deployment of competitive low-cost, high-speed broadband, this century's most important infrastructure.

We can, I know, debate for hours but a record of these hearings needs to show that many people do not share the easy optimism that others express about the state of America's communications readiness.

As you consider legislation in the coming months, some will tell you that America is a veritable broadband wonderland, a triumph of free market entrepreneurship that puts us at the front of high tech nations. But there are stubborn facts we must never avoid. The United States originator of so much of the technology behind the internet has fallen from leader to lagger in broadband penetration.

According to OCED, our country is 16th in wired broadband connections per 100 residents. Worse, comparative research shows Americans are paying more an getting less than wired broadband consumers in competitor countries. The Department of Justice has noted the local wireless marketplace offers consumers little in the way of choice, even as mobile data plans are saddled with data caps that harm consumption and innovation alike and once again for the third time the FCC found itself unable to certify that we enjoy a competitive wireless marketplace.

Surely the time is now for pro-active and pro-consumer measures to make quality broadband universally affordable once and for all.

While we are not gathered here this morning to rehash those decisions, I do think it is important to understand that many of the faults attributed to the current statute are more the result of powerful industry efforts to undermine it and of commission decisions that too often aid and abet the effort.

So while we open discussions on revising communications law, let us recognize that our present statute has been interpreted and implemented in ways not originally intended, and that many of us constituent parts are still relevant, workable and consumer friendly. There is a statute to enforce and putting that job on hold while we consider changing it is not a good option.

Additionally, I think most of us here this morning understand that finding a new correlation of interests that can come together to forge the Communications Act of 2015 or 2020 will be even more challenging than the jockeying that gave birth to the current law.

As the world races ahead, we have a duty to make the best possible use of the laws we have in order to achieve the ongoing goals that Congress laid out. These remain powerful interests, a statute that invokes the public interest over 100 times, that highlights the universality of service, competition and consumer protection and that underlines the necessity for media and informs communities and engages citizens cannot be all bad.

Would I have some preferences for a reworked statute?

Of course, although a good part of it would be making sure the commission and the industry follow through on what is already on the books to foster competition and consumer protection, to deliver on public safety, to preserve privacy in this age of massive intrusion, to avoid never-ending industry consolidation, to put the brakes on gatekeeping in our media, both traditional and new, and to provide the FCC with the resources it needs to discharge its responsibilities.

My greatest disappointment at the commission is that we didn't do enough to encourage media that truly reflects the diversity of our people.

Can you believe that today there is no African-American owned full power commercial television station anywhere in the land?

America is diversity. And if our media fails to represent diversity, diversity of providers and content and viewpoint and ownership, it fails us.

The sad plight of communications across our native lands needs to be addressed with renewed urgency and additional resources.

Imagine that there are still areas where the majority of First Americans cannot access even plain old telephone service, let alone the kind of high-speed broadband that is the most powerful tool they could have to create opportunity where there is so little opportunity now.

I would hope we could find ways to stimulate basic communications research by private-public partnerships. I'm not talking about the next glitzy app but the basic fundamental research that will determine who wins and loses in the global sweepstakes.

I'm for making the commission more efficient, like doing away with the closed meeting rule that prevents more than two commissioners from even talking to one another.

And I hope that reform needs to go forward, whether or not it is accompanied by more far-reaching revisions.

And I believe that when three commissioners have something they want to do at the FCC, that item should go on the agenda.

My list could go on and I welcome the opportunity to discuss such things today. But I always come back to democracy because that's what concerns me most.

Our country is in trouble, reminiscent in many ways of the severity of the economic, global and social crises it faced in the 1930s, and there are no guaranteed happy outcomes.

I just do not see how citizens can be expected to navigate through all these issues and come out with smart decisions for our nation's future when the telecommunications tools we need are not available to all and in the media environment where community outlets have been short-circuited, investigative journalism hangs by a thread and wherein we expect some invisible hand to produce those things that the market itself no longer produces and which, in fact, the market alone has never produced.

Communications are vital to our economy, but they are the lifeblood, the lifeblood of our democracy. They must be available to all, open to all, never the exclusive province of the affluent or the few, always alive to the common good.

We shouldn't see our communications world as part telecom, part media or part traditional media, part new media. We have one communications ecosystem and our job is to make it work for everyone.

And I know of no greater challenge that confronts the Congress, the commission or the country.

Thank you for holding this hearing today and for inviting me to be a part of it. And I look forward to our discussion.

WALDEN: Chairman Copps, thank you for your thoughtful presentation. We appreciate it. And as you know, our subcommittee has moved forward on some of these initiatives and we welcome encouragement over on the other side of the building on the Sunshine Act and a few other things.

So would like to open up the questioning process now with a question of Chairman Powell.

Since you presided over the federal communications proceedings that classified cable and telco delivered broadband services as information services, do you think we would have seen the same level of broadband investment during the past decade had the FCC classified these services as common carrier communications services?

POWELL: I think in short my judgment is no. I think the Internet, if, at the time that that classification decision was made, was more unknown than known. I think it was a period of rampant experimentation.

I think the capital required to drive and produce the broadband networks that were not in place, needed conditions that allowed them the flexibility to make those choices without the risk that they would be put back into kind of the monopoly era regulatory models.

So I think it was an important component to spurring that investment.

WALDEN: Chairman Wiley, does the Federal Communications Commission need to continue to have broad discretion over mergers and acquisitions, or should the Department of Justice anti-trust review be enough?

WILEY: I think there has been duplication from time to time although I would point out that the Justice Department is looking at anti-trust aspects and the FCC has got a broader public interest standpoint.

I think the two agencies need to work together and I think they have worked together through the years.

So I think the process is appropriately developing. But I do worry sometimes that we see great delays in the handling of these consolidations and mergers, which I think is contrary to the best interest of the coverage involved and also contrary, I think, to the public interest and consumers.

WALDEN: And to both Chairman Powell and Chairman Wiley, can the FCC ever really future-proof regulations, given how rapidly technology is changing, and are there elements that the Communications Act holding the commission back from flexibly addressing new technologies?

POWELL: No, I don't think any agency can future-proof the regulatory involvement no more than Congress could write a statute that wouldn't, over time, fray in its relevancy in a market that's driven by technological change.

I do believe, though, that there are tools to give greater flexibility and not more prescriptive constraints that we have seen in some regulatory vehicles. So, no, they can't future predict.

And then I thought -- I think the other guidance is, I think asking the commission to engage in anything that requires predictive judgment about future outcomes should be avoided where possible.

WILEY: Yes. And that's why I suggested in my prepared testimony that we ought to have an opportunity to have a light touch here and have the government have a -- in your statute have a very flexible, technology neutral type of approach to this, because it's very hard to predict.

And the 1996 drafters did not really foresee the development of the Internet to become a universal medium and I don't think they predicted broadband to be what it is today. So I think you have to step back a little bit and I think allow the technology to develop and to allow innovation and invention to occur without stifling it.

WALDEN: OK. I'm going to start with Chairman Powell and then each of you can take this one in the minute and a half I have left.

Should the Internet be regulated as a common carrier under Title II?

POWELL: Well, for me that's easy. No.

I think one of the things I'd like to say about that, though, is that people should fully understand what that means.

Even if that were able to give you a better basis for recovering these two components of the rules, it would be the instant application of thousands of pages of decades-old regulations instantly to the Internet, where they heretofore have not been, both through -- on a bipartisan basis, we've had a much more light (ph) regulatory environments.

To shatter the investment-backed expectations that would result, I think, would be exceedingly damaging and more than most people realize.

WALDEN: Chairman Hundt, do you care to comment on that?

HUNDT: Just two points: the 1996 act was shorter than the rules for Little League Baseball, meaning Congress does not necessarily have to write thousands of pages and, in its wisdom, it did not do so in 1996. And that act now has given the FCC the ability to achieve the fundamental goals.

As I mentioned earlier, it can choose to use the specific methods that are dictated by the common carrier treatment. But it absolutely does not have to use very many of these methods to accomplish its goals.

In fact, the court, on page 61, outlined its view of what the FCC should do and said you could treat it as common carrier and have about 30 words that establish the principles. I'm not saying they should do that. I'm saying they can do that.

WALDEN: Do you think they should?

HUNDT: I think what they should do -- and I hesitate to say to the current chairman what he ought to do, but since you asked -- I think they ought to take a fresh look at all the facts in law as exists right now. And they also ought to be down here, listening to you all in having a robust discussion. But the key point is, they have authority.

WALDEN: Got it.

Real quickly, the two remaining, because I've gone over my time. Wiley (INAUDIBLE) --

(CROSSTALK)

WILEY: I think -- OK.

WALDEN: No, go ahead.

WILEY: All right.

I think it would be a big mistake to turn away from -- in the information service pathway that we've started and go back to common carrier regulations, however that might be defined.

I think we want to provide an environment where there is, I think, opportunities for investment and encouraging innovation, allowing businessmen to try to experiment and try to find ways to serve the customer.

And I think to go back to a 1934 style common carrier regulation, which was really based on regulating the railroads, I think, doesn't make any sense.

WALDEN: All right.

Mr. Copps, real quick?

COPPS: My answer is yes, I do. The course says we have the authority to do that. Whatever we do, we need to do it quickly, promptly and provide some certainty in the marketplace. I have always stressed the importance of that reclassification.

People talk about Section 706. I've always said that there is authority there to do a lot of things.

But what -- we don't need now to get into months of third ways and fourth ways and fifth ways to thread this needle. We need some clarity. Business needs clarity. Consumers need clarity and the commission needs clarity, too.

And we have to make sure whatever we do that things like interconnection and those things, consumer protections are provided.

WALDEN: Appreciate that. I thank the indulgence of the committee and turn now to the ranking member, Ms. Eshoo for five minutes.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And to each one of our distinguished witnesses, what a rich, rich hearing with your testimony. Thank you very, very much.

To Chairman Hundt, thank you for your eloquent summation without any staff or other counsel to assist you late last night.

In your testimony you discussed the importance of the decision that this country made to allow Internet service providers a full use of the existing telephone network without paying the owners anything. It's a very, very -- I mean, one of these essential platforms in the success of the Internet.

So, essentially, we said the incumbents could not be gatekeepers that charge a toll for getting online.

In your view, does yesterday's Circuit decision reverse that longstanding policy?

HUNDT: No, it doesn't. And I think, Congresswoman, that you put your finger on the central issue.

If I may say, yes, Internet service providers are gatekeepers and they also are two-sided networks or two-sided gatekeepers.

Like any gatekeepers, there is somebody on one side and somebody on the other side.

And so the situation then is very similar to the credit card industry. So we all own credit cards and then there's the credit card company and then on the other side of that there is the restaurant.

And it's very useful for restaurants that we all have credit cards and it's useful for us that all the restaurants will take them, but it's not so useful if the gatekeeper says, now some of these restaurants, we're not going to allow them to participate in the system.

Translating that to the present, if the Internet service provider were to say, you know, not all the people that are putting the content on their -- on their computers, we don't want all of them to be able to have access to all of the users; that's a problem if the gatekeeper behaves that way.

ESHOO: Thank you. Very --

HUNDT: That's the central issue.

ESHOO: Yes. Thank you very much.

To Chairman Powell, it's wonderful to see you again. As you know, under current law, cable subscribers are required to buy the so- called broadcast basic tier as a condition of getting access to any other cable programming.

As re: transmission consent fees continue to rise and are inevitably being passed on to consumers in the form of below-the-line fees, I mean, I don't think it's a sustainable business model, most frankly. I just don't think that it can continue to work this way.

Do you think that the so-called must buy requirement makes any sense? Shouldn't consumers have the ability to lower their bills by electing to receive broadcast channels over the air?

POWELL: I don't. I think -- I think it's -- it should be an extraordinary circumstance in which the government tells the consumer you have to buy a television package as a prerequisite of buying more of what you want, which is essentially what the rule does.

The other grounds on which I think it's fatally flawed is only cable subscribers have that obligation. Dish and direct satellite subscribers do not have that obligation. And they're the second and third largest MVPDs in the United States.

Yet a consumer who subscribes to DirecTV does not have to, under the must-buy rule, purchase those programming, but if they switch to Comcast or TimeWarner Cable, they do. That's the parity point that I was making and I think is a perfect place for harmonization.

ESHOO: Thank you very much.

Chairman Copps, thank you for being here today, the man with real wisdom, the man that we always count on to put -- place democracy front and center of everything.

You know so well that, since Citizens United, the last two election cycles that have set records for money spent, including hundreds of millions of dollars from undisclosed sources, the bulk of this so-called dark money spending by outside groups that hide their donors go toward negative TV ads. We all know that.

Would you recommend changes to the Communications Act to ensure that voters are informed about who exactly is behind these anonymous TV ads?

And is there anything in your view that the FCC can do on its own without congressional intervention?

COPPS: I would recommend them enforcing the statute that we already have. And if you take a close look at Section 317, which has to do with sponsorship identification and which goes back even before the Telecommunications Act of 1934 was written, goes back to 1927, ensuring that listeners and viewers, more recently, know by whom they are trying to be persuaded, whether it's a commercial product or a political product.

Those rules were last revisited in a meaningful way by the FCC in the 1960s, which repeated that people have a right to know by whom they are being persuaded.

Since then we have all these new avenues of dark money and super PACs and all of the rest. But we also have the authority, recently reemphasized by the Government Accountability Office, the recommendation that the commission update those rules and get on with the job.

So we can have this kind of information available to consumers so that when you see that negative ad and it says brought to you by Citizens for Purple Majesties and Amber Waves of Grain and it's really a chemical company dumping sludge into the Chesapeake Bay, potential voters, citizens have a right to know that and will know that.

That's basic information that you need to have, if you're going to have a viable civic dialogue. So this is something that the FCC can do. It doesn't await a president making a proposal to do this. It doesn't involve Congress having to pass a law.

It involves the Federal Communications Commission doing its job. And it could do this within 90 to 120 days and update the rules to take mind of the new dark money avenues that I was talking about earlier.

So this would be a real way to shine a little bit of sunlight on the dark world of TV political advertising.

ESHOO: Thank you very much.

And Mr. Wiley, thank you for your wonderful, distinguished public service. I'll submit my questions to you in writing.

WILEY: All right. Thank you.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: Thank you. We'll now turn to the vice chair of the full committee, the gentlelady from Tennessee, Ms. Blackburn for five minutes.

BLACKBURN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you all for the time this morning.

I want to pick up where the subcommittee chairman left off, talking about the responsibility of the FCC and what it would look like going forward.

I think that it's fair to say -- and Mr. Powell, I will address this to you because I have heard you say, you know, AOL was on top at one point when you were -- on top of the game and where are they now, I think, was the comment.

But anyway, looking at where the FCC would be and as we look at the Telecom Act, should we begin to think in terms of the FCC being more as enforcement rather than regulatory in its scope or in its -- really in its scope?

Mr. Powell and then Mr. Wiley, I would like to hear from you.

POWELL: I think some aspects of that deserves a fresh examination. You know, the FCC, which I am a huge supporter of, served there with great people and I think it does an enormously great public service in that we functions that are critical to in respect to management and many other things.

But it is one of the last of the New Deal era agencies that actually has affirmative economic regulatory power; that is, the ability to set the prices, terms and conditions of market activity as opposed to having a more significant enforcement, policing or consumer protection role.

Not to say that some of that may or may not still be warranted, but I do think that that is a kind of holdover from judgments of different administrative eras. And I would recommend if you're going to look at -- you should look at the--

BLACKBURN: Look at the balance?

POWELL: ... the dichotomy and the balance of that role. I do think that leaders -- and many of them sitting at this table -- have -- have migrated more toward that more defensible rule, but many of those provisions still remain, and I think they're worthy of second consideration.

BLACKBURN: OK.

Mr. Wiley?

WILEY: Yes, I would agree with -- largely with what Chairman Powell has suggested. I think the commission does have strong enforcement efforts today. And some would say, almost too strong in some instances. But I think -- I think, frankly, that a lighter touch is -- is the way to go in this area.

BLACKBURN: OK. Let me ask you this. Privacy data security -- it's front-page news right now. It's going to be. Do you think that now is the time for the FCC to focus on its core competencies? Or should it move over and look at privacy data security, or leave that to the FCC? Mr. Wiley?

Mr. Wiley?

WILEY: I -- I didn't hear that. I -- I didn't hear it. I'm sorry.

BLACKBURN: Oh. Privacy data security -- leave it to the FCC and the FCC focus on its core mission? Or what is your thought on that?

WILEY: I think so.

BLACKBURN: You think so?

WILEY: I would agree with that.

BLACKBURN: OK.

Mr. Powell, coming back to you, 706 -- we're hearing a lot about that today. And you may have others who think that, you know, the FCC -- that this is an invitation -- 706 is an invitation to come in and regulate Internet services. So, as you look at 706, do you agree that the provision was intended to give the FCC the ability to forebear from regulations that would stifle broadband investment and innovation?

POWELL: I -- I agree that the decision certainly gives them the power to forebear. And for many years, many people interpreted 706 as deregulatory. It speaks of removing barriers and removing obstacles, less about introducing them.

I certainly was serving at a time where the commissions had held that that was not a separate basis of authority. And in fairness to the fact, every commission had so held until recently. So, that was the position of the law when I -- when I was there, at least.

I will say, though, that I think if the commission is going to have a role in broadband, I -- I highly would prefer that be under the construct of the light regulatory information services definitions that reside around 706, than to make a radical transformation to Title 2 as a regulatory framework for those questions.

BLACKBURN: OK.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, I will yield back the balance of my time.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back. And the chair now recognizes the gentleman from California, the ranking member of the -- of the committee on the Democrats' side, Mr. Waxman.

WAXMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

My colleague, Ms. Blackburn, suggested the FCC needs to act more like the Federal Trade Commission. The FTC doesn't -- does important consumer protection work. But I believe we need an agency like the FCC, that can write forward-looking rules of the road for industry and consumers.

Chairman Hundt and Copps, do you agree with that?

HUNDT: Absolutely, Mr. Waxman. Forward-looking is -- here's the best example of useful forward-looking law. It's in the incentive auction legislation that you passed, where this Congress said, "We want the FCC to establish before the auction a generally-applicable rule about how much spectrum anybody can buy."

That has to be forward-looking. You don't want to go into the auction with your money, and not know whether or not you're going to be permitted to win in the -- keep the license that you -- that you thought you were the high bidder on. That has to be forward-looking. So, that's a great example of you all asking for a forward-looking rule, and really deserving a forward-looking rule.

WAXMAN: Mm-hmm. Mr. Copps?

COPPS: Absolutely, I concur. We all talk about how rapidly the telecommunications technology and services are changing. The commission has to be aware of that -- have the flexibility to react to that, and certainly to fulfill its responsibilities to look into the future, and try to determine how best to fulfill its -- it's mission, which includes consumer protection, includes privacy, and includes ubiquity of services.

WAXMAN: Mr. Powell, in light of yesterday's decision, the D.C. Court -- Circuit recognized the authority granted by Congress to the FCC in the 1996 act. Do you believe that the agency can properly oversee the growth of broadband infrastructure services?

POWELL: I do. For a matter of record, as chairman of the FCC, and the commission that classified broadband the way that it is today, we -- we quite poignantly recognized that -- the importance of that continuing role to a degree. And we believe that the authority existed within that Title 1 framework to take care of those circumstances.

Whether you agree or disagree, the court certainly validated yesterday, from a judicial standpoint, that Title 1 and 706 do provide that flexible authority.

WAXMAN: Mm-hmm.

And, Mr. Wiley...

WILEY: Yes?

WAXMAN: If you agree the FCC has the authority, do you think it ought to use it?

WILEY: Well, the court said that the commission could have authority in this area. I would strongly advise, in my own view, the commission to let the marketplace to develop. And if problems do exist, then to step in. There are avenues. If we find blocking, if we find discrimination, there are avenues that can be taken.

I think the problem is, sometimes, we're -- we're in search of a problem here that may not exist. I think if you look at all the suggestions of the carriers that have come out of the decision from yesterday, they all want to keep the marketplace open, all want to give consumers access to various kinds of content. And I -- I take them at their word. I think that's going to develop.

WAXMAN: Mr. Hundt, if we want to keep the marketplace open, isn't it reasonable to anticipate that some of the players will not want it to be so open if it's to their financial advantage? And shouldn't the FCC play a role to make sure, prospectively, that we have an open competitive market with the consumers being in charge?

HUNDT: I completely agree. And if I might, I think it's important -- well, let me say this. I have the view that the case and the statute have the following meaning.

Section 1706 gives the FCC the authority to accomplish the goals you just stated without also requiring the FCC to make a classification decision. That is to say, it can make a classification decision and act with the authority that would come from that, but it doesn't need to do that in order to pass rules that are authorized under Section 1706. Meaning, 1706 and the common carrier provision are two independent bases for FCC action. That's why the FCC can choose both or either in order to have a (inaudible) rulemaking that would accomplish the goals you described.

WAXMAN: Didn't the court say that the FCC made the wrong choice? And they have two titles they can rely on? You're saying they don't need either title? They can just go ahead and...

HUNDT: I...

WAXMAN: ... think (ph) about regulation?

HUNDT: Yeah, I think what the court said is, if you do choose the information services classification, then you're bound by the restrictions in that. But you don't need to make that choice in order to accomplish the goals that are desiring -- which the court has said that it approves of the goals.

WAXMAN: Mm-hmm. And you don't need to be a -- regulators or (ph) common carrier, either?

HUNDT: I beg your pardon?

WAXMAN: You don't have to regulate it as a common carrier?

HUNDT: The court has said you could choose that, or you could choose 706 or you could choose both. The only thing you can't do is choose information services classification and pass common carrier- like rules.

WAXMAN: I see. Thank you. That's very helpful.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back my time.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back, and the chair now recognizes five minutes, the former chairman of the full committee, the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Barton.

BARTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I've -- I've listened to our testimony and our questions so far. I'm going to make brief statement before I ask a question.

I was here in 1996. And that act was a philosophical change from where the committee had been, and to some extent, where the country had been, in terms of telecommunications policy.

BARTON: You had a Republican Congress -- House and Senate -- for the first time in over 50 years, maybe 60 years. You had a Democratic president, Mr. Clinton, who came from a kind of a conservative pro- business background down in Arkansas. And the -- the former chairman of the committee, Mr. Dingell and Mr. Waxman and Mr. Markey and some of those folks, had a very regulatory approach, although not totally so.

And in the Telco Act of '96, Mr. Braley and Mr. Fields, we went -- we decided to go with a market approach. And Mr. Copps, as he's pointed out, markets don't always work, but generically, if they're open and transparent, unless there is a natural monopoly, they do give a lot more choice to people.

And that's what the Telco Act of '96 did. It rejected the philosophy that the government knows best that the regulator knows best, that people can't if -- if they have -- if they have access to appropriate information, can't make choices that -- are good choices.

And we see reflected today in some of the questions that Mr. Waxman, especially, just asked, you know, that some of my friends on the Democrat side just don't know like a market approach. You know, how dare it be possible that under -- under Title I, informational services, you can have an open, transparent Internet and you don't need the FCC to -- to tell you what to do. My God. That's scary. We better get that FCC back on the job.

They just -- maybe, you know if they can't do it under Title II as a -- as a common carrier, well, they just gonna have to figure out how to -- how to regulate under Title I. Well, you know, if you look at the explosion in what's happened -- I mean, I have -- I had somebody, a young person, a very young person, about nine years old, come into my office, down in Texas, and apparently, did not know there was such a thing as a hard-line telephone. Did not know what that was on my desk.

This young lady thought a phone was just something you carried around with you. And -- and her parents were very young, and they didn't have hard-line phones in their home, and they -- you know

-- her dad worked out of his truck, doing stuff, and -- and contracting and stuff. She didn't know what it was.

So, you know, this thing that Mr. Upton and Mr. Walden are starting to take a real comprehensive review and working with Mr. Waxman and Ms. Eshoo, it's a good thing. But philosophically, I don't want to go back to where I have to depend on the intelligence of Mr. Copps or Mr. Powell or Mr. Hundt or Mr. Wiley and the three or four other wise people at the FCC, to know what's best for me in telecommunications policy.

You know, I think if we set the ground rules, and I -- I agree that you have to have a traffic cop, but I don't agree that you gotta be so prescriptive that -- that the market just flat gets -- gets strangled before it even has a chance to get underway.

So my -- my question, and I'll throw it open to the panel, is there still a need for a Title I, I mean, for a Title II, for -- for common carrier? In the telecommunication marketplace today, could we deregulate the telephone companies, in totality, because, you know, there really is no such thing as a natural monopoly anymore?

COPPS: If we can find a way to assure that some of the qualities that people fought for long and hard in terms of privacy and public safety and consumer protection, do not accompany the new tools of broadband and Internet as they accompanied telephone, then I think we're in trouble.

I like the market approach too, and it was decided long ago that the telecommunications industry (inaudible) industries would operate in a capitalistic system and you don't blame business for trying to seize market control or capture the market or even to have gate keeping but we've always, since very early in the last century, had protections against untrammeled building toward monopoly and duopoly.

I read the '96 act, and I wasn't as intimately involved with it as you were, but followed it with some degree of interest as being somewhat more proactive. I read that act as instructing the Federal Communications Commission to do what it needs to do to encourage bringing the most advanced telecommunications feasible to all of our citizens no matter where they live, at reasonably comparable prices, reasonably comparable services, allowing them to access media that serves communities and provides information that are necessary to exercise a citizen's responsibilities in a democratic society, so I think yes, a light touch where possible.

But, you know, we sit here and talk about, well we have to do away with these -- these stove pipes and all, and I agreed to that with some extent, but we have -- we have enshrined that. I mean, if we're gonna say we're gonna treat a telephone call you make on the Internet entirely different than we make a telephone call somewhere else, that's not functionally equivalent. That's not treating technologies alike.

So, I think...

(CROSSTALK)

BARTON: (inaudible) I mean, I know my time is way over, but it -- it is something...

(LAUGHTER)

... it's something to think about, because we've got a real chance in the rest of this Congress and the next Congress to build on what we started in '96.

WILEY: I would just like to say that I agree with much of what you say. I think in -- in a competitive marketplace that we see today, with the kind of I.P.-centric world, I think economic regulation has to be considered with some skepticism, because the markets are competitive.

If you don't have market failure, then the question is, why should the government be stepping in? Consumer protection, E911, you know, those kinds of things, that's a different story.

But we're talking about economic regulation here, and I think it's more questionable, and I certainly wouldn't be thinking about going back to common carrier world in an information services environment. I don't think that makes sense.

WALDEN: Well thank you, the gentleman's time has expired.

And the chair recognizes, for five minutes, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Doyle.

DOYLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and once again, thank you to our witnesses for your testimony today.

We've talked a lot about net neutrality in the court decision, so I'd like to maybe go to a couple different topics and ask Chairman Hundt and Chairman Copps about special access.

How -- how can the FCC enhance competition, in the special access marketplace, and is new statutory authority necessary or do you think the commission has the sufficient authority to ensure that the markets are competitive.

COPPS: On special access I think what needs to happen -- yes, I think the commission has the authorities for the FCC to make up its mind. I was before this committee and I think you were here too. And perhaps it was Mr. Markey, or somebody who asked us all back in 2007 to sign a letter saying we would have this problem resolved by September.

And we all said "Whoopee, let's -- let's do that".

And it hasn't been done yet. All these seven years have gone by. Enormous amounts of money are at stake here. The ability of competitors to enter the business and to compete is at stake here.

I am pleased at some signs now, that the FCC is beginning to move. And I want to especially commend you because I know you were a big proponent of getting this data collection process going, and that's the prerequisite of -- of doing some -- something final on this.

The commission also has to look at allegations of anti- competitive practices and special access, such things as loyalty mandates and excessive early termination and shortfall penalties. But getting this right is important.

And each year that goes on, there's billions of dollars going to maybe where they should go or maybe where they shouldn't be going.

DOYLE: Thank you.

Commissioner Hundt.

HUNDT: I echo Commissioner Copps' remarks and would just add, this is another example of another useful, forward-looking rule. We could all use a forward-looking rule on this topic.

DOYLE: Thank you, yes. And Commissioner Copps, we have been waiting years and years and years, and I hope before my tenure in Congress is over that we'll see the FCC do something on special access. And I intend to be for a little bit longer.

(LAUGHTER)

Commissioner Copps, the FCC recently closed a very successful -- a low-power FM application process and is currently considering thousands of LPFM applications, and I want to personally thank

you for your efforts in that regards and ask you what other opportunities you see for the FCC to further empower communities in innovative ways.

COPPS: Well, first of all, I want to thank you because, without you and the leadership of your colleagues here, this would not have happened and we wouldn't have had that window, first one open since 2000.

And it's a window of enormous potential. So, number one, we want that to move forward with all dispatch and maybe go from 800 low power stations to maybe thousands of them.

Going beyond that, though, we just have to look at whatever kind of options we can think of to encourage community radio to revivify the pig (ph) channels and make sure that they're not just cast aside, as some of the big companies seem to want to do.

Look at new models for noncommercial media, nonprofit media. And that applies not just to media companies, but to telecom companies, newspapers and so many other things. And there's a lot of potential here in a market that doesn't seem to be able to provide all the tools that we need for media and for news, for nonprofit media to step in.

But the IRS is dragging its feet on making a lot of these determinations that it should be making. So, low power, yes. Looking at channels 5 and 6, there are all sorts of options out there.

Put some special emphasis on using community radio, and diversifying communities and native lands. It's just a field that's rife with potential, if we can just step up to the plate and realize our responsibility to do it.

DOYLE: Thank you.

Gentlemen, thank you for your insight today. We appreciate it here on the committee.

And I'll yield back, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: Thank you very much. The gentleman yield backs the balance of his time.

And the chair now recognizes himself for five minutes.

And, Mr. Powell, thanks for -- again for you being here today. And if I could just start with some questions to you.

POWELL: Yes, sir.

WALDEN: It's kind of interesting because in reviewing your testimony and also Mr. Wiley, you both used very similar language in spots.

And in your opening statement you said that this market requires a greater degree of business flexibility, fewer prescriptive rules and an assurance that any government involvement is applied on a technology-neutral basis and creates a better investment climate.

And I also saw that Mr. Wiley also had said in his testimony about -- the government can't keep up and there's a need for flexibility and technology-neutral framework in his testimony. So, very, very similar language.

But your testimony, when you're -- when you go through it, I find it interesting because you're going through your seven points and for simplicity.

And one of the things that you bring out, because you also were talking about that flexibility and also having better business climate, you state in your testimony that since 1996 we've seen $1 trillion invested in Internet infrastructure.

And then you also laid out that, you know, the simplicity that has to be there.

But also in that simplicity, you said that, you know, practicing simplicity can be scary. And it takes courage to discard old ideas and rules that are no longer needed.

Could you give a couple of examples of those?

POWELL: Yes. It's a great, challenging question. I think I might actually go back to some of what Mr. Barton was talking about.

If you think about one of the wisest things that was done in the 1996 act, it has nothing to do with the individual rules. It was the fundamental judgment that the government rejected the natural monopoly thesis and believed instead that competition was the more fruitful approach.

But common carriage law inherently is about a government- sanctioned monopoly. It's essentially the queen of the realm who grants an exclusive license to a ferryboat captain to go across the river and in exchange for all the privileges of that monopoly, they agree to be bound to serve all the citizens in a nondiscriminatory way and other things that the sovereign wishes to have as part of that exclusive benefit. Mutual in some regards the monopolist gets the exclusive profits and the -- and the realm gets the benefits of serving all the citizens.

In some ways in 1996, the government sued for divorce from companies through the notion of an exclusive monopoly and instead said go compete. Raise your own capital. No guaranteed return on investment. No guaranteed success.

But yet the lingering notions of common carriage, which are still in the statute and, by the way, are still being raised in the context of the net neutrality debate, still hover around our regulatory questions.

To me, whether the country comes to some committed conclusion that, even with its challenges and the need for oversight that were really about competition and were ready to truly let go of common carriage, is a great example, a fundamental one of how to make that decision.

LATTA: Thank you.

And let me follow up with another question.

And when you're looking at the (inaudible) assessing the competition and the communications industry, do you think an updated communications action modify how the FCC currently conducts its competitive analysis?

POWELL: I think so, only because I think there is some ambiguity there that, when managed in responsible hands, works fine. At times, it doesn't.

I am worried about the FCC merger review process in part because it professes to do a competitive analysis following essentially anti- trust guidelines administered by other departments.

But under the public interest standard, which I do think is valuable, it turns into a competition of conditions. And as an anti- trust lawyer, I used to believe the FCC, if they're doing something bad, shoot them. If they're not, don't let them cure harm by how many good jelly beans you can put on the scale and to make the thing go away.

And then by doing it in a way that it extracts these concessions as a voluntary proffer, you make sure that the case can't be appealed to the courts because you no longer have standing.

I think insulating their review process from judicial review through the conditioning mechanism and allowing the commissioning mechanism to be a vehicle by which the commission can legislate

beyond its authority, can get companies to do things in the context of that proceeding it can't pass laws about, borders on kind of administrative improbability.

So does that happen every time? No.

Do I think it happens sometimes? Yes.

And I think Congress should at least examine the review process and see if whether better controls could be in place.

LATTA: Thank you very much.

And I see my time has expired and the chair now recognizes for five minutes the gentlelady from California, Ms. Matsui.

MATSUI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I want to thank all of the former chairmen for being here. This has been really an interesting and informative discussion.

Under Section 254, carriers have certain obligations to provide universal access. In the D.C. Circuit's decision yesterday, the court made clear the FCC has a similar charge under 706 to ensure that all Americans have access to broadband and that the FCC has authority over broadband providers to meet that mandate from Congress.

I have two questions for all the chairmen relating to the court's decision yesterday.

The first, do you agree the FCC should and must promote universal access to broadband for all Americans?

Mr. Wiley?

WILEY: Yes, I would agree with that.

(UNKNOWN): Yes.

MATSUI: Mr. Powell?

POWELL: Absolutely. There's no way you can be a functioning member of society without access to this technology.

MATSUI: OK.

Then does the court's decision yesterday affirm the FCC's authority to transition the universal service fund to broadband?

Chairman Wiley?

WILEY: Yes, I think the FCC has done a good job in looking at that.

I am concerned somewhat with the size and the growth of the universal service fund. And I think the commission has got to look at the compensate -- the pay in that -- covering that. Some issues has got to be looked at, I think.

MATSUI: But it's generally yes?

WILEY: Yes.

MATSUI: (inaudible)?

POWELL: Yes, I think commend Chairman Genachowski from my grading, the fund toward broadband and he did it on a theory of 706. So in that extent, I think the ruling yesterday only strengthens the commission moving in that direction.

MATSUI: Good.

COPPS: Yes.

Chairman Copps?

That's great. I appreciate your views because I believe that it's one of potentially biggest unintended consequences avoided by the court's decision because transitioning USF to broadband is a -- really a critical step toward achieving universal access and adoption in this country.

Chairman Hundt, you said that yesterday's circuit decision is a victory for Congress and the smart, flexible approach of the 1996 Telecom Act.

How can we continue that success?

Are there any unintended consequences we should watch out for as this committee starts the process of updating the Communications Act?

HUNDT: Well, I think as a number of you have mentioned, of course the FCC on remand needs to commence a new proceeding, which I believe Chairman Wheeler has already said that he intends to do.

And naturally that should be and will be an open proceeding. I'm sure this committee will have an ample opportunity to express its views.

I don't, myself, have the ability to forecast where that will come out or should come out, because I think it's really, really important to examine all the new facts about emerging network architectures and about competition problems on both sides of the two- sided network.

HUNDT: I would just say that's why it's so useful that the court has said that the FCC's authority is broad and powerful, because the technologies in the network architectures and the competition problems are constantly changing. And the FCC and rulemaking has the ability to adapt to those changes, sometimes eliminating rules, sometimes writing new rules. So this is a very, very workable process that we have here.

And, as I said before, congratulations to this committee for the 1996 act, which did create this legal culture.

MATSUI: Chairman Powell, would you like to comment?

POWELL: I'm sorry. Can you refresh the question?

MATSUI: Well, I'm really...

POWELL: Sorry.

MATSUI: You know, we -- as Chairman Hundt commenting that the court decision, he felt, was a victory for Congress and for this smart, fixable approach of the '96 act, are there any unintended consequences that we should watch out for as we re-examine and update the Communications Act moving forward?

POWELL: I more or less would agree with Chairman Hundt. I mean, I think to the degree that, you know, in some ways I saw a quote the other day that I thought summed it up great. It's not a victory for any side but it might have been a victory for the debate. And that is that the commission continues to have a meaningful role in the oversight protection of broadband without crossing the line into the more dangerous concerns around common carriage.

And if that's ultimately the outcome, maybe that's workable.

Unintended consequences, I do think even the court struggled with them itself, which is 706 is an extraordinarily broad, unconstrained provision. How it's interpreted and how responsibly it's interpreted and applied, I think, is important.

Because I think Congress hasn't spoken with much specificity about broadband regulation and to take a position as open-ended and vague as 706 and see that as the foundation for everything broadband going forward has potential risks and dangers, but I think that will be worked out over time through its application, through dialogue with Congress.

MATSUI: Thank you very much. Chairman Copps?

COPPS: While I'm pleased that the court recognized the authority of the commission, I don't know that I'm ready to declare victory yet. If it is a victory for the debate, that's not necessarily a good thing because we've had so many years of debate while the evolution of the Internet continues and gatekeeping shows the rise of its ugly head.

So it's a victory if the commission reacts and reacts promptly and provides some certainty and some guarantees. But we've lost a couple of years, looking for third ways and other ways and I don't want to lose a couple of more years going down that road.

MATSUI: Well, I think there's an opportunity here. Yes?

WILEY: I was just going to say. I think if it's a victory, I think it's a victory for technical innovation, a victory for investment and ultimately a victory for the consumer. And I think thus we ought to see how the marketplace develops in this area and see whether problems, as I said earlier, really come about, as some people predict.

MATSUI: I think this is an interesting moment in time. And we have to provide a thoughtful way as we move forward. And I appreciate all your comments. Thank you very much. I yield back.

WALDEN: Gentle lady yields back. The chairman now recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

SHIMKUS: Thank you, chairman. Welcome, you all. It's good to have you. The -- and I think it would be safe to say that no one envisioned this world in which we live in technologically. No one envisioned it in '96. So the really the basic -- the basic first question is in a rewrite for public policy elected officials or even folks in the commission to envision what would world would be like ten years after a rewrite, that's -- that's going to be almost -- that's impossible to do.

Is that -- most people view that as correct? No one knew in '96 what would come. So that talks about what these basic premises that I enjoy: democracy, freedom, marketplace, capitalism.

One thing that hasn't really been addressed is consumer choice. And how that really does drive innovation and drive -- and it's that marketplace. And I remember going to the consumer electronics show and the MP3 was being unveiled and I just was amazed at how much capital flowed for just music in this space, in the technology space. That's the same thing now with Internet, broadband, downloads, Pandora, you name it. It's all migrated to that.

So we don't ever want to lose the aspect of the power of the individual consumer in this debate versus what some people would say would be the power of a government or regulatory arena or

agency. And Mr. Copps, I think that's true for these segments of society that feel they don't have access.

I think that you can pull together based upon technology the ability to get the word out through broad band, information, newsletters and the like. I mean the technology has allowed us to really -- there's really no excuse for people not to have access to information flow today even if they go through universal service fund or go to the library to get on broadband through what we've been able to do through the e-rates and all that other stuff which we talked about a lot in your day, Mr. Hundt.

So here -- here's the basic question I have. Because I -- a couple of you in your opening statements, talk about silos. You are all members of the commission and you all were chairmen, which is a different position than being a standard commissioner. Because you have the responsibility for the whole body of workers within the FCC. So, we've got consumers -- we've got the bureaus and the other things other than the bureaus. I only talk about the bureaus but you go on the website you see all these other little offices and stuff: consumer and government affairs, enforcement, international media, public safety, wireless, wire line.

So in a rewrite of the '96 act, should there not be some discussion in how we reform the commission itself based upon what current technology is today? And I think, Mr. Wiley, you kind of talked about this a little bit. And just a guess of where am I heading in the future?

I mean, there is a future look, right, Mr. Copps? There is a future. But how do we reform the FCC itself and start tearing down some of these silos, which some of you have addressed are a problem? And if we can go from left to right, Mr. Wiley, if you want to go first and that will be the end of my questions.

WILEY: Yes, I think what's changed in the Internet world is that you find different parties doing the same kinds of services, providing the same kind of activities that you wouldn't have thought of before. You wouldn't have thought of broadcasters being in the technology end or cable being in the wire -- in the wire line field. But this is happening now.

And I think, therefore, the commission probably does have to change its internal structure. If you have -- in a digital world if you have functionally equivalent services being provided by different parties, I think they should be regulated in a functionally equivalent way. And that's not the way the commission has done it through the years. It's not the way they're organized. It's going to take some change.

SHIMKUS: Thank you. Mr. Hundt?

HUNDT: You know the French say "well, that works in practice, but maybe doesn't really work in theory." And I think it's really, really important to focus on practice. The current structure allows the FCC chair in what I will definitely describe as an open process to reorganize the FCC to meet the objectives that are set by any particular Congress in any particular situation. And that's a good thing.

So, when this Congress had the wisdom to ask the FCC to auction the spectrum in 1993, I was allowed, thanks to you -- but not because of a statutory mandate, but because of flexibility, I was allowed to create a wireless bureau, which previously did not exist.

At any given moment it's hard to say exactly what the administrative structure ought to be. And I think the current system, which tells the chair, figure it out, tell us what it is, you're held accountable, that's a good system.

POWELL: I do think form follows function. And I think -- certainly when I was chairman, we merged a few bureaus. Cable was a separate bureau from broadcasting. Today it's the media bureau -- changes we made to try to reflect.

A common principle is organize around the way it's seen through the eyes and ears of consumers. And, you know, to me at the time, television was television to most Americans and making sure you had cross-pollinization of the bureaucrats, professional who -- the bureaucracy and professionals who managed that I thought was important so they saw their functions through the same eyes of our constituents. And I think that's one principle you can follow.

POWELL: I do -- I do agree with Reed. I think the chairman is also CEO. The statute assigns them that responsibility. I don't think we talk enough about the CEO role and the management of that operation, but I think there's plenty of flexibility to respond to that if it's clear what it is what we're trying to execute.

COPPS: I don't think there's any magic formula. Certainly there have been times when the stove pipe approach has been too much in presence. I think Michael tried to work against that and go towards a little more holistic type of view. So did the Chairman Jennakowsi (ph).

That being said though, you need experts in these specific bureaus. There is a specific telecom expertise and wire line and wireless and all the details of that and special access and everything else we're talking about. So I think you still have to have those bureaus but if you can have -- I think chairman Jennakowsi (ph) established a consumer task force whose job it was to go across those agencies and look at whatever or those bureaus and whatever those bureaus were doing to assess the impact on consumer well-being.

So I think that's a good approach. But it's a management thing and something that I think is a product of good leadership at the commission and good oversight by the committee.

(UNKNOWN): We need to move onto Mr. Dingell for the next five minutes. Mr. Chairman.

DINGELL: I want to commend you for this hearing. I think this has been an important hearing and events of this week tell us that it's time that the committee is going to have to start looking at what we're going to do about bringing the '96 Act up to date.

I have enjoyed the comments by my dear friend, Mr. Barton, in announcing my position as being strongly regulator. Sometimes I have a hard time recognizing my position when it's set forth by other members.

In any event, that is not important. But I would just like to remind everybody that this business of the '96 Act started when we began to try to get judge Greene out of the business of regulating the telecommunications industry.

It also started when we started trying to get the amount of spectrum that was held out of use by industry and business and government and get that available to people. And to see to it that we had a fair program for dealing with our legislation and a fair program for dealing with these matters.

I would like to welcome our friends, the chairman here, for their appearance and for their assistance to us and for what it is that they have done with us over the years.

If there's an attempt made to update the communications action, I will offer my support. Yesterday's court decisions vacating the anti- discrimination and anti-blocking rules of the federal communications commission open internet order is proof that the Congress needs to bring our communication laws into the 21st century.

Only clear direction from Congress will strengthen consumer protections, promote competitions and give industry the regulatory certainty it needs to innovate in the future. As we go about this important work, I caution that we do so with great care. On the benefit of a carefully collected and substantial body of evidence.

This is going to require rigorous oversight by the committee and considerable work to get the information that we have need of so that we can legislate properly. And I hope that the undertaking

will be bipartisan in order so that any final product that we complete here moves through the Senate and to the president's desk for signature.

We have to resolve a number of very important high line (ph) and hard questions to inform our work as we move forward. I respectfully suggest that these questions included -- or rather include but are not limited to the following.

First, how do we improve and protect Americans access to content while also preserving the ability of private companies to monetize their investments for future growth?

Likewise, how do we best foster the ongoing development of future technologies that will ensure American leadership in the field of technology and communications. And then we have to decide how we are to promote the more efficient and fair use of value and increasingly scarce commodities like spectrum, which we've not administered too well of late and have administered on the amounts we could get for in money rather than how it would serve the nation to allocate this spectrum.

Lastly, we're going to have to decide how we will ensure that the Federal Communications Commission, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration and other related bodies function smoothly to protect consumers and promote growth, rather than hindering it.

Regardless of these answers and the answers to these questions and others, I submit that our work should proceed from the conviction that the public interest is still and is always going to remain the central concern that we have with regard to the Communications Act.

I have had the good fortune to be one of the authors of almost every major piece of telecommunications legislation passed by the Congress in the past three decades, and the public interest is in the heart of each, going back to the '33 and '34 act. I see no reason why that should be any different this time around.

The only issue here worth exploring is what that standard has meant in years past and whether there's any reason to give the commission different guidance for the future in interpreting it as we address the other questions I've just outlined.

Mr. Chairman, I wish you godspeed in this endeavor, and I offer you my support. And I'm delighted that the chairmen of the commission have been here this morning to assist us in beginning this process, which I hope will go forward with reasonable speed, with great care, and again, with great attention to the public interest.

I thank you all for listening to me.

WALDEN: Chairman Dingell, thank you for your kind comments and your always generous words and willingness to work to improve our communication and other laws. We look forward to working with you. My only disappointment is you did not have a list of yes or no questions for this panel.

(LAUGHTER)

Now, with that, we'll turn to Mr. Terry from Nebraska, and we look forward to your comments and questions, sir.

TERRY: Yes, you do (ph). Thank you.

And I just -- for our esteemed guests here today, I want to follow up on what my friend from California, Ms. Matsui, began, and that's with the high-cost areas. I want to take it from a little bit different angle and get your input.

As kind of mentioned here, we've seen a convergence of technologies and services that are all kind of being wrapped into one anymore (ph). And the same as -- we talked about it in my early days on this committee in voice, and Barton brought that up. Well, now it's in video.

And so when we talk about a rural telecom and the Internet as a basis of delivering video today, it's kind of making -- well, it's altering the way that rural telecoms used to work. And so we have a current legal structure with this QRA and a mindset of -- on treating rural telecoms like old copper wires, which a lot of them are still using.

So I just want to ask your opinions about and reform for or within the FCC, should rural and high-cost areas -- so Mr. Copps, it even comes back to inner city, where you have low take but high cost.

How do we think about this differently in making sure that if you live in rural America or you're setting up a wind farm, where you want to continuously oversee but remotely, thereby requiring broad broadband for all of that data? Do we need to think about things differently than high-cost rural, high-cost inner city?

Mr. Wiley, why don't we start with you.

WILEY: Well, I'm not an expert in the rural telephone area, but I still think there is a concern that's different than in the big cities. And I think therefore, high-cost funds still are something that have to be part of the whole equation, in my opinion, and you know that better than anybody in Nebraska. So I don't have any huge input to you today as far as how to change the system.

TERRY: Yes. And later (ph), I guess to clarify, since video and Internet are becoming the same and your telecom is your really maybe your sole provider of that, it's all meshed together. Does that change anything? Mr. Hundt?

HUNDT: I think that people have said we really want broadband to be the network for everyone in the country. In rural areas, as I'm sure you know, Congressman, there are many places where the cable broadband penetration is as low as 15 percent and 20 percent, not anything nearly as high as it is in Washington, D.C., or in the suburbs.

Now, that's a problem that the FCC really does need to think about in conjunction with the industry that Michael represents so ably. And in particular, not to touch too many other buttons, the recent increases in the prices of the content have a disproportionate impact in rural America because when those content price increases as passed on by the cable industry, they are taking a lot of money out of the wallets of the people in those areas, and those are the same areas where broadband is expensive. And so as people are paying more for the broadcast content and the cable channel content, they have less available to purchase broadband.

This is a problem that is real and existing right now. And this also gives me a chance to pass the solution over to the -- to Chairman Powell.

(LAUGHTER)

POWELL: Congressman, I think you make a couple of important points that we should just put top of mind, which is the challenge of reaching that last 5 to 7 percent is because under traditional market fundamentals, they're uneconomic. And if they're uneconomic, the only way to cure something is you have to change the economic equation.

This is why I've always had no problem understanding and respecting that government has a meaningful and significant role in terms of our ubiquity objectives in universal service, of universality and affordability, to play a role through either the universal service program or any other properly constructed program to try to change the economic equation that attracts the infrastructure that those communities deserve.

I think it's a more optimistic scenario in the modern world than it was before because in the old world, we had single technology. We tried to string twisted copper wire between two farms 300 miles apart, and that was enormously and hideously expensive. One of the things I think really opens up an opportunity today is, because of a common IP platform, we can essentially deliver almost any kind of service over almost any kind of network.

So that means that wireless, and probably its companion of satellite-available services, have real hope and promise for rural America. That is, they have very dynamically different costs characteristics. A satellite at 28,000 feet sees rural Nebraska no differently than it sees Manhattan. Wireless has a much lower cost infrastructure for some of those areas.

So I think that isn't a complete answer, but putting a lot of energy and investment into how those services will solve those problems is useful. And I think, as the chairman of the FCC is moving toward an IP network common regulatory proceeding, that conversion that you're talking about also can get harmonized and the universal service program get harmonized along with it.

TERRY: Thank you. Agree.

COPPS: I have a little different answer. Reasonably comparable services at reasonably comparable prices is the injunction on the charge of the Telecommunications Act. Reforming USF, which the commission is in the process of doing -- with lots of wrinkles and problems to work out, no question about that -- is certainly an important part of the equation.

But anybody who thinks that the universal service fund alone is going to bring this country the kind of high-speed, low-cost broadband that we need to have to be competitive in the world arena in the 21st century I think is -- is not looking at the situation as it is.

This has to be an infrastructure mission. Our country has had infrastructure missions before, when we came together to build highways and railroads and rural electricity, and so on and so forth. And that's what we need now.

We are not going to be competitive, we're not going to get out of the holes that we're in unless every citizen in this country has that access. And yes, it's reaching that last 5 percent to 7 percent. That's extremely important. Way more than half of our homes don't have the kind of high-speed, low-cost broadband, fiber broadband, that we're going to really need to be competitive.

So we need to look at that not just as an FCC problem but as a problem confronting our government and our society and act upon it and figure out whether we are really serious of being competitive in the global sweepstakes.

TERRY: Thank you.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back. Look to the gentleman from New Mexico, Mr. **Lujan,** for five.

LUJAN: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. And I must say I was concerned with some of the approach that was being taken in the line of questioning leading up to those last responses to my colleague, where for the first time I heard the importance of rural America.

Coming from a Western state, from a congressional district that represents 17 of New Mexico's 22 tribes, and the sprawling nature associated with what the West brings us, many parts of rural America, where our food is grown, where energy is generated, critically important to be able to get coverage to these areas.

And as I joked with Chairman Wheeler when we had him in front of us a couple weeks ago, I explained to him that, you know, these last flights home, it's been great to see the TSA debating whether we can make phone calls at 30,000 feet. I know that I have streaming video content at 30,000 feet. I can communicate with my office and anyone else that I so choose to.

So if I can communicate with constituents and get the video content that I want at 30,000 feet, why can't I do it on the ground in rural America? The technology is here, and there's no reason that we can't push it out.

To three responses, I just can't say thanks enough for that. Chairman Copps, with the response associated with a very aggressive push to infrastructure investment in America -- it's absolutely

needed. And we shouldn't forget, especially as we talk about different ideals and philosophies that we have on this committee, and even in this Congress, and across the country, that it was in many conservative and rural parts of America that benefited from government investment with rural electrification, with major water projects that provide us power now that could be in question because of water flows -- whole other topic of conversation, but nonetheless, that we need to make sure that we're addressing.

So Chairman Powell, you talked about twisted pairs and what that brought us, decisions that were made as a result of the '96 act. And looking at section 7068, I'm not sure what we're arguing about with concerns in that particular area. It's encouraging deployment of reasonable and timely basis on advanced telecom, especially for educational purposes.

There may be some concerns with some of my colleagues on price cap regulation, but regulatory for bands, measures that promote competition in local markets -- this could be written by any member on this committee, encouraging ideals that I think that we all share.

But one thing that hasn't been talked about very much, and even given the fact that there was a huge data breach with Target, 70 million customers that were impacted, is the security of this network. I would hope that -- and I'd like to get your opinion, if 706a provides us the necessary standards to be able to bring safeguards, or if you think that that's something that needs to be addressed.

And I'd like to invite comment from each of you. Mr. Hundt?

HUNDT: As Chairman Powell said, section 1706 is very broad, and I think that it is an opportunity and a duty for the FCC to dig into it and to create an appropriate framework, with the help of this committee and its counterpart in the Senate.

If I might continue your point -- your theme of rural America, there are a number of other provisions, as well, in the '96 act that the FCC can use to try to achieve the goal of completely widespread broadband, even in rural and high-cost areas.

And one that I would identify is the current proceeding to reimagine the E-rate. The E-rate -- if we went -- I just recently met with the chief librarian in Puma County, Arizona, which isn't very far away from you, and you know the geography is not dissimilar.

They have a fantastic system of broadband for not just the central library in Tucson but all the branch libraries all over this very, very sparsely populated geography. The library is the number one public Internet access point in southern Arizona. Therefore, it's the proper focus of extra E-rate support and the proper focus of the combination of network architectures that might well resemble what Chairman Powell was talking about. I -- that's -- we shouldn't decide that part. But we should decide that's a very flexible tool also that can be used to deliver the right participation in the American community to rural America.

LUJAN: Chairman Powell?

POWELL: Congressman, I'd really like to put a punctuation on what you raised because I think it goes to the committee's desire, I hope, to try to harmonize and see communication landscape as a single ecosystem. All the wonderful benefits we're bragging and celebrating are continuously and daily at risk. I think cyberthreat, data retention, breach are all issues that are the Achilles heel of all of the promise of the network that we're celebrating, but they require very complex solutions that look through an entire ecosystem.

706 is no more -- is not particularly up to that job. Why? Even for no other reason that you can't have a discussion without software involved. The cybersecurity question on a global economic -- ecosystem basis means a conversation with every element of that massive connective chain, and that is the Web companies, the infrastructure companies, wireless companies, content companies. There's just no way, in my opinion, even with its breadth, that one could look hopefully to that as the

single point of authority to make the most meaningful impact on this issue, mostly because 50 percent of that ecosystem aren't even implicated by that provision.

LUJAN: Chairman...

COPPS: I hope 706 is up to the job. I think it does confer a lot of authority. But I don't want this to become just the solution du jour, and we talk about 706 for the next two years, and then another court somewhere strikes that down, or whatever.

I do want to highlight one thing that you mentioned in terms of getting broadband out. And I commend you for your interest and your work with native Hawaiians (ph) and native Americans. And one area where I think maybe a rewrite would help would be to more formally institutionalize, put some flesh on the bones of the trust relationship and the consultative mechanisms that we have between the commission and native Americans.

It's not -- it's working better than it has. I think there has been more emphasis in recent years. Obviously, back in Chairman Kennard's time, who's not here today, there was an interest in moving us forward and getting us into a new trust relationship. But that's 13 or 14 years ago.

And the situation, as you point out, is so dire, when one member of a tribe can't call somebody else, but you can make the call from 30,000 feet, that's something wrong there. But that might be a concrete area where the commission can actually -- where the Congress can actually lend a hand.

WALDEN: Appreciate that. Gentleman's time is expired. We'll now go to the gentleman from New Jersey for five minutes.

LANCE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And to the distinguished panel, this is among the most interesting hearings in which I have ever participated. It's my honor to be able to meet all of you.

I gather there is a consensus from the distinguished panel that the 1996 legislation needs, to some extent, statutory update and revision. Is that accurate -- from the panel?

(UNKNOWN): I would agree.

(UNKNOWN): I don't agree.

LANCE: And Chairman Hundt, if you would indicate why you do not agree there needs to be statutory update?

HUNDT: I think that the D.C. circuit has made it very clear that the '96 act has given the authority to the FCC to address all the economic and social problems that this committee in recent years and in past years has asked the FCC to address.

LANCE: Other distinguished members...

COPPS: I basically concur and agree with what Chairman Hundt has said. Sure, it's always nice to have some additional clarity, but time is of the essence here. We have a statute that I think can deliver on a lot of the things that need to be delivered, and we should be about that job.

I just -- it's so difficult to see the correlation of forces coming together to give birth to an act, after what we went through in 1996, and I don't think it's going to be any easier in 2014 to do that than it was 18 years ago.

LANCE: Chairman Powell?

POWELL: I think, by any measure, a deliberative process in the legislature would take a meaningful number of years, as the chairman -- as Chairman Walden himself has recognized in setting out a multi- year process. I do think there are sufficient conditions to justify the institution of that kind of examination over that period of time because I think the market is radically different, and the relevancy of law as applied to reality should be a core principle of governance.

LANCE: I thank you.

WILEY: I think the very fact that you didn't have the Internet really developed, you didn't have broadband, you didn't have all the technological changes that have occurred since 1996 really gives, I think, substance to taking another look. And I think that gives Congress an opportunity, I think, to perhaps make some suggestions to the regulatory body that I think would be very helpful.

LANCE: Thank you, Chairman Wiley.

Am I accurate -- I've not read the decision. I have reviewed its consequences, but I've not read it, and I certainly will read yesterday's decision. Am I accurate that the FCC decided in 2004 that Internet access services would not be classified as telecommunications services? Is that true, Chairman Powell?

POWELL: Yes, sir, that's correct.

LANCE: And if that decision were to be revisited, that could be revisited by the administrative agency? Is that accurate as to how it could proceed?

POWELL: It is accurate. It could.

LANCE: And if there were to be a revisiting of the 2004 decision that this is not classified as telecommunications services, then there would have to be an extensive period of review and there would have to be some sort of high-level determination as to why a different decision were to be made? Is that the way it would work?

POWELL (?): Yes. Under administrative law, even with deference, the agency has to provide a reasoned explanation for its change in policy. It would require a notice and comment proceeding which is open.

LANCE: Yes.

POWELL: I wouldn't -- you know, the suggestion's been made that, somehow, that would lead to instant clarity. It would lead to another three to four-year period of conflict and litigation.

LANCE: And litigation. Chairman Copps?

COPPS: But I would just say I don't think it would take forever to compile that record. I, and a lot of other people I know, would be happy to contribute to the rationale for that sort of action. So it's not really starting under tabula rasa. I think a lot of the information is out there. It was just a route not taken, and now we need to go back and look at it.

LANCE: And the FCC's reclassification would be considered arbitrary and capricious unless there were a period of comment and refreshing the record and some sort of heightened standard, is that accurate legally?

(UNKNOWN): Yes, sir. They have to follow the Administrative Procedure Act obligations.

(UNKNOWN): And I'm certain they would.

LANCE: I would presume that would be the case. And finally, the decision yesterday possibly could be appealed to the Supreme Court, but it's not clear whether or not either side is likely to do that?

(UNKNOWN): That's correct.

LANCE: Thank you very much.

My time has expired, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: Thank the gentleman.

Now turn to Mr. Long from Missouri, I think our last member to ask questions. Please go ahead.

LONG: Thank you, Chairman.

And Chairman Hundt, last night, you said that you spent quite a bit of time trying to go through the court ruling of yesterday. And most of the congressmen were home trying to read through a 1,562-page bill that we're going to be voting on this afternoon. So I've ordered my staff to bring a copy of that to you. And if you could peruse that over...

(LAUGHTER)

If you can peruse that over your lunch hour and kind of decipher it for me, I would appreciate it.

Earlier in your testimony, Chairman Hundt, you said that -- and I didn't get to understand your point, I don't think, concerning the auction. You said, if I remember right, that we need a cap so people know what they're buying. Can you kind of tell me what you were -- in full disclosure, I come from a 30-year career as an auctioneer before I came to Congress a few years ago, so I've got a lot of interest in how an auction operates and try and make it operate the best it can for the public and the taxpayers.

HUNDT: I remember very well that in our first auction, we had Senator Burns, who had a...

LONG: Conrad Burns, you bet.

HUNDT: ... come and conduct the very first auction...

LONG: He is from Missouri. Now, he served from Montana, but he's originally from Missouri. That's two of us.

HUNDT: He did claim that particular heritage, and he did great job. I would recommend to Chairman Wheeler that he should come and ask you to conduct this next auction.

(LAUGHTER)

LONG: I'm not worried about conducting as much as I am how to -- you know, how it's put together, and that's what I've been trying to...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: But what was your comment? I didn't understand. You said that we need a cap so people know what they're buying. What exactly did you mean?

HUNDT: So in any auction, when folks come in, you want the high bidder to be able to walk away with whatever was auctioned. And the way to do that, I believe, is to make sure that everybody bidding in that auction knows the following. What are the rules about how much you can buy?

It doesn't have to be a cap. It could be -- some people think it should be an aggregation level. There's many different ways to define it. But people ought to know as they're about to take the money out of the wallet, as they're about to raise the hand and say that they're putting in the high bid, they ought to know that they can walk away with whatever they can buy, instead of having to have another

proceeding where they ask the FCC or the Department of Justice later, Am I permitted to walk away with this, because I don't know whether or not I've violated any of your aggregation rules.

So this Congress in the incentive auction rule did say that the FCC should create a generally applicable aggregation rule, and I think that was a very wise thing to do. That way, everybody going into the auction can estimate in advance whether or not what they buy is -- what they bid on and win on is what they can walk away with.

LONG: OK. I -- talking to the interested parties that are interested in buying this spectrum, they have told me -- and this is probably a topic for another day, but they said if they can buy A, B and C spectrum, then maybe they want to buy L, M, N, O, P later in the auction. If they can't buy A, B and C, L, M, N, O, P doesn't -- if they can't buy that, too, then the first three things that they bought -- so it's a very confusing situation.

So any of you have any staff or anybody you want to get with my staff that we can talk about and kind of sort that out, I'd appreciate it.

I want to move to Chairman Wiley for a minute. If you turn on the TV at night, the only reason it's not 100 percent phone company ads and cellular companies and things is because it's interspersed with the auto insurance ads. So there would be more -- so it's seems like there's quite a bit of competition out there now.

And as far as the auction that I was talking about with Chairman Hundt, the wireless market, I think, appears to be extremely competitive. And you do have larger companies, AT&T, Verizon, T- Mobile, Sprint. And given that, doesn't it make sense that the FCC -- why will they -- should they not -- they shouldn't handicap bidders, should they, to get the most money for the taxpayers and have the best auction they can where either -- some people are wanting to limit who can buy what. Can you kind of walk me through that?

WILEY: Well, my view is that the auction ought to be available, open to all. I think if Congress really wants to see the maximum amount of revenue derived in order to support the public safety network, we're going to have to pay the broadcasters. It's a very complex process. And I do -- I am concerned about the fact that we start to begin to limit people in this, that you're going to find you're going to have less revenue than might be otherwise anticipated. I think a free auction ought to be open to all.

LONG: When people would attend my auction, I was always interested in having the most people there and have them spend the most money that they could. And if they didn't want to bid, I would bid for them. I'd tell them just to hold their hand up in the air, and when they paid enough, I'd tell them to take it down, so...

(LAUGHTER)

-- with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

(UNKNOWN): Quite an auction.

(LAUGHTER)

WALDEN: I want to thank our distinguished panel of witnesses, both for your prior government service and your continuing involvement and interest in public policy to assist us in our mission and goals in updating the communications act.

I draw attention to those who are observing our hearing. They can go to our hashtag and -- at #commsactupdate (ph). I think it's in front here. And give us your information. A lot of people have been doing that during the hearing. We appreciate that, another reflection of how technology is changing the world, and we need to keep up with it.

So thank you for your participation. Our subcommittee stands adjourned.

END

LOAD-DATE: January 18, 2014

339 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Political Transcript Wire

January 15, 2014 Wednesday

REP. GREG WALDEN HOLDS A HEARING ON COMMUNICATIONS ACT UPDATE

LENGTH: 21556 words

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY HOLDS A HEARING ON THE COMMUNICATIONS ACT

JANUARY 15, 2014

SPEAKERS: REP. GREG WALDEN, R-ORE. CHAIRMAN REP. BOB LATTA, R-OHIO REP. LEE TERRY, R-NEB. REP. JOHN SHIMKUS, R-ILL. REP. MIKE ROGERS, R-MICH. REP. MARSHA BLACKBURN, R-TENN. REP. BRETT GUTHRIE, R-KY. REP. ADAM KINZINGER, R-ILL. REP. STEVE SCALISE, R-LA. REP. LEONARD LANCE, R-N.J. REP. CORY GARDNER, R-COLO. REP. MIKE POMPEO, R-KAN. REP. BILLY LONG, R-MO. REP. RENEE ELLMERS, R-N.C. REP. JOE L. BARTON, R-TEXAS EX OFFICIO REP. FRED UPTON, R-MICH. EX OFFICIO

REP. ANNA G. ESHOO, D-CALIF., RANKING MEMBER REP. BOBBY L. RUSH, D-ILL. REP. DIANA DEGETTE, D-COLO. REP. MIKE DOYLE, D-PA. REP. DORIS MATSUI, D-CALIF. REP. FRANK PALLONE JR., D-N.J. REP. JOHN D. DINGELL, D-MICH. REP. BRUCE BRALEY, D-IOWA REP. PETER WELCH, D-VT. REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M. REP. JIM MATHESON, D-UTAH REP. HENRY A. WAXMAN, D-CALIF. EX OFFICIO

WITNESSES: RICHARD WILEY, FORMER CHAIRMAN, FCC

REED HUNDT, FORMER CHAIRMAN, FCC

MICHAEL POWELL, FORMER CHAIRMAN, FCC

MICHAEL COPPS FORMER CHAIRMAN, FCC

[*] WALDEN: I'll call to order the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, and thank our witnesses for being here for this first of what will be many hearings as we look to update the Communications Act.

Few sectors of our economy are equal to the communications and technology sector when it comes to innovation, investment in the American economy, and job creation. In these tough economic times, we as policy-makers should be committed to fostering this critical sector of the economy.

Yet the laws that regulate the industry are outdated at best, and some are affirmatively damaging. This is why Chairman Upton and I, along with members of this Subcommittee, have decided to undertake the difficult task of updating the Communications Act of 1934.

In the eight decades since its passage, Congresses have come and gone. Some have even made substantial, though targeted, changes to the law. But none have undertaken to rethink the act for the environment of convergence and innovation in which we live today.

It's time for our laws to reflect our modern technological landscape, one grounded in the networks and services of our past, and driven by our IP and mobile future.

Just yesterday, the D.C. Circuit issued its decision in the net neutrality case, striking down the rules ordered by the Federal Communications Commission. I for one was pleased to see the court remove the government from the business of making management judgments and give providers the freedom to make decisions that are pro- competitive and pro-consumer.

While this decision benefits consumers and providers alike by keeping the Internet free from government interference, the rationale highlights the ongoing confusion regarding regulation of different services.

This is yet another example of why it's vital that we take a hard look at the laws in this space and reconcile them with the realities of technology. The answer is not to subject new technology to outdated regulations, but rather to craft laws appropriate to innovative services and platforms.

As we embark on this effort, it should come as no surprise that I'm focused on ensuring that we engage in a transparent and collaborative process, not only (ph) with our colleagues here in the Congress, but also with the many stakeholders outside of these halls.

What we want is a dialogue. Last week, the Committee released the first of what will be a series of white papers seeking input from the public. And I hope that interested parties will take the opportunity to make their voices heard to us.

Today's witnesses provide a unique and valuable perspective on the Communications Act.

As Chairman of the agency tasked with carrying out Congress's will and implementing the Act, the four witnesses today have had a front row seat to witness the Act in the real world, to see where it works and where it doesn't. These Chairmen have varied experiences and viewpoints that in many ways represent the evolution of modern communications.

When Chairman Wiley led the agency, telephone service was a government-regulated monopoly. Consumers got their news from broadcast television and print newspapers and the Internet was still years away.

Sixteen years later, when Reed Hundt took the reins, the Internet was coming into full force and mobility was beginning to take off. Chairman Powell's tenure saw the convergence of services towards the bundled offerings we see today, as well as the deployment of broadband to Americans.

And in the four years since Michael Copps served as Acting Chairman, there have been dramatic changes to the way we communicate and the technology that powers our lives. For example, the title of today's hearing contains a hashtag. Twitter, then with no vowels in its name, had yet to be discovered by -- at South by Southwest.

Neither we nor the august panel before us can predict the future and what technological changes it will bring. But by learning the lessons of the past, we can do our best to create a legal and regulatory environment that will foster innovation and competition, encourage consumer choice and optimum services.

So again, I want to thank you for -- to our witnesses for this impressive panel. We look forward to hearing your testimony and we appreciate your public service.

With that, I would yield to the Vice-Chair of the Subcommittee, Mr. Latta, for any opening comments he may have.

LATTA: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you very much to our panel of distinguished witnesses for testifying before us today. I appreciate you all being here.

Since 1966, we have witnessed an unprecedented technological evolution in the communications industry. The rapid emergence of new and innovative technologies has fostered increased investment throughout the industry, and the development of a vibrant, competitive communications marketplace.

As we move into the future, it's important to examine the Communications Act to ensure that our public policy continues to encourage this kind of growth and innovation that is essential to fueling our economy.

Reforms to current law should reflect the technology we enjoy today and be able to adapt to the technology of tomorrow without further government intervention.

Our efforts should be dedicated to ensure that the laws governing the communications marketplace do not stifle current and future investment, innovation, economic growth, and consumer choice in this dynamic and converging digital age of communications.

I look forward to the testimony from our witnesses today. And again, Mr. Chairman, I thank you very much for holding this hearing.

WALDEN: Thank the gentleman for his comments.

Now I turn to the gentlelady from California, Ms. Eshoo, the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee, for her opening comments.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning to you, to all of the members, and the warmest welcome to each of the witnesses that are at the table.

Your combined public service is -- really stands as a hallmark of devoted service to our country, but also to move the country forward in one of its most important economic sectors. So welcome to you. It's wonderful to see all of you at the same time at the table.

With news of the court's net neutrality decision, today's hearing, I think, is a timely opportunity to hear from each one of you who have led the expert agency, the FCC, and combined, it represents over four decades of service. That is nothing short of extraordinary.

ESHOO: And each of you have had a hand in really I think changing our nation's communication and technology landscape. So not only kudos to you, thank you to you, but a recognition of what each one of you accomplished.

When Congress passed the Telecommunications Act of 1996, it was my second term in Congress, my first term on the committee, and there were just 11 references to the Internet -- the word "Internet" -- and only one mention of broadband across a 128-page bill.

Many proponents of updating the act have cited this as evidence that the act is outdated and unable to keep up with changes in technology.

But as Chairman Wheeler affirmed last week, the Communications Act continues to provide the FCC with ample authority to exercise its role in this new environment.

The court's decision yesterday I believe furthers this argument by upholding the FCC's existing authority to oversee broadband services. And I think that's very important for consumers across the country.

I make these points not to discourage the subcommittee's review of the act. I joined with the -- with the chairman to review this. I think that it's a worthy exercise.

But rather, we need to ensure that we know what problems we're trying to fix before undertaking a multi-year examination that include hearings, stakeholder meetings, white papers and the such.

Since the '96 act was enacted, hundreds of new entrants have emerged and more than $1.2 trillion has been invested by U.S. telecommunications companies.

I want this success story to be an unending one. And I think that is the goal of everyone on this wonderful subcommittee.

So, to that end, my goal throughout the subcommittee's review will be to see more competition, greater consumer choice and more innovation.

I am so proud, as the chairman was making his opening remarks, that so much of this has been born in my congressional district.

And so, innovation, innovation, innovation; and these goals were embedded in the '96 act and they remain just as important today.

At the same time, our process of examining the Communications Act should not derail, in my view, a more immediate update of our video laws -- a view shared by a majority of the witnesses at a September subcommittee hearing.

Recurring TV blackouts coupled with the rising cost of broadcast television programming with limited choice has left consumers frustrated and looking to Congress and the FCC for answers. I believe that working together at a bipartisan basis, we can make this happen in 2014.

So, Chairman Walden, thank you for holding today's hearing on the Communications Act. I welcome the review and I look forward to hearing the unique insights from the top experts from our country who have given so much in terms of their leadership in leading the expert agency.

And with that, 34 seconds to yield to Congressman Matsui.

MATSUI: Thank you, Ranking Member.

And I want to welcome all the former chairmen. We welcome you here for your ideas and experience that provide a basis for discussions moving forward.

As technology evolves, I believe it's important that we consider appropriate updates to the Communications Act that -- with goals that promote competition and innovation in the marketplace.

To that point, I am pleased that yesterday the D.C. Circuit affirmed the FCC's authority to oversee broadband services. In my opinion, that was the crux of the debate and the FCC's argument prevailed on the question of authority over broadband.

The FCC will need to exert its authority to ensure now that all Americans have access to a free and open Internet -- a competitive marketplace where checks and balances will fare (ph) well (ph) for all Americans.

I look forward to the hearing today and I yield back the balance of my time.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back the balance of her time.

The chair now recognizes the distinguished member from Michigan, the chairman of the full committee, Mr. Upton for opening comments.

UPTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Last month, you and I announced our plans for a comprehensive update to the Communications Act of 1934.

The changes in technology since the last update in '96 have been dramatic and existing laws have failed to keep pace with the vibrant and dynamic telecommunication industry. Communications and technology sectors have consistently been areas of American leadership, innovative -- innovation and job creation, certainly. But the Communications Act is showing its age and our continued international leadership is, indeed, at stake.

Yesterday's net neutrality decision, while a victory for consumers in the economy, illustrates the uncertainty flowing from the current statutory and scheme and the need for this action.

It's time to revamp these laws to reflect the new competitive landscape in changing consumer expectations.

And as we begin the open process leading to a Comm Act update, we are looking for input -- yes, we are -- from all of the stakeholders in the communications and technology world. Where better to start than with our distinguished panel of former leaders of the FCC?

These leaders served during diverse times in the evolution of the communications sector and they've seen the market operate under the strong hand of the U.S. government and the challenges within divorcing the government from its heavy regulation of the communications sector from times before.

They've seen cable grow from its days as a struggling start-up. They've seen satellite services succeed in bringing competition to the video market and fail to find -- find success as a competitor to mobile phone service.

And they've seen the Internet grow from a DOD project to a tool for research universities and now as the commercial economic force that we know today.

Throughout the many nuanced iterations of the Communications Act, today's witnesses have firsthand seen the act at its finest and also when its inability to keep pace with technological innovation has impacted those vital economic issues.

So, I want to thank the witnesses for taking their time to share their experiences with us. We value, indeed, their expertise and welcome their thoughts on how we can ensure the Communications Act fosters our communications and technology sectors well into this century.

And I yield the balance of my time to Vice Chair...

BLACKBURN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And if I had my iPhone in my hand, I would hit "retweet" for everything that he has just said.

(LAUGHTER)

We do appreciate that you all are here. We do want to take advantage of the perspective that you have had.

Think about what has happened in the past 17 years since '96 and the changes that we have seen, not only in how we communicate but the rapidity of those communications and entertainment and how we access that -- how we take it with us, how we consume it.

So, we know that the pace of change means that we have to be very judicious and careful as we look at a rewrite.

We know that there are issues that are going to come on the plate that we're going to have to discuss also as we look at not only the Telecom rewrite but at the use of the virtual space -- privacy,

data security; the way the virtual marketplace is used and the way our constituents want to have a toolbox to protect, as I call it, their virtual U (ph) online.

So, we appreciate your time -- your willingness to be with us this morning.

And I yield back to the chairman of the committee.

UPTON: Yield -- yield back. Or (ph)...

WALDEN: Did the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Barton, want to use some of that time?

BARTON: (OFF-MIKE) Yes (ph), if it's available.

WALDEN: It is.

BARTON: (OFF-MIKE) Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I've served on this committee since 1986. I've served with three of the four former chairmen -- Mr. Wylie preceded me.

We've had some agreements, we've had some disagreements. So, it's good to have all four of you gentlemen here today.

When I was chairman of the full committee, back in 1996, my committee introduced a bill we called the COPE Bill -- the -- the Communication Opportunity Promotion Enhancement Act of 2006.

It dealt with national franchising, net neutrality, public educational and governmental access, e-911 and what we now call VOIP. It passed this committee 42 to 12 and passed the House 321 to 101 but it didn't come up for a vote in the Senate.

I voted for the Telecommunications Act of '96 and the Cable Act of '92 and I hope this year to get to vote for another major bill that comes from the leadership of Mr. Upton, Mr. Walden, Mr. Waxman and Miss Eshoo.

This is a good thing to be doing and we're going to get some good information from you gentlemen and we appreciate you being here.

WALDEN: The gentleman's time's expired. I appreciate his comments. We'll now go to the former chairman of the committee, Mr. Waxman, for opening comments.

WAXMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your convening this morning's hearing and launching the subcommittee's examination of potential updates to the Communications Act.

And I want to thank our distinguished panel for being here to help us think through these ideas. And I think I've been in Congress during the time that all of you have been the heads of the FCC.

Technology has changed at a blistering pace since the enactment of the 1996 Telecommunications Act 18 years ago. The communications and technology industries are a thriving sector of our economy.

As broadband plays an increasingly central role in the daily life of our nation, having a strong Federal Communications Commission to oversee its successful growth is more critical than ever.

Yesterday, the D.C. Court affirmed what never should have been in question: the FCC is the expert agency, charged by Congress to oversee broadband networks. In doing so, the court reaffirmed that the FCC has broad, flexible authority to regulate in the broadband and digital age. However, while

the court recognized the FCC's jurisdiction, it also overturned the specific rules the commission had adopted in the open Internet order.

I believe the FCC now has an opportunity, as well as a duty, to exercise the authority the court recognized yesterday, and reinstate the no-blocking and non-discrimination rules.

An open Internet is critical to the continuing growth of this economic sector. The Internet is a vibrant platform for commerce, innovation, and free speech. Having enforceable, open Internet rules of the road means that consumers are in control of their experience online.

I am pleased that Chairman Walden has stated his intention to expeditiously adopt a new set of rules following the court's guidance. And I look forward to working with the chairman and my colleagues in Congress to make sure these pro-consumer, pro-competition policies will continue to guide the expansion of broadband services.

This subcommittee is now embarking on a journey to update the Communications Act. And regardless of the advancements in network architecture or transmission protocol, the principles of competition and consumer protection remain as sound today as they were in 1934.

I know Chairman Walden recognizes the importance of these values and the action of the FCC that it (ph) plans to take later this month to initiate technology transitions reflects that.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses about what Congress can do to help the FCC meet the challenges of the broadband and digital age.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to yield the balance of my time to Mr. Doyle.

DOYLE: Thank you, Mr. Waxman.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing. And thank you to this distinguished panel. It's good to see all of you here in front of the committee.

I just want to briefly concur with Mr. Waxman in light of yesterday's decision by the D.C. Circuit, that I want to encourage Chairman Walden to work quickly to ensure that the Internet remains an open platform for innovation, competition and economic growth, which the FCC now clearly has the authority to do.

I look forward to working with the commission and the stakeholders to put in place a robust framework that sustains an open Internet.

Mr. Waxman, I thank you for your courtesy, and I would yield back to you if someone else needs more time.

WAXMAN: Would (ph) -- would (ph) -- (inaudible) a minute.

If not, I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back the balance of his time.

We'll proceed now to our distinguished panel of witnesses, and begin with Chairman Richard Wiley, who was nominated by President Nixon, and served as chairman of the Federal Communications Commission from 1970 to 1977.

As chairman for most of the '70s, Chairman Wiley's tenure at the commission predates many of the major changes in the communications sector.

Chairman, we're glad to have you here today. Pull that microphone up close, and (inaudible) to go. Thank you for being here.

You need to push the button on the microphone there one time.

WILEY: Thank you very much, Chairman Walden, Ranking Member Eshoo, and other subcommittee members. Thank you for the invitation to testify today.

While I know it's not going to be self-evident, due to my youthful appearance, I've been involved for nearly 45 years in federal telecommunications policy. And from my own standpoint, what has occurred during that period is simply amazing. When I was at the FCC in the 1970s, the average American enjoyed just three broadcast television stations, and one local and long- distance telephone provider. And the Department of Defense had just begun to explore a revolutionary computer project known as ARPANET.

But today, our citizens have access to hundreds of video channels delivered by countless providers and transmission technologies, dozens of voice and tech services, numerous wire line and wireless companies. And, of course, ARPANET have morphed into the Internet, which has become a universal medium of communications.

Interestingly, the bulk of this stunning technological metamorphosis has emerged since the 1996 Telecommunications Act was passed. That legislation significantly altered the rules governing virtually every aspect of communications. And the act's purpose was a simple in theory as it was complex in implementation. That is, to provide for a pro-competitive, deregulatory national policy framework designed to accelerate the deployment of advanced services and open all telecom markets to competition.

To this end, the statute sought to eliminate cross-platform barriers and to encourage competition among service suppliers previously treated as monopolies or oligopolies.

Now, to the credit of the drafters, the 1996 Act helped to bring about the vibrant competition that consumers enjoy today in a variety of communication sectors, be it voice, data, or video. Whether delivered by twisted pair, co-axial cable, optical fiber, or the electromagnetic spectrum, myriad providers today are offering their customers suites of advanced services in a marketplace that really could not have been imagined 18 years ago.

In my view, where (ph) the statute, and, indeed, FCC implementation has succeeded is when a lighter regulatory touch has been applied to markets, such as mobile and information services. The result has been that these sectors have thrived. For example, in the robustly competitive wireless marketplace, there are now more wireless subscriber connections than the population of the United States. Just think of that.

And mobile broadband has spawned an entirely new industry, mobile aps -- one that is estimated to employ more than 500,000 developers and related jobs, and contributes billions to the economy.

A similar success story is unfolding the delivery of digital content, where seemingly unlimited video-streaming web sites have developed to compete against traditional MVPDs, offering an eagerly waiting public new ways to consume video.

This marketplace, I would suggest, is emerging because of innovation and competition, and not because of government regulation.

Conversely, where the government has been less effective in maintaining -- is in maintaining highly restrictive regulations on traditional industries, like, for example, wireline telephony and broadcasting. The end result has been to disadvantage these sectors, even though they may be providing services that are often equivalent to those offered by their less regulated competitors.

In the developing I.P.-centric world, all types of providers should be able to market all kinds of services, employing the same computer-oriented language that defines digital communications.

And yet, the 1996 act continues to regulate commutations markets differently based on the conduit used to reach the customer, as well as the geographic location where traffic originates and terminates.

Now, the underlying problem is not a failure of congressional or FCC vision. Instead, the reality is that a government has great difficulty in writing laws or promulgating regulations that can keep pace with advancing technology. And especially so in a dynamic and ever-changing industry like communications.

Thus, I would suggest that the objective of a statutory rewrite should not be to legislate premised on the current state of the marketplace, or even on predictions of what it may look like in the future. Instead, Congress may want to consider a flexible and technologically neutral framework that will be capable of adapting to technical invention and innovation, whatever that may prove to be.

In this regard, let me close by setting forth a few principles that might guide the drafting of a new statute.

First, the industry silos embedded in (ph) the 1996 act should be abolished. And instead, functionally equivalent services should be treated in the same manner regardless of who provides them, or how they are delivered to consumers.

Second, the traditional dichotomy between interstate and intrastate services should be eliminated, because regulatory classifications based on geographical end points no longer make sense in an I.P. environment.

Third, legislation should be focused on maintaining consumer protection and public safety regulations. Conversely, economic regulations should be considered in the case of non-competitive markets or in the event of demonstrated market failure.

And fourth, new regulations should be instituted with a lighter touch, as I said, accompanied by sunset provisions so that the rationale for continued government intervention can be reviewed on a regular basis.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to testify.

WALDEN: Chairman Wiley, thank you very much for your learned comments, we appreciate your counsel. We'll go now to Chairman Reed Hundt, who was nominated by President Clinton and served as chairman of the FCC from 1993 to 1997. Chairman Hunt's tenure at the commission saw the passage of the ominous budget reconciliation of '93, which granted the commission the authority to auction spectrum licenses, and the Telecommunications Act of '96, so Chairman Hundt, thanks for joining us today, we're looking forward to your comments as well. HUNDT: Thank you Chairman Walden, thank you for inviting me. A good, good morning to Ranking Member Eshoo and to all the other members of this distinguished committee. I'm very proud that many of you have become lifelong friends and it's a pleasure to be here with you.

I also want to thank the D.C. Circuit for giving me a flashback to law school so that I was late last night scrambling to read the key case right before this class.

I have a feeling I'm not the only person here who -- who did that but I also want to note I didn't have any staff for classmates, so I apologize if I haven't read it correctly, but I thought that I would throw away my remarks and for whatever it's worth, offer you my reading of -- of the case.

In my view the D.C. Circuit has written first a very, very well- reasoned and very important case. There's no question that this reflects that circuit's experience in these topic areas and that they brought that experience to bear in a bipartisan way to express a view about how the United States ought to grant the authority to create the legal culture that governs broadband.

What have they said, I believe the court has vindicated the wisdom of Congress in the 1996 act. Specifically, the court has said that when Congress, in that act, in Section 706, conveyed to its expert agency, the, quote, "authority to enact measures encouraging the deployment of broadband infrastructure" unquote.

In doing that, according to the D.C. Circuit, Congress said to the FCC, "You will be our instrument for creating a flexible and a -- a supple legal culture that will change over time as the market changes and as technology changes.

But they can always be used to protect competition, to protect consumers, and fundamentally, to make sure that absolutely everybody in America is participating in the common medium of the internet, and that absolutely everybody in America is able to use it to publish their views and review all the views of everyone else."

Not all those words are in this decision, but almost all those words are actually in this decision. Section 1706 of course is just one part of the 1996 act but I know I don't have to remind many of the members here -- maybe I don't have to remind any of the members here -- that was passed by a very large bipartisan vote in the Senate and in the House.

We all were -- those of us who were in public service then -- remember being in the Library of Congress when President Clinton, the Democratic President passed this law that was passed by a Senate controlled by the Republicans and a House controlled by the Republicans. And all came together and said, "We have a common vision".

And that is that there will be networks we did not know, technically speaking, what they would all look like, but there would be networks that would connect all of us to each other and to all of the resources of information that in fact would be utilized for entrepreneurship, for innovation, and for learning.

And I have to say, this is what's happened. Now, no one here thinks the government built these networks. No one thinks the FCC built these networks. But everyone should know that the legal culture that was created by Congress and its expert agency, through the terms of Republican and Democratic chairs, the legal culture is the legal culture that is regarded all around the world as the absolute best legal culture for governing the internet.

Any one of us knows 12 things that we think should be done differently, or maybe two dozen, but we ought to recognize just for a little while, that we as a country should pat our government on the back and say for the last 20 years, the legal culture that's been created that has governed the internet has really created the best possible environment for innovation, for entrepreneurship, for consumers.

That's what's actually happened, and this court has said, "And that law still exists". This court has said, "Already, Congress has enacted the law that gives the FCC the authority to protect competition and consumers".

And that authority, according to this court, lies in Section 1706, and the court also said that Congress can -- that the FCC can if it choose classify broadband as a common carrier. It could use either of these methods, it can use one of these methods, but it can accomplish the goals that are stated in the act and that have repeatedly been restated by this Congress.

The only thing the court said is, "If you're going to pass rules that look like common carrier rules and you're going to classify broadband as an information service, then you're going to be creating a contradiction that we won't permit".

You can't call it an information service and then pass rules that look like common carrier rules because if it quacks like a duck it's a duck.

So, that's why it was sent back. I read a lot of articles that said that this was a victory for Verizon. This is a victory for Congress. If it was a victory for Verizon, it was a Pyrrhic victory. It was the most perfect example of a Pyrrhic victory since Pyrrhus.

(LAUGHTER)

So I just wanna compliment this Congress on passing a supple law that has worked well, and that this court has just said still will permit you to achieve your goals through the expert agency.

Thank you.

WALDEN: Thank you Chairman Hundt. We appreciate your comments and your staying up all night to cram for our hearing.

(LAUGHTER)

Now turn to Chairman Michael Powell, who was nominated by George W. Bush and served as Chairman of the FCC from 2001 to 2005. During Mr. Powell's chairmanship, they saw a significant increase in the deployment of broadband to American homes as well as convergence of services toward the development of broadband -- toward the bundles of services that are common today, among many other things.

Chairman Powell, thank you for joining us today and please go ahead.

POWELL: Thank you Mr. Chairman, and as a former chairman, I'm happy to be sitting around with a bunch of these other chairmen offering as best we can our historic perspectives on how to prudently go about rewriting the act, should that be your intention.

And I'm pleased to be with Ranking Member Eshoo again and all the distinguished members of the committee.

I think it goes without saying, and all of us will say it in different ways, that the world has changed quite radically from 20 years ago in terms of markets and services, but don't ask us, ask your kids. Ask them to name three broadcast networks, if you will, ask them to do without the internet for a week, and for God's sakes, ask them to put their phone down at dinner and see what reaction you get. I think you will be convinced.

That transformation has taken place largely because of an enormous revolution in network architecture, in the form of the internet, which has unleashed a form of inter modal competition that heretofore wasn't really possible.

And it's really introduced an exciting world, and we should remember, gave birth to a host of companies and opportunities that never were envisioned before. The companies that are here, Google, Facebook, Amazon, Ebay, Twitter, Instagram -- you name it -- all able to be born and flourished because of this transformation.

I would say that any consideration of the act should start with not only cataloguing its ills, but cataloguing its successes, much as Reed was alluding to.

I think it's really important to note that over this period, we have seen the most stunning amount of investment in infrastructure and architecture, that we have ever seen.

We have reached 90 percent of Americans faster than any other technology in world history. Innovation and growth have continued at exponential rates, with broadband increasing over 19 times just in the last decade, doubling basically, increasing about 58 percent annually.

That's a stunning achievement and something we should make sure we keep going.

I -- so I think, you know, being guided by the old maxim of "Do no harm" is an important cautionary tale. As I thought about how you might think about architecting a new regime, I'm guided by the idea of the internet itself, which is the fundamental principle of simplicity as a design principle.

It has been a very, very powerful one in the internet and I think it -- it offers some guidance in this space as well. So I'd like to, toward that end, offer -- I'm gonna see Mr. Wiley's four principles and do him three better and offer you seven, as briefly as I can.

The first is, we've heard a lot about innovation. I do think the principal goal of the government should be to nurture that innovation. This is the kind of fomenting change we have never been able to harness as fully as we are today. Innovation has allowed us to bring completely new products and services and network changes to the market.

It's created a form of creative destruction that keeps the market energetic and keeps monopoly in check. And I think it's created new kinds of transparency for the American consumer through crowd sourcing and visibility. And we should study the conditions that go in to innovation and make sure we harness them. I think three are critical.

Innovations really do require freer markets. And a market that moves at Moore's law speed, the pace of adaptation transformation and change are incredibly fast. And there needs to be a constant and intense dialogue between producers and consumers. We should be careful to protect that.

Innovation requires risk taking. As we know, most new ventures fail. There has to be room in government policy for failure. There has to be room in government policy for encouraging taking those risks. And innovation requires investing more than a trillion as Congressman Eshoo was talking about earlier since 1996, is stunning. But it requires a stable regulatory environment to provide that uncertainty because if investment slows innovation will slow with it.

The second rule of simplicity, I think, is once you've created a lighter regulatory environment, by trying to pursue the maxim of less is more, organize it better.

We certainly have heard about the challenges of silos and buckets. Clearly that had its place in another time when these technologies, applications and typed of companies were deeply intertwined, were not able to provide alternative services and other spaces. That day has moved on and we certainly crave a more unified, integrated kind of legal regime that doesn't make those sorts of distinctions.

In fact, as I heard mentioned today I think yesterday's court decision and the multiyear debate on net neutrality that illustrates the almost tortuous challenges sometimes of addressing a modern circumstance in using provisions of last century's rules. I think they're certainly widespread agreement on core principles around an open internet.

Yet the somewhat kludgy path we've had to follow in an effort to implement them has made the matter, I believe, infinitely more complex and controversial than necessary and the threat of radically upending the long-standing light regulatory foundation of broadband on which massive investment and growth have been built with good effect to implement one set of rules seems distressing. Any shift of that magnitude I do think would require Congress' -- the people's representatives to weigh in on.

A third principle give regulators the ability and obligation to address changing markets. As we've said the markets move drastically and the FCC often has limited ability to make those migrations. Yes, in places they have. There are other instances in which they've not been able to even when they concede that the fundamental circumstances are changed.

Fourth, the law should ensure competitive parity and technical neutrality. There is a hodgepodge of applications of statutes I could point out in which certain rules apply to one sector of a service and not to other sectors. This has really just been an outgrowth of the passage of years and the changing nature of companies. But there are many rules that apply to cable for example that don't apply to dbs for no discernible reason.

One very valuable thing the committee can do is prune through the statute to harmonize those differentiated treatments as best as possible.

Fifth, the FCC should police markets not create them. I think this is generally well understood but there is a role for a cop on the beat. What I don't think there should be is a master chef who believes it's the commission's objective to make markets or create the conditions and circumstances for them.

And finally, the last two, timeliness. If you're working in Moore's law you need timely and prompt decisions from the government.

Lastly and most importantly, the law still needs to preserve important societal values, and protect consumers from harm. And the FCC and the government will always have a sacred responsibility in that regard. Thank you for your time.

WALDEN: Chairman, thank you. Speaking of cops on the beat, we'll now go to Michael Copps, served as acting chairman of the federal communications commission from January to June 2009, and served as commissioner from 2001 to 2011.

Prior to joining the commission, Commissioner Copps worked right here on Capitol Hill, and the U.S. Department of Commerce. Commissioner Copps, Chairman Copps, thank you for being with us. And we look forward to your comments to round out our panel.

COPPS: Thank you Chairman Walden, Chairman Upton, Miss Eshoo and Mr. Waxman, Vice Chairman, Former Chairman, all the members of the committee, I'm delighted to be here.

We're here today to review whether the Communications Act needs to be updated or otherwise reformed. I've heard some say that simply because the act is old it must be obsolete. That no matter how well it has served us an act written 18 years ago cannot have relevance in today's altered world.

As someone only a little younger than the original act of 1934, I would raise a caution flag or two. The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were written long ago, too, yet we still find them critically relevant in our lives. While it is praiseworthy to ponder changes to the law, I would suggest firstly that the framework of the current statute remains in many ways strong.

And secondly, that the current act's provisions can still do much to improve our communications landscape. To enlarge economic and social opportunity for all of us, and to nourish the kind of civic dialogue upon which successful self-government inevitably rests.

In an ideal world most of us would welcome an up-to-the minute rewrite of the law to reflect how we believe it could be improved.

The last such revision in 1996 was born of a unique political moment that aligned a sufficient and sundry number of stake holders across sectors and constituencies who were able to negotiate a compromise statute that while far from perfect at least envisioned delivering to every American no matter who they are, where they live, or their particular circumstances of their individual lives, the most advanced communications technologies and services feasible at reasonable and comparable prices, replete with consumer protections, rights of privacy, assurances of public safety and utilizing competition to help achieve these goals.

Putting the statute to work to deliver these benefits was my mission at the FCC, working with some of the most amazing public servants anywhere.

Nowadays, I carry out my public interest mission in the nonprofit sector at Common Cause. In the immediate wake of the new law's passage, the commission indeed made important strides to carry out these congressional mandates.

But alas things changed.

Some of the very interests who helped negotiate the new Communications Act spent more time undermining the statute than implementing it. Such efforts continue to this day as we saw in yesterday's court decision that left unaddressed would seriously jeopardize the future of the open internet.

I appeared in front of this panel many times over the years to voice my dissent on commission decisions involving the reclassification of communications services, industry consolidation across both our telecom and media sectors, the elimination of policies that had long safeguarded the public interest, and the heavy toll thereby exacted on consumer choices, consumer prices and slowing the deployment of competitive low-cost, high-speed broadband, this century's most important infrastructure.

We can, I know, debate for hours but a record of these hearings needs to show that many people do not share the easy optimism that others express about the state of America's communications readiness. As you consider legislation in the coming months, some will tell you that America is a veritable broadband wonderland, a triumph of free market entrepreneurship that puts us at the front of high tech nations. But there are stubborn facts we must never avoid. The United States originator of so much of the technology behind the internet has fallen from leader to lagger in broadband penetration.

According to OCED, our country is 16th in wired broadband connections per 100 residents. Worse, comparative research shows Americans are paying more an getting less than wired broadband consumers in competitor countries. The Department of Justice has noted the local wireless marketplace offers consumers little in the way of choice, even as mobile data plans are saddled with data caps that harm consumption and innovation alike and once again for the third time the FCC found itself unable to certify that we enjoy a competitive wireless marketplace.

Surely the time is now for pro-active and pro-consumer measures to make quality broadband universally affordable once and for all.

While we are not gathered here this morning to rehash those decisions, I do think it is important to understand that many of the faults attributed to the current statute are more the result of powerful industry efforts to undermine it and of commission decisions that too often aid and abet the effort.

So while we open discussions on revising communications law, let us recognize that our present statute has been interpreted and implemented in ways not originally intended, and that many of us constituent parts are still relevant, workable and consumer friendly. There is a statute to enforce and putting that job on hold while we consider changing it is not a good option.

Additionally, I think most of us here this morning understand that finding a new correlation of interests that can come together to forge the Communications Act of 2015 or 2020 will be even more challenging than the jockeying that gave birth to the current law.

As the world races ahead, we have a duty to make the best possible use of the laws we have in order to achieve the ongoing goals that Congress laid out. These remain powerful interests, a statute that invokes the public interest over 100 times, that highlights the universality of service, competition and consumer protection and that underlines the necessity for media and informs communities and engages citizens cannot be all bad.

Would I have some preferences for a reworked statute?

Of course, although a good part of it would be making sure the commission and the industry follow through on what is already on the books to foster competition and consumer protection, to deliver on public safety, to preserve privacy in this age of massive intrusion, to avoid never-ending industry consolidation, to put the brakes on gatekeeping in our media, both traditional and new, and to provide the FCC with the resources it needs to discharge its responsibilities. My greatest disappointment at the commission is that we didn't do enough to encourage media that truly reflects the diversity of our people.

Can you believe that today there is no African-American owned full power commercial television station anywhere in the land?

America is diversity. And if our media fails to represent diversity, diversity of providers and content and viewpoint and ownership, it fails us.

The sad plight of communications across our native lands needs to be addressed with renewed urgency and additional resources.

Imagine that there are still areas where the majority of First Americans cannot access even plain old telephone service, let alone the kind of high-speed broadband that is the most powerful tool they could have to create opportunity where there is so little opportunity now.

I would hope we could find ways to stimulate basic communications research by private-public partnerships. I'm not talking about the next glitzy app but the basic fundamental research that will determine who wins and loses in the global sweepstakes.

I'm for making the commission more efficient, like doing away with the closed meeting rule that prevents more than two commissioners from even talking to one another.

And I hope that reform needs to go forward, whether or not it is accompanied by more far-reaching revisions.

And I believe that when three commissioners have something they want to do at the FCC, that item should go on the agenda.

My list could go on and I welcome the opportunity to discuss such things today. But I always come back to democracy because that's what concerns me most.

Our country is in trouble, reminiscent in many ways of the severity of the economic, global and social crises it faced in the 1930s, and there are no guaranteed happy outcomes.

I just do not see how citizens can be expected to navigate through all these issues and come out with smart decisions for our nation's future when the telecommunications tools we need are not available to all and in the media environment where community outlets have been short-circuited, investigative journalism hangs by a thread and wherein we expect some invisible hand to produce those things that the market itself no longer produces and which, in fact, the market alone has never produced.

Communications are vital to our economy, but they are the lifeblood, the lifeblood of our democracy. They must be available to all, open to all, never the exclusive province of the affluent or the few, always alive to the common good. We shouldn't see our communications world as part telecom, part media or part traditional media, part new media. We have one communications ecosystem and our job is to make it work for everyone.

And I know of no greater challenge that confronts the Congress, the commission or the country.

Thank you for holding this hearing today and for inviting me to be a part of it. And I look forward to our discussion.

WALDEN: Chairman Copps, thank you for your thoughtful presentation. We appreciate it. And as you know, our subcommittee has moved forward on some of these initiatives and we welcome encouragement over on the other side of the building on the Sunshine Act and a few other things.

So would like to open up the questioning process now with a question of Chairman Powell.

Since you presided over the federal communications proceedings that classified cable and telco delivered broadband services as information services, do you think we would have seen the same

level of broadband investment during the past decade had the FCC classified these services as common carrier communications services?

POWELL: I think in short my judgment is no. I think the Internet, if, at the time that that classification decision was made, was more unknown than known. I think it was a period of rampant experimentation.

I think the capital required to drive and produce the broadband networks that were not in place, needed conditions that allowed them the flexibility to make those choices without the risk that they would be put back into kind of the monopoly era regulatory models.

So I think it was an important component to spurring that investment.

WALDEN: Chairman Wiley, does the Federal Communications Commission need to continue to have broad discretion over mergers and acquisitions, or should the Department of Justice anti-trust review be enough?

WILEY: I think there has been duplication from time to time although I would point out that the Justice Department is looking at anti-trust aspects and the FCC has got a broader public interest standpoint.

I think the two agencies need to work together and I think they have worked together through the years.

So I think the process is appropriately developing. But I do worry sometimes that we see great delays in the handling of these consolidations and mergers, which I think is contrary to the best interest of the coverage involved and also contrary, I think, to the public interest and consumers. WALDEN: And to both Chairman Powell and Chairman Wiley, can the FCC ever really future-proof regulations, given how rapidly technology is changing, and are there elements that the Communications Act holding the commission back from flexibly addressing new technologies?

POWELL: No, I don't think any agency can future-proof the regulatory involvement no more than Congress could write a statute that wouldn't, over time, fray in its relevancy in a market that's driven by technological change.

I do believe, though, that there are tools to give greater flexibility and not more prescriptive constraints that we have seen in some regulatory vehicles. So, no, they can't future predict.

And then I thought -- I think the other guidance is, I think asking the commission to engage in anything that requires predictive judgment about future outcomes should be avoided where possible.

WILEY: Yes. And that's why I suggested in my prepared testimony that we ought to have an opportunity to have a light touch here and have the government have a -- in your statute have a very flexible, technology neutral type of approach to this, because it's very hard to predict.

And the 1996 drafters did not really foresee the development of the Internet to become a universal medium and I don't think they predicted broadband to be what it is today. So I think you have to step back a little bit and I think allow the technology to develop and to allow innovation and invention to occur without stifling it.

WALDEN: OK. I'm going to start with Chairman Powell and then each of you can take this one in the minute and a half I have left.

Should the Internet be regulated as a common carrier under Title II?

POWELL: Well, for me that's easy. No.

I think one of the things I'd like to say about that, though, is that people should fully understand what that means.

Even if that were able to give you a better basis for recovering these two components of the rules, it would be the instant application of thousands of pages of decades-old regulations instantly to the Internet, where they heretofore have not been, both through -- on a bipartisan basis, we've had a much more light (ph) regulatory environments.

To shatter the investment-backed expectations that would result, I think, would be exceedingly damaging and more than most people realize.

WALDEN: Chairman Hundt, do you care to comment on that?

HUNDT: Just two points: the 1996 act was shorter than the rules for Little League Baseball, meaning Congress does not necessarily have to write thousands of pages and, in its wisdom, it did not do so in 1996. And that act now has given the FCC the ability to achieve the fundamental goals.

As I mentioned earlier, it can choose to use the specific methods that are dictated by the common carrier treatment. But it absolutely does not have to use very many of these methods to accomplish its goals.

In fact, the court, on page 61, outlined its view of what the FCC should do and said you could treat it as common carrier and have about 30 words that establish the principles. I'm not saying they should do that. I'm saying they can do that.

WALDEN: Do you think they should?

HUNDT: I think what they should do -- and I hesitate to say to the current chairman what he ought to do, but since you asked -- I think they ought to take a fresh look at all the facts in law as exists right now. And they also ought to be down here, listening to you all in having a robust discussion. But the key point is, they have authority.

WALDEN: Got it.

Real quickly, the two remaining, because I've gone over my time. Wiley (INAUDIBLE) --

(CROSSTALK)

WILEY: I think -- OK.

WALDEN: No, go ahead.

WILEY: All right.

I think it would be a big mistake to turn away from -- in the information service pathway that we've started and go back to common carrier regulations, however that might be defined.

I think we want to provide an environment where there is, I think, opportunities for investment and encouraging innovation, allowing businessmen to try to experiment and try to find ways to serve the customer.

And I think to go back to a 1934 style common carrier regulation, which was really based on regulating the railroads, I think, doesn't make any sense.

WALDEN: All right.

Mr. Copps, real quick?

COPPS: My answer is yes, I do. The course says we have the authority to do that. Whatever we do, we need to do it quickly, promptly and provide some certainty in the marketplace. I have always stressed the importance of that reclassification. People talk about Section 706. I've always said that there is authority there to do a lot of things.

But what -- we don't need now to get into months of third ways and fourth ways and fifth ways to thread this needle. We need some clarity. Business needs clarity. Consumers need clarity and the commission needs clarity, too.

And we have to make sure whatever we do that things like interconnection and those things, consumer protections are provided.

WALDEN: Appreciate that. I thank the indulgence of the committee and turn now to the ranking member, Ms. Eshoo for five minutes.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And to each one of our distinguished witnesses, what a rich, rich hearing with your testimony. Thank you very, very much.

To Chairman Hundt, thank you for your eloquent summation without any staff or other counsel to assist you late last night.

In your testimony you discussed the importance of the decision that this country made to allow Internet service providers a full use of the existing telephone network without paying the owners anything. It's a very, very -- I mean, one of these essential platforms in the success of the Internet.

So, essentially, we said the incumbents could not be gatekeepers that charge a toll for getting online.

In your view, does yesterday's Circuit decision reverse that longstanding policy?

HUNDT: No, it doesn't. And I think, Congresswoman, that you put your finger on the central issue.

If I may say, yes, Internet service providers are gatekeepers and they also are two-sided networks or two-sided gatekeepers.

Like any gatekeepers, there is somebody on one side and somebody on the other side.

And so the situation then is very similar to the credit card industry. So we all own credit cards and then there's the credit card company and then on the other side of that there is the restaurant.

And it's very useful for restaurants that we all have credit cards and it's useful for us that all the restaurants will take them, but it's not so useful if the gatekeeper says, now some of these restaurants, we're not going to allow them to participate in the system.

Translating that to the present, if the Internet service provider were to say, you know, not all the people that are putting the content on their -- on their computers, we don't want all of them to be able to have access to all of the users; that's a problem if the gatekeeper behaves that way.

ESHOO: Thank you. Very --

HUNDT: That's the central issue.

ESHOO: Yes. Thank you very much.

To Chairman Powell, it's wonderful to see you again. As you know, under current law, cable subscribers are required to buy the so- called broadcast basic tier as a condition of getting access to any other cable programming.

As re: transmission consent fees continue to rise and are inevitably being passed on to consumers in the form of below-the-line fees, I mean, I don't think it's a sustainable business model, most frankly. I just don't think that it can continue to work this way.

Do you think that the so-called must buy requirement makes any sense? Shouldn't consumers have the ability to lower their bills by electing to receive broadcast channels over the air?

POWELL: I don't. I think -- I think it's -- it should be an extraordinary circumstance in which the government tells the consumer you have to buy a television package as a prerequisite of buying more of what you want, which is essentially what the rule does.

The other grounds on which I think it's fatally flawed is only cable subscribers have that obligation. Dish and direct satellite subscribers do not have that obligation. And they're the second and third largest MVPDs in the United States.

Yet a consumer who subscribes to DirecTV does not have to, under the must-buy rule, purchase those programming, but if they switch to Comcast or TimeWarner Cable, they do. That's the parity point that I was making and I think is a perfect place for harmonization.

ESHOO: Thank you very much.

Chairman Copps, thank you for being here today, the man with real wisdom, the man that we always count on to put -- place democracy front and center of everything.

You know so well that, since Citizens United, the last two election cycles that have set records for money spent, including hundreds of millions of dollars from undisclosed sources, the bulk of this so-called dark money spending by outside groups that hide their donors go toward negative TV ads. We all know that.

Would you recommend changes to the Communications Act to ensure that voters are informed about who exactly is behind these anonymous TV ads?

And is there anything in your view that the FCC can do on its own without congressional intervention? COPPS: I would recommend them enforcing the statute that we already have. And if you take a close look at Section 317, which has to do with sponsorship identification and which goes back even before the Telecommunications Act of 1934 was written, goes back to 1927, ensuring that listeners and viewers, more recently, know by whom they are trying to be persuaded, whether it's a commercial product or a political product.

Those rules were last revisited in a meaningful way by the FCC in the 1960s, which repeated that people have a right to know by whom they are being persuaded.

Since then we have all these new avenues of dark money and super PACs and all of the rest. But we also have the authority, recently reemphasized by the Government Accountability Office, the recommendation that the commission update those rules and get on with the job.

So we can have this kind of information available to consumers so that when you see that negative ad and it says brought to you by Citizens for Purple Majesties and Amber Waves of Grain and it's really a chemical company dumping sludge into the Chesapeake Bay, potential voters, citizens have a right to know that and will know that.

That's basic information that you need to have, if you're going to have a viable civic dialogue. So this is something that the FCC can do. It doesn't await a president making a proposal to do this. It doesn't involve Congress having to pass a law.

It involves the Federal Communications Commission doing its job. And it could do this within 90 to 120 days and update the rules to take mind of the new dark money avenues that I was talking about earlier.

So this would be a real way to shine a little bit of sunlight on the dark world of TV political advertising.

ESHOO: Thank you very much.

And Mr. Wiley, thank you for your wonderful, distinguished public service. I'll submit my questions to you in writing.

WILEY: All right. Thank you.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: Thank you. We'll now turn to the vice chair of the full committee, the gentlelady from Tennessee, Ms. Blackburn for five minutes.

BLACKBURN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you all for the time this morning.

I want to pick up where the subcommittee chairman left off, talking about the responsibility of the FCC and what it would look like going forward.

I think that it's fair to say -- and Mr. Powell, I will address this to you because I have heard you say, you know, AOL was on top at one point when you were -- on top of the game and where are they now, I think, was the comment.

But anyway, looking at where the FCC would be and as we look at the Telecom Act, should we begin to think in terms of the FCC being more as enforcement rather than regulatory in its scope or in its -- really in its scope?

Mr. Powell and then Mr. Wiley, I would like to hear from you.

POWELL: I think some aspects of that deserves a fresh examination. You know, the FCC, which I am a huge supporter of, served there with great people and I think it does an enormously great public service in that we functions that are critical to in respect to management and many other things.

But it is one of the last of the New Deal era agencies that actually has affirmative economic regulatory power; that is, the ability to set the prices, terms and conditions of market activity as opposed to having a more significant enforcement, policing or consumer protection role.

Not to say that some of that may or may not still be warranted, but I do think that that is a kind of holdover from judgments of different administrative eras. And I would recommend if you're going to look at -- you should look at the--

BLACKBURN: Look at the balance?

POWELL: ... the dichotomy and the balance of that role. I do think that leaders -- and many of them sitting at this table -- have -- have migrated more toward that more defensible rule, but many of those provisions still remain, and I think they're worthy of second consideration.

BLACKBURN: OK.

Mr. Wiley?

WILEY: Yes, I would agree with -- largely with what Chairman Powell has suggested. I think the commission does have strong enforcement efforts today. And some would say, almost too strong in some instances. But I think -- I think, frankly, that a lighter touch is -- is the way to go in this area.

BLACKBURN: OK. Let me ask you this. Privacy data security -- it's front-page news right now. It's going to be. Do you think that now is the time for the FCC to focus on its core competencies? Or should it move over and look at privacy data security, or leave that to the FCC? Mr. Wiley?

Mr. Wiley?

WILEY: I -- I didn't hear that. I -- I didn't hear it. I'm sorry.

BLACKBURN: Oh. Privacy data security -- leave it to the FCC and the FCC focus on its core mission? Or what is your thought on that?

WILEY: I think so.

BLACKBURN: You think so?

WILEY: I would agree with that.

BLACKBURN: OK.

Mr. Powell, coming back to you, 706 -- we're hearing a lot about that today. And you may have others who think that, you know, the FCC -- that this is an invitation -- 706 is an invitation to come in and regulate Internet services. So, as you look at 706, do you agree that the provision was intended to give the FCC the ability to forebear from regulations that would stifle broadband investment and innovation?

POWELL: I -- I agree that the decision certainly gives them the power to forebear. And for many years, many people interpreted 706 as deregulatory. It speaks of removing barriers and removing obstacles, less about introducing them.

I certainly was serving at a time where the commissions had held that that was not a separate basis of authority. And in fairness to the fact, every commission had so held until recently. So, that was the position of the law when I -- when I was there, at least.

I will say, though, that I think if the commission is going to have a role in broadband, I -- I highly would prefer that be under the construct of the light regulatory information services definitions that reside around 706, than to make a radical transformation to Title 2 as a regulatory framework for those questions.

BLACKBURN: OK.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, I will yield back the balance of my time.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back. And the chair now recognizes the gentleman from California, the ranking member of the -- of the committee on the Democrats' side, Mr. Waxman.

WAXMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

My colleague, Ms. Blackburn, suggested the FCC needs to act more like the Federal Trade Commission. The FTC doesn't -- does important consumer protection work. But I believe we need an agency like the FCC, that can write forward-looking rules of the road for industry and consumers.

Chairman Hundt and Copps, do you agree with that?

HUNDT: Absolutely, Mr. Waxman. Forward-looking is -- here's the best example of useful forward-looking law. It's in the incentive auction legislation that you passed, where this Congress said, "We

want the FCC to establish before the auction a generally-applicable rule about how much spectrum anybody can buy."

That has to be forward-looking. You don't want to go into the auction with your money, and not know whether or not you're going to be permitted to win in the -- keep the license that you -- that you thought you were the high bidder on. That has to be forward-looking. So, that's a great example of you all asking for a forward-looking rule, and really deserving a forward-looking rule.

WAXMAN: Mm-hmm. Mr. Copps?

COPPS: Absolutely, I concur. We all talk about how rapidly the telecommunications technology and services are changing. The commission has to be aware of that -- have the flexibility to react to that, and certainly to fulfill its responsibilities to look into the future, and try to determine how best to fulfill its -- it's mission, which includes consumer protection, includes privacy, and includes ubiquity of services.

WAXMAN: Mr. Powell, in light of yesterday's decision, the D.C. Court -- Circuit recognized the authority granted by Congress to the FCC in the 1996 act. Do you believe that the agency can properly oversee the growth of broadband infrastructure services?

POWELL: I do. For a matter of record, as chairman of the FCC, and the commission that classified broadband the way that it is today, we -- we quite poignantly recognized that -- the importance of that continuing role to a degree. And we believe that the authority existed within that Title 1 framework to take care of those circumstances.

Whether you agree or disagree, the court certainly validated yesterday, from a judicial standpoint, that Title 1 and 706 do provide that flexible authority.

WAXMAN: Mm-hmm.

And, Mr. Wiley...

WILEY: Yes?

WAXMAN: If you agree the FCC has the authority, do you think it ought to use it?

WILEY: Well, the court said that the commission could have authority in this area. I would strongly advise, in my own view, the commission to let the marketplace to develop. And if problems do exist, then to step in. There are avenues. If we find blocking, if we find discrimination, there are avenues that can be taken.

I think the problem is, sometimes, we're -- we're in search of a problem here that may not exist. I think if you look at all the suggestions of the carriers that have come out of the decision from yesterday, they all want to keep the marketplace open, all want to give consumers access to various kinds of content. And I -- I take them at their word. I think that's going to develop.

WAXMAN: Mr. Hundt, if we want to keep the marketplace open, isn't it reasonable to anticipate that some of the players will not want it to be so open if it's to their financial advantage? And shouldn't the FCC play a role to make sure, prospectively, that we have an open competitive market with the consumers being in charge?

HUNDT: I completely agree. And if I might, I think it's important -- well, let me say this. I have the view that the case and the statute have the following meaning.

Section 1706 gives the FCC the authority to accomplish the goals you just stated without also requiring the FCC to make a classification decision. That is to say, it can make a classification decision and act with the authority that would come from that, but it doesn't need to do that in order to pass rules that are authorized under Section 1706. Meaning, 1706 and the common carrier

provision are two independent bases for FCC action. That's why the FCC can choose both or either in order to have a (inaudible) rulemaking that would accomplish the goals you described.

WAXMAN: Didn't the court say that the FCC made the wrong choice? And they have two titles they can rely on? You're saying they don't need either title? They can just go ahead and...

HUNDT: I...

WAXMAN: ... think (ph) about regulation?

HUNDT: Yeah, I think what the court said is, if you do choose the information services classification, then you're bound by the restrictions in that. But you don't need to make that choice in order to accomplish the goals that are desiring -- which the court has said that it approves of the goals.

WAXMAN: Mm-hmm. And you don't need to be a -- regulators or (ph) common carrier, either?

HUNDT: I beg your pardon?

WAXMAN: You don't have to regulate it as a common carrier?

HUNDT: The court has said you could choose that, or you could choose 706 or you could choose both. The only thing you can't do is choose information services classification and pass common carrier-like rules.

WAXMAN: I see. Thank you. That's very helpful.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back my time.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back, and the chair now recognizes five minutes, the former chairman of the full committee, the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Barton.

BARTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I've -- I've listened to our testimony and our questions so far. I'm going to make brief statement before I ask a question.

I was here in 1996. And that act was a philosophical change from where the committee had been, and to some extent, where the country had been, in terms of telecommunications policy.

BARTON: You had a Republican Congress -- House and Senate -- for the first time in over 50 years, maybe 60 years. You had a Democratic president, Mr. Clinton, who came from a kind of a conservative pro- business background down in Arkansas. And the -- the former chairman of the committee, Mr. Dingell and Mr. Waxman and Mr. Markey and some of those folks, had a very regulatory approach, although not totally so.

And in the Telco Act of '96, Mr. Braley and Mr. Fields, we went -- we decided to go with a market approach. And Mr. Copps, as he's pointed out, markets don't always work, but generically, if they're open and transparent, unless there is a natural monopoly, they do give a lot more choice to people.

And that's what the Telco Act of '96 did. It rejected the philosophy that the government knows best that the regulator knows best, that people can't if -- if they have -- if they have access to appropriate information, can't make choices that -- are good choices.

And we see reflected today in some of the questions that Mr. Waxman, especially, just asked, you know, that some of my friends on the Democrat side just don't know like a market approach. You know, how dare it be possible that under -- under Title I, informational services, you can have an open, transparent Internet and you don't need the FCC to -- to tell you what to do. My God. That's scary. We better get that FCC back on the job.

They just -- maybe, you know if they can't do it under Title II as a -- as a common carrier, well, they just gonna have to figure out how to -- how to regulate under Title I. Well, you know, if you look at the explosion in what's happened -- I mean, I have -- I had somebody, a young person, a very young person, about nine years old, come into my office, down in Texas, and apparently, did not know there was such a thing as a hard-line telephone. Did not know what that was on my desk.

This young lady thought a phone was just something you carried around with you. And -- and her parents were very young, and they didn't have hard-line phones in their home, and they -- you know -- her dad worked out of his truck, doing stuff, and -- and contracting and stuff. She didn't know what it was.

So, you know, this thing that Mr. Upton and Mr. Walden are starting to take a real comprehensive review and working with Mr. Waxman and Ms. Eshoo, it's a good thing. But philosophically, I don't want to go back to where I have to depend on the intelligence of Mr. Copps or Mr. Powell or Mr. Hundt or Mr. Wiley and the three or four other wise people at the FCC, to know what's best for me in telecommunications policy.

You know, I think if we set the ground rules, and I -- I agree that you have to have a traffic cop, but I don't agree that you gotta be so prescriptive that -- that the market just flat gets -- gets strangled before it even has a chance to get underway.

So my -- my question, and I'll throw it open to the panel, is there still a need for a Title I, I mean, for a Title II, for -- for common carrier? In the telecommunication marketplace today, could we deregulate the telephone companies, in totality, because, you know, there really is no such thing as a natural monopoly anymore?

COPPS: If we can find a way to assure that some of the qualities that people fought for long and hard in terms of privacy and public safety and consumer protection, do not accompany the new tools of broadband and Internet as they accompanied telephone, then I think we're in trouble.

I like the market approach too, and it was decided long ago that the telecommunications industry (inaudible) industries would operate in a capitalistic system and you don't blame business for trying to seize market control or capture the market or even to have gate keeping but we've always, since very early in the last century, had protections against untrammeled building toward monopoly and duopoly.

I read the '96 act, and I wasn't as intimately involved with it as you were, but followed it with some degree of interest as being somewhat more proactive. I read that act as instructing the Federal Communications Commission to do what it needs to do to encourage bringing the most advanced telecommunications feasible to all of our citizens no matter where they live, at reasonably comparable prices, reasonably comparable services, allowing them to access media that serves communities and provides information that are necessary to exercise a citizen's responsibilities in a democratic society, so I think yes, a light touch where possible.

But, you know, we sit here and talk about, well we have to do away with these -- these stove pipes and all, and I agreed to that with some extent, but we have -- we have enshrined that. I mean, if we're gonna say we're gonna treat a telephone call you make on the Internet entirely different than we make a telephone call somewhere else, that's not functionally equivalent. That's not treating technologies alike.

So, I think...

(CROSSTALK)

BARTON: (inaudible) I mean, I know my time is way over, but it -- it is something...

(LAUGHTER)

... it's something to think about, because we've got a real chance in the rest of this Congress and the next Congress to build on what we started in '96.

WILEY: I would just like to say that I agree with much of what you say. I think in -- in a competitive marketplace that we see today, with the kind of I.P.-centric world, I think economic regulation has to be considered with some skepticism, because the markets are competitive.

If you don't have market failure, then the question is, why should the government be stepping in? Consumer protection, E911, you know, those kinds of things, that's a different story.

But we're talking about economic regulation here, and I think it's more questionable, and I certainly wouldn't be thinking about going back to common carrier world in an information services environment. I don't think that makes sense.

WALDEN: Well thank you, the gentleman's time has expired.

And the chair recognizes, for five minutes, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Doyle.

DOYLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and once again, thank you to our witnesses for your testimony today.

We've talked a lot about net neutrality in the court decision, so I'd like to maybe go to a couple different topics and ask Chairman Hundt and Chairman Copps about special access.

How -- how can the FCC enhance competition, in the special access marketplace, and is new statutory authority necessary or do you think the commission has the sufficient authority to ensure that the markets are competitive.

COPPS: On special access I think what needs to happen -- yes, I think the commission has the authorities for the FCC to make up its mind. I was before this committee and I think you were here too. And perhaps it was Mr. Markey, or somebody who asked us all back in 2007 to sign a letter saying we would have this problem resolved by September.

And we all said "Whoopee, let's -- let's do that".

And it hasn't been done yet. All these seven years have gone by. Enormous amounts of money are at stake here. The ability of competitors to enter the business and to compete is at stake here.

I am pleased at some signs now, that the FCC is beginning to move. And I want to especially commend you because I know you were a big proponent of getting this data collection process going, and that's the prerequisite of -- of doing some -- something final on this.

The commission also has to look at allegations of anti- competitive practices and special access, such things as loyalty mandates and excessive early termination and shortfall penalties. But getting this right is important. And each year that goes on, there's billions of dollars going to maybe where they should go or maybe where they shouldn't be going.

DOYLE: Thank you.

Commissioner Hundt.

HUNDT: I echo Commissioner Copps' remarks and would just add, this is another example of another useful, forward-looking rule. We could all use a forward-looking rule on this topic.

DOYLE: Thank you, yes. And Commissioner Copps, we have been waiting years and years and years, and I hope before my tenure in Congress is over that we'll see the FCC do something on special access. And I intend to be for a little bit longer.

(LAUGHTER)

Commissioner Copps, the FCC recently closed a very successful -- a low-power FM application process and is currently considering thousands of LPFM applications, and I want to personally thank you for your efforts in that regards and ask you what other opportunities you see for the FCC to further empower communities in innovative ways.

COPPS: Well, first of all, I want to thank you because, without you and the leadership of your colleagues here, this would not have happened and we wouldn't have had that window, first one open since 2000.

And it's a window of enormous potential. So, number one, we want that to move forward with all dispatch and maybe go from 800 low power stations to maybe thousands of them.

Going beyond that, though, we just have to look at whatever kind of options we can think of to encourage community radio to revivify the pig (ph) channels and make sure that they're not just cast aside, as some of the big companies seem to want to do.

Look at new models for noncommercial media, nonprofit media. And that applies not just to media companies, but to telecom companies, newspapers and so many other things. And there's a lot of potential here in a market that doesn't seem to be able to provide all the tools that we need for media and for news, for nonprofit media to step in.

But the IRS is dragging its feet on making a lot of these determinations that it should be making. So, low power, yes. Looking at channels 5 and 6, there are all sorts of options out there.

Put some special emphasis on using community radio, and diversifying communities and native lands. It's just a field that's rife with potential, if we can just step up to the plate and realize our responsibility to do it.

DOYLE: Thank you.

Gentlemen, thank you for your insight today. We appreciate it here on the committee.

And I'll yield back, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: Thank you very much. The gentleman yield backs the balance of his time.

And the chair now recognizes himself for five minutes.

And, Mr. Powell, thanks for -- again for you being here today. And if I could just start with some questions to you.

POWELL: Yes, sir. WALDEN: It's kind of interesting because in reviewing your testimony and also Mr. Wiley, you both used very similar language in spots.

And in your opening statement you said that this market requires a greater degree of business flexibility, fewer prescriptive rules and an assurance that any government involvement is applied on a technology-neutral basis and creates a better investment climate.

And I also saw that Mr. Wiley also had said in his testimony about -- the government can't keep up and there's a need for flexibility and technology-neutral framework in his testimony. So, very, very similar language.

But your testimony, when you're -- when you go through it, I find it interesting because you're going through your seven points and for simplicity.

And one of the things that you bring out, because you also were talking about that flexibility and also having better business climate, you state in your testimony that since 1996 we've seen $1 trillion invested in Internet infrastructure.

And then you also laid out that, you know, the simplicity that has to be there.

But also in that simplicity, you said that, you know, practicing simplicity can be scary. And it takes courage to discard old ideas and rules that are no longer needed.

Could you give a couple of examples of those?

POWELL: Yes. It's a great, challenging question. I think I might actually go back to some of what Mr. Barton was talking about.

If you think about one of the wisest things that was done in the 1996 act, it has nothing to do with the individual rules. It was the fundamental judgment that the government rejected the natural monopoly thesis and believed instead that competition was the more fruitful approach.

But common carriage law inherently is about a government- sanctioned monopoly. It's essentially the queen of the realm who grants an exclusive license to a ferryboat captain to go across the river and in exchange for all the privileges of that monopoly, they agree to be bound to serve all the citizens in a nondiscriminatory way and other things that the sovereign wishes to have as part of that exclusive benefit. Mutual in some regards the monopolist gets the exclusive profits and the -- and the realm gets the benefits of serving all the citizens.

In some ways in 1996, the government sued for divorce from companies through the notion of an exclusive monopoly and instead said go compete. Raise your own capital. No guaranteed return on investment. No guaranteed success. But yet the lingering notions of common carriage, which are still in the statute and, by the way, are still being raised in the context of the net neutrality debate, still hover around our regulatory questions.

To me, whether the country comes to some committed conclusion that, even with its challenges and the need for oversight that were really about competition and were ready to truly let go of common carriage, is a great example, a fundamental one of how to make that decision.

LATTA: Thank you.

And let me follow up with another question.

And when you're looking at the (inaudible) assessing the competition and the communications industry, do you think an updated communications action modify how the FCC currently conducts its competitive analysis?

POWELL: I think so, only because I think there is some ambiguity there that, when managed in responsible hands, works fine. At times, it doesn't.

I am worried about the FCC merger review process in part because it professes to do a competitive analysis following essentially anti- trust guidelines administered by other departments.

But under the public interest standard, which I do think is valuable, it turns into a competition of conditions. And as an anti- trust lawyer, I used to believe the FCC, if they're doing something bad, shoot them. If they're not, don't let them cure harm by how many good jelly beans you can put on the scale and to make the thing go away.

And then by doing it in a way that it extracts these concessions as a voluntary proffer, you make sure that the case can't be appealed to the courts because you no longer have standing.

I think insulating their review process from judicial review through the conditioning mechanism and allowing the commissioning mechanism to be a vehicle by which the commission can legislate beyond its authority, can get companies to do things in the context of that proceeding it can't pass laws about, borders on kind of administrative improbability.

So does that happen every time? No.

Do I think it happens sometimes? Yes.

And I think Congress should at least examine the review process and see if whether better controls could be in place.

LATTA: Thank you very much.

And I see my time has expired and the chair now recognizes for five minutes the gentlelady from California, Ms. Matsui.

MATSUI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I want to thank all of the former chairmen for being here. This has been really an interesting and informative discussion.

Under Section 254, carriers have certain obligations to provide universal access. In the D.C. Circuit's decision yesterday, the court made clear the FCC has a similar charge under 706 to ensure that all Americans have access to broadband and that the FCC has authority over broadband providers to meet that mandate from Congress.

I have two questions for all the chairmen relating to the court's decision yesterday.

The first, do you agree the FCC should and must promote universal access to broadband for all Americans?

Mr. Wiley?

WILEY: Yes, I would agree with that.

(UNKNOWN): Yes.

MATSUI: Mr. Powell?

POWELL: Absolutely. There's no way you can be a functioning member of society without access to this technology.

MATSUI: OK.

Then does the court's decision yesterday affirm the FCC's authority to transition the universal service fund to broadband?

Chairman Wiley?

WILEY: Yes, I think the FCC has done a good job in looking at that.

I am concerned somewhat with the size and the growth of the universal service fund. And I think the commission has got to look at the compensate -- the pay in that -- covering that. Some issues has got to be looked at, I think.

MATSUI: But it's generally yes?

WILEY: Yes.

MATSUI: (inaudible)?

POWELL: Yes, I think commend Chairman Genachowski from my grading, the fund toward broadband and he did it on a theory of 706. So in that extent, I think the ruling yesterday only strengthens the commission moving in that direction.

MATSUI: Good. COPPS: Yes.

Chairman Copps?

That's great. I appreciate your views because I believe that it's one of potentially biggest unintended consequences avoided by the court's decision because transitioning USF to broadband is a -- really a critical step toward achieving universal access and adoption in this country.

Chairman Hundt, you said that yesterday's circuit decision is a victory for Congress and the smart, flexible approach of the 1996 Telecom Act.

How can we continue that success?

Are there any unintended consequences we should watch out for as this committee starts the process of updating the Communications Act?

HUNDT: Well, I think as a number of you have mentioned, of course the FCC on remand needs to commence a new proceeding, which I believe Chairman Wheeler has already said that he intends to do.

And naturally that should be and will be an open proceeding. I'm sure this committee will have an ample opportunity to express its views.

I don't, myself, have the ability to forecast where that will come out or should come out, because I think it's really, really important to examine all the new facts about emerging network architectures and about competition problems on both sides of the two- sided network.

HUNDT: I would just say that's why it's so useful that the court has said that the FCC's authority is broad and powerful, because the technologies in the network architectures and the competition problems are constantly changing. And the FCC and rulemaking has the ability to adapt to those changes, sometimes eliminating rules, sometimes writing new rules. So this is a very, very workable process that we have here.

And, as I said before, congratulations to this committee for the 1996 act, which did create this legal culture.

MATSUI: Chairman Powell, would you like to comment?

POWELL: I'm sorry. Can you refresh the question?

MATSUI: Well, I'm really...

POWELL: Sorry.

MATSUI: You know, we -- as Chairman Hundt commenting that the court decision, he felt, was a victory for Congress and for this smart, fixable approach of the '96 act, are there any unintended consequences that we should watch out for as we re-examine and update the Communications Act moving forward?

POWELL: I more or less would agree with Chairman Hundt. I mean, I think to the degree that, you know, in some ways I saw a quote the other day that I thought summed it up great. It's not a victory for any side but it might have been a victory for the debate. And that is that the commission continues to have a meaningful role in the oversight protection of broadband without crossing the line into the more dangerous concerns around common carriage.

And if that's ultimately the outcome, maybe that's workable.

Unintended consequences, I do think even the court struggled with them itself, which is 706 is an extraordinarily broad, unconstrained provision. How it's interpreted and how responsibly it's interpreted and applied, I think, is important.

Because I think Congress hasn't spoken with much specificity about broadband regulation and to take a position as open-ended and vague as 706 and see that as the foundation for everything broadband going forward has potential risks and dangers, but I think that will be worked out over time through its application, through dialogue with Congress. MATSUI: Thank you very much. Chairman Copps?

COPPS: While I'm pleased that the court recognized the authority of the commission, I don't know that I'm ready to declare victory yet. If it is a victory for the debate, that's not necessarily a good thing because we've had so many years of debate while the evolution of the Internet continues and gatekeeping shows the rise of its ugly head.

So it's a victory if the commission reacts and reacts promptly and provides some certainty and some guarantees. But we've lost a couple of years, looking for third ways and other ways and I don't want to lose a couple of more years going down that road.

MATSUI: Well, I think there's an opportunity here. Yes?

WILEY: I was just going to say. I think if it's a victory, I think it's a victory for technical innovation, a victory for investment and ultimately a victory for the consumer. And I think thus we ought to see how the marketplace develops in this area and see whether problems, as I said earlier, really come about, as some people predict.

MATSUI: I think this is an interesting moment in time. And we have to provide a thoughtful way as we move forward. And I appreciate all your comments. Thank you very much. I yield back.

WALDEN: Gentle lady yields back. The chairman now recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

SHIMKUS: Thank you, chairman. Welcome, you all. It's good to have you. The -- and I think it would be safe to say that no one envisioned this world in which we live in technologically. No one envisioned it in '96. So the really the basic -- the basic first question is in a rewrite for public policy elected officials or even folks in the commission to envision what would world would be like ten years after a rewrite, that's -- that's going to be almost -- that's impossible to do.

Is that -- most people view that as correct? No one knew in '96 what would come. So that talks about what these basic premises that I enjoy: democracy, freedom, marketplace, capitalism.

One thing that hasn't really been addressed is consumer choice. And how that really does drive innovation and drive -- and it's that marketplace. And I remember going to the consumer electronics show and the MP3 was being unveiled and I just was amazed at how much capital flowed for just music in this space, in the technology space. That's the same thing now with Internet, broadband, downloads, Pandora, you name it. It's all migrated to that.

So we don't ever want to lose the aspect of the power of the individual consumer in this debate versus what some people would say would be the power of a government or regulatory arena or agency. And Mr. Copps, I think that's true for these segments of society that feel they don't have access. I think that you can pull together based upon technology the ability to get the word out

through broad band, information, newsletters and the like. I mean the technology has allowed us to really -- there's really no excuse for people not to have access to information flow today even if they go through universal service fund or go to the library to get on broadband through what we've been able to do through the e-rates and all that other stuff which we talked about a lot in your day, Mr. Hundt.

So here -- here's the basic question I have. Because I -- a couple of you in your opening statements, talk about silos. You are all members of the commission and you all were chairmen, which is a different position than being a standard commissioner. Because you have the responsibility for the whole body of workers within the FCC. So, we've got consumers -- we've got the bureaus and the other things other than the bureaus. I only talk about the bureaus but you go on the website you see all these other little offices and stuff: consumer and government affairs, enforcement, international media, public safety, wireless, wire line.

So in a rewrite of the '96 act, should there not be some discussion in how we reform the commission itself based upon what current technology is today? And I think, Mr. Wiley, you kind of talked about this a little bit. And just a guess of where am I heading in the future?

I mean, there is a future look, right, Mr. Copps? There is a future. But how do we reform the FCC itself and start tearing down some of these silos, which some of you have addressed are a problem? And if we can go from left to right, Mr. Wiley, if you want to go first and that will be the end of my questions.

WILEY: Yes, I think what's changed in the Internet world is that you find different parties doing the same kinds of services, providing the same kind of activities that you wouldn't have thought of before. You wouldn't have thought of broadcasters being in the technology end or cable being in the wire -- in the wire line field. But this is happening now.

And I think, therefore, the commission probably does have to change its internal structure. If you have -- in a digital world if you have functionally equivalent services being provided by different parties, I think they should be regulated in a functionally equivalent way. And that's not the way the commission has done it through the years. It's not the way they're organized. It's going to take some change.

SHIMKUS: Thank you. Mr. Hundt?

HUNDT: You know the French say "well, that works in practice, but maybe doesn't really work in theory." And I think it's really, really important to focus on practice. The current structure allows the FCC chair in what I will definitely describe as an open process to reorganize the FCC to meet the objectives that are set by any particular Congress in any particular situation. And that's a good thing. So, when this Congress had the wisdom to ask the FCC to auction the spectrum in 1993, I was allowed, thanks to you -- but not because of a statutory mandate, but because of flexibility, I was allowed to create a wireless bureau, which previously did not exist.

At any given moment it's hard to say exactly what the administrative structure ought to be. And I think the current system, which tells the chair, figure it out, tell us what it is, you're held accountable, that's a good system.

POWELL: I do think form follows function. And I think -- certainly when I was chairman, we merged a few bureaus. Cable was a separate bureau from broadcasting. Today it's the media bureau -- changes we made to try to reflect.

A common principle is organize around the way it's seen through the eyes and ears of consumers. And, you know, to me at the time, television was television to most Americans and making sure you had cross-pollinization of the bureaucrats, professional who -- the bureaucracy and professionals who managed that I thought was important so they saw their functions through the same eyes of our constituents. And I think that's one principle you can follow.

POWELL: I do -- I do agree with Reed. I think the chairman is also CEO. The statute assigns them that responsibility. I don't think we talk enough about the CEO role and the management of that operation, but I think there's plenty of flexibility to respond to that if it's clear what it is what we're trying to execute.

COPPS: I don't think there's any magic formula. Certainly there have been times when the stove pipe approach has been too much in presence. I think Michael tried to work against that and go towards a little more holistic type of view. So did the Chairman Jennakowsi (ph).

That being said though, you need experts in these specific bureaus. There is a specific telecom expertise and wire line and wireless and all the details of that and special access and everything else we're talking about. So I think you still have to have those bureaus but if you can have -- I think chairman Jennakowsi (ph) established a consumer task force whose job it was to go across those agencies and look at whatever or those bureaus and whatever those bureaus were doing to assess the impact on consumer well-being.

So I think that's a good approach. But it's a management thing and something that I think is a product of good leadership at the commission and good oversight by the committee.

(UNKNOWN): We need to move onto Mr. Dingell for the next five minutes. Mr. Chairman.

DINGELL: I want to commend you for this hearing. I think this has been an important hearing and events of this week tell us that it's time that the committee is going to have to start looking at what we're going to do about bringing the '96 Act up to date.

I have enjoyed the comments by my dear friend, Mr. Barton, in announcing my position as being strongly regulator. Sometimes I have a hard time recognizing my position when it's set forth by other members.

In any event, that is not important. But I would just like to remind everybody that this business of the '96 Act started when we began to try to get judge Greene out of the business of regulating the telecommunications industry.

It also started when we started trying to get the amount of spectrum that was held out of use by industry and business and government and get that available to people. And to see to it that we had a fair program for dealing with our legislation and a fair program for dealing with these matters.

I would like to welcome our friends, the chairman here, for their appearance and for their assistance to us and for what it is that they have done with us over the years.

If there's an attempt made to update the communications action, I will offer my support. Yesterday's court decisions vacating the anti- discrimination and anti-blocking rules of the federal communications commission open internet order is proof that the Congress needs to bring our communication laws into the 21st century.

Only clear direction from Congress will strengthen consumer protections, promote competitions and give industry the regulatory certainty it needs to innovate in the future. As we go about this important work, I caution that we do so with great care. On the benefit of a carefully collected and substantial body of evidence.

This is going to require rigorous oversight by the committee and considerable work to get the information that we have need of so that we can legislate properly. And I hope that the undertaking will be bipartisan in order so that any final product that we complete here moves through the Senate and to the president's desk for signature.

We have to resolve a number of very important high line (ph) and hard questions to inform our work as we move forward. I respectfully suggest that these questions included -- or rather include but are not limited to the following.

First, how do we improve and protect Americans access to content while also preserving the ability of private companies to monetize their investments for future growth?

Likewise, how do we best foster the ongoing development of future technologies that will ensure American leadership in the field of technology and communications. And then we have to decide how we are to promote the more efficient and fair use of value and increasingly scarce commodities like spectrum, which we've not administered too well of late and have administered on the amounts we could get for in money rather than how it would serve the nation to allocate this spectrum.

Lastly, we're going to have to decide how we will ensure that the Federal Communications Commission, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration and other related bodies function smoothly to protect consumers and promote growth, rather than hindering it.

Regardless of these answers and the answers to these questions and others, I submit that our work should proceed from the conviction that the public interest is still and is always going to remain the central concern that we have with regard to the Communications Act.

I have had the good fortune to be one of the authors of almost every major piece of telecommunications legislation passed by the Congress in the past three decades, and the public interest is in the heart of each, going back to the '33 and '34 act. I see no reason why that should be any different this time around. The only issue here worth exploring is what that standard has meant in years past and whether there's any reason to give the commission different guidance for the future in interpreting it as we address the other questions I've just outlined.

Mr. Chairman, I wish you godspeed in this endeavor, and I offer you my support. And I'm delighted that the chairmen of the commission have been here this morning to assist us in beginning this process, which I hope will go forward with reasonable speed, with great care, and again, with great attention to the public interest.

I thank you all for listening to me.

WALDEN: Chairman Dingell, thank you for your kind comments and your always generous words and willingness to work to improve our communication and other laws. We look forward to working with you. My only disappointment is you did not have a list of yes or no questions for this panel.

(LAUGHTER)

Now, with that, we'll turn to Mr. Terry from Nebraska, and we look forward to your comments and questions, sir.

TERRY: Yes, you do (ph). Thank you.

And I just -- for our esteemed guests here today, I want to follow up on what my friend from California, Ms. Matsui, began, and that's with the high-cost areas. I want to take it from a little bit different angle and get your input.

As kind of mentioned here, we've seen a convergence of technologies and services that are all kind of being wrapped into one anymore (ph). And the same as -- we talked about it in my early days on this committee in voice, and Barton brought that up. Well, now it's in video.

And so when we talk about a rural telecom and the Internet as a basis of delivering video today, it's kind of making -- well, it's altering the way that rural telecoms used to work. And so we have a current legal structure with this QRA and a mindset of -- on treating rural telecoms like old copper wires, which a lot of them are still using.

So I just want to ask your opinions about and reform for or within the FCC, should rural and high-cost areas -- so Mr. Copps, it even comes back to inner city, where you have low take but high cost.

How do we think about this differently in making sure that if you live in rural America or you're setting up a wind farm, where you want to continuously oversee but remotely, thereby requiring broad broadband for all of that data? Do we need to think about things differently than high-cost rural, high-cost inner city?

Mr. Wiley, why don't we start with you. WILEY: Well, I'm not an expert in the rural telephone area, but I still think there is a concern that's different than in the big cities. And I think therefore, high-cost funds still are something that have to be part of the whole equation, in my opinion, and you know that better than anybody in Nebraska. So I don't have any huge input to you today as far as how to change the system.

TERRY: Yes. And later (ph), I guess to clarify, since video and Internet are becoming the same and your telecom is your really maybe your sole provider of that, it's all meshed together. Does that change anything? Mr. Hundt?

HUNDT: I think that people have said we really want broadband to be the network for everyone in the country. In rural areas, as I'm sure you know, Congressman, there are many places where the cable broadband penetration is as low as 15 percent and 20 percent, not anything nearly as high as it is in Washington, D.C., or in the suburbs.

Now, that's a problem that the FCC really does need to think about in conjunction with the industry that Michael represents so ably. And in particular, not to touch too many other buttons, the recent increases in the prices of the content have a disproportionate impact in rural America because when those content price increases as passed on by the cable industry, they are taking a lot of money out of the wallets of the people in those areas, and those are the same areas where broadband is expensive. And so as people are paying more for the broadcast content and the cable channel content, they have less available to purchase broadband.

This is a problem that is real and existing right now. And this also gives me a chance to pass the solution over to the -- to Chairman Powell.

(LAUGHTER)

POWELL: Congressman, I think you make a couple of important points that we should just put top of mind, which is the challenge of reaching that last 5 to 7 percent is because under traditional market fundamentals, they're uneconomic. And if they're uneconomic, the only way to cure something is you have to change the economic equation.

This is why I've always had no problem understanding and respecting that government has a meaningful and significant role in terms of our ubiquity objectives in universal service, of universality and affordability, to play a role through either the universal service program or any other properly constructed program to try to change the economic equation that attracts the infrastructure that those communities deserve.

I think it's a more optimistic scenario in the modern world than it was before because in the old world, we had single technology. We tried to string twisted copper wire between two farms 300 miles apart, and that was enormously and hideously expensive. One of the things I think really opens up an opportunity today is, because of a common IP platform, we can essentially deliver almost any kind of service over almost any kind of network.

So that means that wireless, and probably its companion of satellite-available services, have real hope and promise for rural America. That is, they have very dynamically different costs characteristics. A satellite at 28,000 feet sees rural Nebraska no differently than it sees Manhattan. Wireless has a much lower cost infrastructure for some of those areas.

So I think that isn't a complete answer, but putting a lot of energy and investment into how those services will solve those problems is useful. And I think, as the chairman of the FCC is moving toward an IP network common regulatory proceeding, that conversion that you're talking about also can get harmonized and the universal service program get harmonized along with it.

TERRY: Thank you. Agree.

COPPS: I have a little different answer. Reasonably comparable services at reasonably comparable prices is the injunction on the charge of the Telecommunications Act. Reforming USF, which the commission is in the process of doing -- with lots of wrinkles and problems to work out, no question about that -- is certainly an important part of the equation.

But anybody who thinks that the universal service fund alone is going to bring this country the kind of high-speed, low-cost broadband that we need to have to be competitive in the world arena in the 21st century I think is -- is not looking at the situation as it is.

This has to be an infrastructure mission. Our country has had infrastructure missions before, when we came together to build highways and railroads and rural electricity, and so on and so forth. And that's what we need now.

We are not going to be competitive, we're not going to get out of the holes that we're in unless every citizen in this country has that access. And yes, it's reaching that last 5 percent to 7 percent. That's extremely important. Way more than half of our homes don't have the kind of high-speed, low-cost broadband, fiber broadband, that we're going to really need to be competitive.

So we need to look at that not just as an FCC problem but as a problem confronting our government and our society and act upon it and figure out whether we are really serious of being competitive in the global sweepstakes.

TERRY: Thank you.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back. Look to the gentleman from New Mexico, Mr. **Lujan,** for five.

LUJAN: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. And I must say I was concerned with some of the approach that was being taken in the line of questioning leading up to those last responses to my colleague, where for the first time I heard the importance of rural America. Coming from a Western state, from a congressional district that represents 17 of New Mexico's 22 tribes, and the sprawling nature associated with what the West brings us, many parts of rural America, where our food is grown, where energy is generated, critically important to be able to get coverage to these areas.

And as I joked with Chairman Wheeler when we had him in front of us a couple weeks ago, I explained to him that, you know, these last flights home, it's been great to see the TSA debating whether we can make phone calls at 30,000 feet. I know that I have streaming video content at 30,000 feet. I can communicate with my office and anyone else that I so choose to.

So if I can communicate with constituents and get the video content that I want at 30,000 feet, why can't I do it on the ground in rural America? The technology is here, and there's no reason that we can't push it out.

To three responses, I just can't say thanks enough for that. Chairman Copps, with the response associated with a very aggressive push to infrastructure investment in America -- it's absolutely needed. And we shouldn't forget, especially as we talk about different ideals and philosophies that we have on this committee, and even in this Congress, and across the country, that it was in many conservative and rural parts of America that benefited from government investment with rural electrification, with major water projects that provide us power now that could be in question because of water flows -- whole other topic of conversation, but nonetheless, that we need to make sure that we're addressing.

So Chairman Powell, you talked about twisted pairs and what that brought us, decisions that were made as a result of the '96 act. And looking at section 7068, I'm not sure what we're arguing about with concerns in that particular area. It's encouraging deployment of reasonable and timely basis on advanced telecom, especially for educational purposes.

There may be some concerns with some of my colleagues on price cap regulation, but regulatory for bands, measures that promote competition in local markets -- this could be written by any member on this committee, encouraging ideals that I think that we all share.

But one thing that hasn't been talked about very much, and even given the fact that there was a huge data breach with Target, 70 million customers that were impacted, is the security of this network. I would hope that -- and I'd like to get your opinion, if 706a provides us the necessary standards to be able to bring safeguards, or if you think that that's something that needs to be addressed.

And I'd like to invite comment from each of you. Mr. Hundt?

HUNDT: As Chairman Powell said, section 1706 is very broad, and I think that it is an opportunity and a duty for the FCC to dig into it and to create an appropriate framework, with the help of this committee and its counterpart in the Senate. If I might continue your point -- your theme of rural America, there are a number of other provisions, as well, in the '96 act that the FCC can use to try to achieve the goal of completely widespread broadband, even in rural and high-cost areas.

And one that I would identify is the current proceeding to reimagine the E-rate. The E-rate -- if we went -- I just recently met with the chief librarian in Puma County, Arizona, which isn't very far away from you, and you know the geography is not dissimilar.

They have a fantastic system of broadband for not just the central library in Tucson but all the branch libraries all over this very, very sparsely populated geography. The library is the number one public Internet access point in southern Arizona. Therefore, it's the proper focus of extra E-rate support and the proper focus of the combination of network architectures that might well resemble what Chairman Powell was talking about. I -- that's -- we shouldn't decide that part. But we should decide that's a very flexible tool also that can be used to deliver the right participation in the American community to rural America.

LUJAN: Chairman Powell?

POWELL: Congressman, I'd really like to put a punctuation on what you raised because I think it goes to the committee's desire, I hope, to try to harmonize and see communication landscape as a single ecosystem. All the wonderful benefits we're bragging and celebrating are continuously and daily at risk. I think cyberthreat, data retention, breach are all issues that are the Achilles heel of all of the promise of the network that we're celebrating, but they require very complex solutions that look through an entire ecosystem.

706 is no more -- is not particularly up to that job. Why? Even for no other reason that you can't have a discussion without software involved. The cybersecurity question on a global economic -- ecosystem basis means a conversation with every element of that massive connective chain, and that is the Web companies, the infrastructure companies, wireless companies, content companies. There's just no way, in my opinion, even with its breadth, that one could look hopefully to that as the single point of authority to make the most meaningful impact on this issue, mostly because 50 percent of that ecosystem aren't even implicated by that provision.

LUJAN: Chairman...

COPPS: I hope 706 is up to the job. I think it does confer a lot of authority. But I don't want this to become just the solution du jour, and we talk about 706 for the next two years, and then another court somewhere strikes that down, or whatever.

I do want to highlight one thing that you mentioned in terms of getting broadband out. And I commend you for your interest and your work with native Hawaiians (ph) and native Americans. And one area where I think maybe a rewrite would help would be to more formally institutionalize, put some flesh on the bones of the trust relationship and the consultative mechanisms that we have between the commission and native Americans.

It's not -- it's working better than it has. I think there has been more emphasis in recent years. Obviously, back in Chairman Kennard's time, who's not here today, there was an interest in moving us forward and getting us into a new trust relationship. But that's 13 or 14 years ago.

And the situation, as you point out, is so dire, when one member of a tribe can't call somebody else, but you can make the call from 30,000 feet, that's something wrong there. But that might be a concrete area where the commission can actually -- where the Congress can actually lend a hand.

WALDEN: Appreciate that. Gentleman's time is expired. We'll now go to the gentleman from New Jersey for five minutes.

LANCE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And to the distinguished panel, this is among the most interesting hearings in which I have ever participated. It's my honor to be able to meet all of you.

I gather there is a consensus from the distinguished panel that the 1996 legislation needs, to some extent, statutory update and revision. Is that accurate -- from the panel?

(UNKNOWN): I would agree.

(UNKNOWN): I don't agree.

LANCE: And Chairman Hundt, if you would indicate why you do not agree there needs to be statutory update?

HUNDT: I think that the D.C. circuit has made it very clear that the '96 act has given the authority to the FCC to address all the economic and social problems that this committee in recent years and in past years has asked the FCC to address.

LANCE: Other distinguished members...

COPPS: I basically concur and agree with what Chairman Hundt has said. Sure, it's always nice to have some additional clarity, but time is of the essence here. We have a statute that I think can deliver on a lot of the things that need to be delivered, and we should be about that job.

I just -- it's so difficult to see the correlation of forces coming together to give birth to an act, after what we went through in 1996, and I don't think it's going to be any easier in 2014 to do that than it was 18 years ago.

LANCE: Chairman Powell?

POWELL: I think, by any measure, a deliberative process in the legislature would take a meaningful number of years, as the chairman -- as Chairman Walden himself has recognized in setting out a multi- year process. I do think there are sufficient conditions to justify the institution of that kind of examination over that period of time because I think the market is radically different, and the relevancy of law as applied to reality should be a core principle of governance.

LANCE: I thank you.

WILEY: I think the very fact that you didn't have the Internet really developed, you didn't have broadband, you didn't have all the technological changes that have occurred since 1996 really gives, I think, substance to taking another look. And I think that gives Congress an opportunity, I think, to perhaps make some suggestions to the regulatory body that I think would be very helpful.

LANCE: Thank you, Chairman Wiley.

Am I accurate -- I've not read the decision. I have reviewed its consequences, but I've not read it, and I certainly will read yesterday's decision. Am I accurate that the FCC decided in 2004 that Internet access services would not be classified as telecommunications services? Is that true, Chairman Powell?

POWELL: Yes, sir, that's correct.

LANCE: And if that decision were to be revisited, that could be revisited by the administrative agency? Is that accurate as to how it could proceed?

POWELL: It is accurate. It could.

LANCE: And if there were to be a revisiting of the 2004 decision that this is not classified as telecommunications services, then there would have to be an extensive period of review and there would have to be some sort of high-level determination as to why a different decision were to be made? Is that the way it would work?

POWELL (?): Yes. Under administrative law, even with deference, the agency has to provide a reasoned explanation for its change in policy. It would require a notice and comment proceeding which is open.

LANCE: Yes.

POWELL: I wouldn't -- you know, the suggestion's been made that, somehow, that would lead to instant clarity. It would lead to another three to four-year period of conflict and litigation.

LANCE: And litigation. Chairman Copps?

COPPS: But I would just say I don't think it would take forever to compile that record. I, and a lot of other people I know, would be happy to contribute to the rationale for that sort of action. So it's not really starting under tabula rasa. I think a lot of the information is out there. It was just a route not taken, and now we need to go back and look at it.

LANCE: And the FCC's reclassification would be considered arbitrary and capricious unless there were a period of comment and refreshing the record and some sort of heightened standard, is that accurate legally?

(UNKNOWN): Yes, sir. They have to follow the Administrative Procedure Act obligations.

(UNKNOWN): And I'm certain they would.

LANCE: I would presume that would be the case. And finally, the decision yesterday possibly could be appealed to the Supreme Court, but it's not clear whether or not either side is likely to do that?

(UNKNOWN): That's correct.

LANCE: Thank you very much.

My time has expired, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: Thank the gentleman.

Now turn to Mr. Long from Missouri, I think our last member to ask questions. Please go ahead.

LONG: Thank you, Chairman.

And Chairman Hundt, last night, you said that you spent quite a bit of time trying to go through the court ruling of yesterday. And most of the congressmen were home trying to read through a 1,562-

page bill that we're going to be voting on this afternoon. So I've ordered my staff to bring a copy of that to you. And if you could peruse that over...

(LAUGHTER)

If you can peruse that over your lunch hour and kind of decipher it for me, I would appreciate it.

Earlier in your testimony, Chairman Hundt, you said that -- and I didn't get to understand your point, I don't think, concerning the auction. You said, if I remember right, that we need a cap so people know what they're buying. Can you kind of tell me what you were -- in full disclosure, I come from a 30-year career as an auctioneer before I came to Congress a few years ago, so I've got a lot of interest in how an auction operates and try and make it operate the best it can for the public and the taxpayers.

HUNDT: I remember very well that in our first auction, we had Senator Burns, who had a...

LONG: Conrad Burns, you bet.

HUNDT: ... come and conduct the very first auction...

LONG: He is from Missouri. Now, he served from Montana, but he's originally from Missouri. That's two of us. HUNDT: He did claim that particular heritage, and he did great job. I would recommend to Chairman Wheeler that he should come and ask you to conduct this next auction.

(LAUGHTER)

LONG: I'm not worried about conducting as much as I am how to -- you know, how it's put together, and that's what I've been trying to...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: But what was your comment? I didn't understand. You said that we need a cap so people know what they're buying. What exactly did you mean?

HUNDT: So in any auction, when folks come in, you want the high bidder to be able to walk away with whatever was auctioned. And the way to do that, I believe, is to make sure that everybody bidding in that auction knows the following. What are the rules about how much you can buy?

It doesn't have to be a cap. It could be -- some people think it should be an aggregation level. There's many different ways to define it. But people ought to know as they're about to take the money out of the wallet, as they're about to raise the hand and say that they're putting in the high bid, they ought to know that they can walk away with whatever they can buy, instead of having to have another proceeding where they ask the FCC or the Department of Justice later, Am I permitted to walk away with this, because I don't know whether or not I've violated any of your aggregation rules.

So this Congress in the incentive auction rule did say that the FCC should create a generally applicable aggregation rule, and I think that was a very wise thing to do. That way, everybody going into the auction can estimate in advance whether or not what they buy is -- what they bid on and win on is what they can walk away with.

LONG: OK. I -- talking to the interested parties that are interested in buying this spectrum, they have told me -- and this is probably a topic for another day, but they said if they can buy A, B and C spectrum, then maybe they want to buy L, M, N, O, P later in the auction. If they can't buy A, B and C, L, M, N, O, P doesn't -- if they can't buy that, too, then the first three things that they bought -- so it's a very confusing situation.

So any of you have any staff or anybody you want to get with my staff that we can talk about and kind of sort that out, I'd appreciate it.

I want to move to Chairman Wiley for a minute. If you turn on the TV at night, the only reason it's not 100 percent phone company ads and cellular companies and things is because it's interspersed with the auto insurance ads. So there would be more -- so it's seems like there's quite a bit of competition out there now. And as far as the auction that I was talking about with Chairman Hundt, the wireless market, I think, appears to be extremely competitive. And you do have larger companies, AT&T, Verizon, T- Mobile, Sprint. And given that, doesn't it make sense that the FCC -- why will they -- should they not -- they shouldn't handicap bidders, should they, to get the most money for the taxpayers and have the best auction they can where either -- some people are wanting to limit who can buy what. Can you kind of walk me through that?

WILEY: Well, my view is that the auction ought to be available, open to all. I think if Congress really wants to see the maximum amount of revenue derived in order to support the public safety network, we're going to have to pay the broadcasters. It's a very complex process. And I do -- I am concerned about the fact that we start to begin to limit people in this, that you're going to find you're going to have less revenue than might be otherwise anticipated. I think a free auction ought to be open to all.

LONG: When people would attend my auction, I was always interested in having the most people there and have them spend the most money that they could. And if they didn't want to bid, I would bid for them. I'd tell them just to hold their hand up in the air, and when they paid enough, I'd tell them to take it down, so...

(LAUGHTER)

-- with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

(UNKNOWN): Quite an auction.

(LAUGHTER)

WALDEN: I want to thank our distinguished panel of witnesses, both for your prior government service and your continuing involvement and interest in public policy to assist us in our mission and goals in updating the communications act.

I draw attention to those who are observing our hearing. They can go to our hashtag and -- at #commsactupdate (ph). I think it's in front here. And give us your information. A lot of people have been doing that during the hearing. We appreciate that, another reflection of how technology is changing the world, and we need to keep up with it.

So thank you for your participation. Our subcommittee stands adjourned.

END

LOAD-DATE: January 20, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 66535

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

JOURNAL-CODE: PTTW

Copyright 2014 ProQuest Information and Learning
All Rights Reserved
Copyright 2014 Roll Call, Inc.

Targeted News Service

January 15, 2014 Wednesday 1:39 AM EST

N.M. Delegation Announces Federal Drought Assistance Available for NM Farmers and Ranchers

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 819 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The office of Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Lujan**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced that 27 counties in New Mexico will qualify for emergency loan assistance from the Farm Service Agency (FSA) due to losses caused by the ongoing drought. A full list of counties is included below.

The designation makes producers, farmers and ranchers in these counties eligible for Farm Service Agency (FSA) emergency loans, provided eligibility requirements are met. Funds are available for up to a maximum of $500,000 and may be used to restore or replace essential property; pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year; pay essential family living expenses; reorganize the farming operation; and refinance certain debts.

The counties were declared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as "primary natural disaster areas" after suffering from droughts of severe, extreme and exceptional intensity during the growing season for eight or more consecutive weeks; or as "contiguous counties" because of they were nearby and considered to face similar circumstances.

"New Mexico farmers and ranchers continue to face great challenges due to the prolonged drought and I am glad the USDA continues to recognize the need for federal disaster assistance in our affected counties," Udall said. "We need to do all we can to support farm operators, especially in rural communities, who continue to be devastated by consecutive years of drought.

Assistance like the FSA's emergency loan program is one important way we can do this. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I'm proud to fight for the emergency assistance for farmers and ranchers, along with many other resources for our agricultural community."

"Farmers and ranchers help drive the economy and have shaped our state's history, as many growers in New Mexico come from families that have cultivated land for generations," Heinrich said. "These disaster declarations are a good first step to ensure they receive the necessary federal resources they need to recover from last year's natural disasters."

"Agriculture is a vital part of New Mexico's economy, and this year's drought has imposed enormous hardships on our farmers and ranchers," Pearce said. "Today's announcement was the right decision, and will provide much-needed relief. I look forward to continuing to work closely with farmers and ranchers across southern New Mexico to make sure that they receive the support and resources they need."

"Severe drought conditions across New Mexico are leaving farmers and ranchers throughout the state struggling, impacting their livelihoods as well as our economy," **Lujan** said. "The disaster

declaration by the Secretary of Agriculture will make important resources available to help farmers make ends meet during this difficult time. It is also vital that Congress completes work on a new farm bill that takes steps to help farmers and ranchers better endure severe drought conditions."

"As years of severe drought continue to inflict harm on New Mexico's farmers and ranchers as well as our economy, it is important that we employ every tool possible to support those who are struggling due to factors completely outside of their control," **Lujan** Grisham said. "This federal disaster declaration will allow our state's farm operators to get the assistance they need. As a member of the House Agriculture Committee, I will continue working to pass a farm bill that includes crucial programs to support farmers and ranchers suffering from drought and natural disasters."

Through the FSA emergency loan program, farm operators can borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses. To qualify, they must have suffered at least a 30 percent loss in crop production or a physical loss to livestock, livestock products, real estate or chattel property.

Farm operators have eight months following the date of the disaster declaration to apply and are encouraged to do so through their local Farm Service Agency office. For a list of offices by county in New Mexico, click here or call 505-761-4900http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=nm&agency=fsa

More information about the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Emergency Loan Program's can be found here. http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/newsReleases?area=newsroom&subject=landing&topic=pfs&newstype=prfactsheet&type=detail&item=pf_20120716_farln_en_2012emln.html

The counties in New Mexico now eligible for assistance through the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Emergency Loan Program are:

Bernalillo

Chaves

Colfax

DeBaca

Dona Ana

Curry

Eddy

Guadalupe

Harding

Lea

Lincoln

Los Alamos

Mora

Otero

Quay

Rio Arriba

Roosevelt

Sandoval

San Juan

San Miguel

Santa Fe

Sierra

Socorro

Taos

Torrance

Union

Valencia

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30TacordaCheng-140214-4637780 30TacordaCheng

LOAD-DATE: February 16, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

January 14, 2014 Tuesday

NM delegation's Dems want fixes to Obamacare

BYLINE: Copyright © 2014 Albuquerque Journal By Michael Coleman Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. 1

LENGTH: 769 words

WASHINGTON - Democrats in New Mexico's congressional delegation who cheered when President Barack Obama signed the Affordable Care Act into law three years ago are less enthusiastic following the flawed rollout of its health care exchanges in recent weeks, but none supports its repeal.

Meanwhile, Rep. Steve Pearce - the delegation's lone Republican - was a harsh critic of the law before its passage and remains convinced it should be scrapped. The Journal interviewed all five members of the delegation about the law last week.

Most delegation Democrats concede certain elements of the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, could use some fine-tuning, but they also contend the underlying law is sound.

"We start with the idea that this is an attempt to get everybody quality affordable health care," said Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., who voted for the law. "I think most of our citizens agree that would be a good thing, especially in a state like New Mexico, with such a high rate of uninsured."

However, Udall said the bill had a "disastrous rollout," with technical glitches plaguing the enrollment website.

"I'm outraged about what happened because it hurt some people's ability to sign up and discouraged some people," Udall said. "But down the line, what we want to be doing is fix the problems as we see them. This is the law of the land. Let's get the problems fixed."

Udall late last year teamed up with Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-La., to help Americans whose existing health plans had been canceled because of the onset of Obamacare. The president had long told Americans if they liked their existing plans, they could keep them but, in spite of the president's promise, thousands of plans were canceled. The Udall-Landrieu legislation would allow individuals to keep their current health plans if they chose to do so, as long as they stay current with their payments. The bill has languished in the Senate.

Pearce said that fix and others are simply political cover for Democrats, such as Udall and Landrieu, who are up for re-election in 2014.

"People who are up for re-election are absolutely scrambling because the voters are extremely angry about this stuff, so they start looking for fixes," Pearce said.

House Republicans have passed dozens of bills to repeal the health law in its entirety, but the legislation is a nonstarter in the Democratic-controlled Senate.

"Some of the wrinkles are getting smoothed out from an administrative standpoint," said Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., who also voted for the law. "Any large piece of legislation is going to have its challenges and there may well be things we have to change legislatively. What I don't think you'll see are the fundamental pillars (repealed)." Heinrich said he supports fine-tuning the bill but didn't have any specific suggestions. He said he wants to give the law more time to reveal where fixes are needed.

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, a Democrat who was not in Congress when the Affordable Care Act was passed, said that, despite a botched rollout, many Americans support the law. A Gallup poll released Friday showed that the law has fallen to its lowest approval rating in more than a year, with 54 percent disapproving and just 38 percent approving.

"People don't want to repeal the Affordable Care Act, but they do want to fix it," said **Lujan** Grisham, a former New Mexico health secretary. "Even the people who love it see value in getting it fixed."

She said the law could be tweaked to ensure that "high-risk" pools of beneficiaries don't flood the exchanges, driving up prices for everyone in the system.

"We want coverage and insurance that's affordable for the vast majority, not just a few," she said.

Lujan Grisham predicted the Republican push to repeal the law will wane in the second session of the 113th Congress.

"I think finally - not entirely - but in large part, that debate has diminished," **Lujan** Grisham said. "There may be some fixes that look like repeal to me and I'm not interested in that."

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, a Democrat, said he spent a lot of time in hospitals before the December 2012 death of his father, former New Mexico House Speaker Ben **Lujan**, who lost a battle with lung cancer. The health care horror stories the congressman heard from fellow patients and their families convinced him that Obamacare is a step in the right direction from the previous insurance system.

"The environment was a very unfair one when it came to people getting the treatment they need," he said. "But if improvements need to be made to make it work better, we need to do that." Off target

Obamacare enrollment is low for young adults A3

LOAD-DATE: January 14, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

342 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 14, 2014

LUJAN STATEMENT ON SCHOOL SHOOTING IN ROSWELL; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 137 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the shooting at Berrendo Middle School in Roswell, New Mexico.

"This morning's tragic shooting in Roswell has shaken a community and forever impacted the lives of the students, parents, and teachers who experienced this senseless violence. Around New Mexico, our hearts are heavy as we keep in our prayers the two young children who were shot. I thank the school's staff and law enforcement for acting swiftly to ensure the safety of others at the school. During this difficult time for the entire Roswell community, my thoughts are with all those who have endured this terrible tragedy."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan.**house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-statement-on-school-shooting-in-roswell/

LOAD-DATE: January 15, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

343 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

January 14, 2014 Tuesday 8:36 PM EST

Lujan Statement on School Shooting in Roswell

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 138 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the shooting at Berrendo Middle School in Roswell, New Mexico.

"This morning's tragic shooting in Roswell has shaken a community and forever impacted the lives of the students, parents, and teachers who experienced this senseless violence. Around New Mexico, our hearts are heavy as we keep in our prayers the two young children who were shot. I thank the school's staff and law enforcement for acting swiftly to ensure the safety of others at the school. During this difficult time for the entire Roswell community, my thoughts are with all those who have endured this terrible tragedy."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140115-4600784 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: January 14, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

344 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

January 12, 2014 Sunday

Congress delegation expects production; Economic issues lead NM agenda

BYLINE: Copyright © 2014 Albuquerque Journal By Michael Coleman Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: NEW MEXICO; Pg. B1

LENGTH: 958 words

WASHINGTON - As lawmakers get back to work this month after their holiday recess, New Mexico's congressional delegation is optimistic that the second session of the 113th Congress will be more productive than the first.

After all, things couldn't get much worse. Last year's congressional session was marred by a protracted fiscal fight that culminated in a 16-day government shutdown, leaving many Americans fuming. Meanwhile, a Pew Foundation study found that Congress passed just 55 "substantive" bills last year, a record low for a first session.

In Journal interviews last week, members of New Mexico's congressional delegation said the bruising budget battles appear to be over - at least for now - which should result in more productivity.

"I think there is a real opportunity to pass legislation, which we didn't have last year," said Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, who was elected president of the freshman class for the second session of the 113th Congress. "There is a clear message from our constituents that they have had enough."

She and other Democratic New Mexico lawmakers cited immigration reform, an unemployment benefit extension, a minimum wage hike, protecting New Mexico's nuclear weapons labs and helping to create private-sector jobs from federal research and development spending as top priorities, among other initiatives.

Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, both Democrats, told the Journal they plan to focus on ways to bolster New Mexico's economy. Among their most immediate priorities is helping to pass a bill extending unemployment benefits that expired on Dec. 28. The measure stalled in the Senate last week.

"We need to help these families pay for basic necessities," Udall said.

Udall, a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said he is relieved that Congress passed a two-year budget resolution in December, which should help return both chambers to their "regular order" of business. Anoth- er potential fight over the debt ceiling looms in early February, but most congressional observers expect some kind of deal to avert a government shutdown.

Udall said the House and Senate appropriations committees can now determine actual spending levels, which is critical for federally dependent states such as New Mexico.

"It's important we do our No. 1 job, which is set priorities for the federal government through funding bills," he said. "It makes a big difference for New Mexico."

Udall said he plans an aggressive push for construction projects on New Mexico's military bases to help keep them viable and off of any federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission lists. He

vowed to continue working to protect spending at Los Alamos and Sandia national laboratories, especially for the budget beleaguered B-61 bomber.

Udall also said he hopes the U.S. House will follow the Senate's lead and pass an immigration reform bill. House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, said last week that he planned to introduce a list of conservative "principles" on the issue soon to spur action in the House. But the speaker's list is not expected to contain a path to citizenship for the estimated 12 millions illegal immigrants already in the U.S.

Rep. Steve Pearce, the New Mexico delegation's lone Republican, predicted the citizenship issue will remain a sticking point between the GOP-controlled House and the Democratic-controlled Senate. Pearce has long supported a greatly expanded guest worker program but opposes outright legalization.

"The ultimate question that comes down is, are we going to pass amnesty or not?" Pearce said. "With 7 percent unemployment, we ought to be really careful about opening these immigration doors to too many people."

Pearce said he plans to continue his fight against what he views as unnecessary federal spending, as well as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's attempts to list species as endangered that he deems harmful to New Mexico's economy. Pearce has opposed the listing of the lesser prairie chicken and sagebrush lizard in New Mexico, arguing that the restrictions would harm job creation and productive land use.

"We'll be taking proactive stances when Fish and Wildlife is trying to list this species and that species," Pearce said. "We're going to try to come up with innovative ways to protect species and keep the jobs there."

Heinrich said economic issues will most likely dominate his agenda.

"I think you'll see a lot of effort into raising the minimum wage and trying to extend unemployment for the long-term unemployed," Heinrich said. "We'll also be looking very closely at student loans and student debt."

Heinrich, a member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, also said he will push for wilderness protections in New Mexico, including a bill he has co-sponsored with Udall that would set aside almost a half-million acres in southern New Mexico as a national monument.

Several members of the New Mexico delegation cited technology transfer as a key agenda item. Tech transfer is a fancy phrase for spinning government-funded research and technology, such as the billions spent at Sandia and Los Alamos, into private-sector jobs.

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., is co-chairman of the House Technology Transfer Caucus.
He, **Lujan** Grisham and Heinrich each told the Journal they will push to maintain the labs' Lab Directed Research and Development budgets in a way that helps spur innovation. Those funds are under attack from some in Congress as unnecessary in a time of tight budgets.

Udall, who expects to introduce a new tech transfer bill in the coming weeks, said Ernest Moniz, the new secretary of energy, is attuned to the importance of the issue.

"I feel better about getting something done," Udall said. "I think the new secretary has an interest here."

LOAD-DATE: January 13, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Albuquerque Journal

Carlsbad Current-Argus (New Mexico)

January 12, 2014 Sunday

Voting record for NM congressional delegation

BYLINE: Carlsbad Current-Argus

SECTION: NEWS

LENGTH: 183 words

The voting record for New Mexico's congressional delegation for Jan. 5-11 U.S. House

HR 724 To amend the Clean Air Act to remove the requirement for dealer certification of new light-duty motor vehicles. (Passed 405-0) Steve Pearce yes, **Ben Ray Lujan** yes, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HR 3527 Poison Center Network Act (Passed 388-18)Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HR 3628 Transportation Reports Elimination Act of 2013 (Passed 406-0) Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HR 2279 Reducing Excessive Deadline Obligations Act of 2013 (Passed 225-188) Pearce yes, **Lujan** no, **Lujan** Grisham no.

HR 3811 Health Exchange Security and Transparency Act (Passed 291-122) Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes. U.S. Senate

S 1845 Motion to Invoke Cloture on the Motion to Proceed; A bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes. (Passed 60-37) Martin Heinrich yes, Tom Udall yes.

PN 529 Upon Reconsideration Motion to Invoke Cloture on the Nomination of Robert Wilkins to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the D.C. Circuit. (Passed 55-38) Heinrich yes, Udall yes.

LOAD-DATE: January 12, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2014 Carlsbad Current-Argus, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

January 9, 2014 Thursday 12:24 AM EST

New Mexico Dems: New Mexico's Democratic Congressional Delegation Announces $1.6 Million Grant for Highway and Road Repairs

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 249 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan**, and Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham have announced that the New Mexico Department of Transportation will receive a $1.6 million grant for repair and reconstruction of roads around the state damaged in last year's floods. The grant funds will be used to restore major highways and roads on federal lands that were damaged by the severe flooding in September. The record-breaking rain and storms caused damage in about two-thirds of the state.

In October, at the urging of the congressional delegation, President Obama declared a major disaster for the state of New Mexico and Santa Clara Pueblo for the severe storms and flooding that occurred from Sept. 9-22. This funding is being made available as a result of the delegation's request for emergency relief. It will help restore essential traffic, minimize the extent of damage, protect remaining facilities, and complete other permanent repairs necessary to restore roads and highways to their pre-flooding conditions. The U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration authorized the funds through an Emergency Relief program, which may award funds to a state after the president or governor issues a formal emergency declaration and if the state requests emergency relief for repairs to its eligible highways.

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage4psi-140110-30VitinMar-4596736

LOAD-DATE: January 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

January 9, 2014 Thursday 12:23 AM EST

New Mexico Dems: Congressman Ben Ray Lujan: Senate Action on Unemployment Insurance a Good First Step

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 364 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District applauded Senate action today that will allow for the consideration of bipartisan legislation to extend federal unemployment benefits that expired at the end of last month. On December 28, 1.3 million Americans, including 6,000 New Mexicans, saw their unemployment benefits run out at a time when the economy in New Mexico continues to struggle in the wake of the deepest recession in a generation.

"The Senate vote to move forward on legislation to extend unemployment insurance is a positive first step toward helping our friends and neighbors who want to work and support their families, but are not finding opportunities to get ahead during these difficult economic times," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Instead of providing a lifeline for the long-term unemployed in New Mexico, House Republican leaders have sat idly by as unemployment benefits for thousands of New Mexicans expired, and as more individuals stand to lose benefits every week."

Without Congressional action, an additional 9,000 New Mexicans will lose federal unemployment benefits over the next six months. Last month, **Lujan** wrote to House Speaker John Boehner (http://www.**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-signs-letter-to-boehner-calling-for-extension-of-federal-unemployment-insurance/) urging him to schedule a House vote on this important issue before recessing for the year. Republican leaders failed to act, allowing benefits to lapse. **Lujan** is once again calling for action in the House.

"As the House returns to Washington this week, extending unemployment benefits should be a top priority. At a time when there are three job seekers for every one job opening, an extension to this important safety net can help families continue to weather these tough times," **Lujan** added. "Not only does unemployment insurance support those who have been hit hardest by the recession, but it also assists our local businesses that feel the impact when families no longer can afford the basics of food, clothing, or rent."

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage4psi-140110-30VitinMar-4596731

LOAD-DATE: January 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 8, 2014

N.M. Delegation Announces $1.6 Million Grant for Highway and Road Repairs; Rep. Steve Pearce (R-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 250 words

WASHINGTON - U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Lujan**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced that the New Mexico Department of Transportation will receive a $1.6 million grant for repair and reconstruction of roads around the state damaged in last year's floods. The grant funds will be used to restore major highways and roads on federal lands that were damaged by the severe flooding in September. The record-breaking rain and storms caused damage in about two-thirds of the state.

In October, at the urging of the congressional delegation, President Obama declared a major disaster for the state of New Mexico and Santa Clara Pueblo for the severe storms and flooding that occurred from Sept. 9-22. This funding is being made available as a result of the delegation's request for emergency relief. It will help restore essential traffic, minimize the extent of damage, protect remaining facilities, and complete other permanent repairs necessary to restore roads and highways to their pre-flooding conditions. The U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration authorized the funds through an Emergency Relief program, which may award funds to a state after the president or governor issues a formal emergency declaration and if the state requests emergency relief for repairs to its eligible highways.

Read this original document at: http://pearce.house.gov/press-release/nm-delegation-announces-16-million-grant-highway-and-road-repairs

LOAD-DATE: January 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 8, 2014

N.M. Delegation Announces $1.6 Million Grant for Highway and Road Repairs;
Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 253 words

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Lujan**, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced that the New Mexico Department of Transportation will receive a $1.6 million grant for repair and reconstruction of roads around the state damaged in last year's floods. The grant funds will be used to restore major highways and roads on federal lands that were damaged by the severe flooding in September. The record-breaking rain and storms caused damage in about two-thirds of the state.

In October, at the urging of the congressional delegation, President Obama declared a major disaster for the state of New Mexico and Santa Clara Pueblo for the severe storms and flooding that occurred from Sept. 9-22. This funding is being made available as a result of the delegation's request for emergency relief. It will help restore essential traffic, minimize the extent of damage, protect remaining facilities, and complete other permanent repairs necessary to restore roads and highways to their pre-flooding conditions. The U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration authorized the funds through an Emergency Relief program, which may award funds to a state after the president or governor issues a formal emergency declaration and if the state requests emergency relief for repairs to its eligible highways.

Read this original document at: http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/press-releases/nm-delegation-announces-16-million-grant-for-highway-and-road-repairs

LOAD-DATE: January 10, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

350 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

January 8, 2014 Wednesday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WAR ON POVERTY

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 373 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the 50th anniversary of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty."

"Fifty years ago, in a State of the Union Address, President Johnson declared "War on Poverty' and brought to the conscience of a nation the plight of millions of Americans who were suffering from hunger, unemployment, and a lack of economic opportunity. He focused attention on those for whom the American Dream had fallen out of reach.

"Since that time, our nation has made strides, implementing polices that have given more Americans an opportunity to succeed and climb the ladder out of poverty. Social Security and Medicare have been instrumental in helping millions of Americans avoid the clutches of poverty and secure dignity in their older years. Head Start, Pell Grants, and nutrition assistance have all helped lift millions of families out of destitution.

"Despite these efforts over the past 50 years, much work still remains. In New Mexico, too many of our friends and neighbors are living in poverty. Too many of our children go to bed hungry every night. Too many Americans still "live on the outskirts of hope' just as President Johnson saw five decades ago. Our fight against poverty must not fade. As long as 20 percent of New Mexicans continue to live in poverty, we must continue to work toward solutions that provide a fair shot at the American Dream.

"Slashing nutrition assistance for families that are struggling to put food on the table and allowing unemployment insurance to expire for those who are working so hard to find a job in the face of a tough economy is no way to achieve this goal. Providing a safety net that supports families during difficult times along with implementing economic policies that invest in education, innovation, and infrastructure are critical components of an agenda that will create jobs and provide opportunities for all Americans.

"As we recognize this anniversary of President Johnson's call to action, let us recommit to work on behalf of the men, women, and children who live in poverty and address this challenge head on."

LOAD-DATE: January 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

January 8, 2014 Wednesday 8:27 PM EST

Lujan Statement on 50th Anniversary of the War on Poverty

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 382 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today on the 50th anniversary of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty."

"Fifty years ago, in a State of the Union Address, President Johnson declared 'War on Poverty' and brought to the conscience of a nation the plight of millions of Americans who were suffering from hunger, unemployment, and a lack of economic opportunity. He focused attention on those for whom the American Dream had fallen out of reach.

"Since that time, our nation has made strides, implementing polices that have given more Americans an opportunity to succeed and climb the ladder out of poverty. Social Security and Medicare have been instrumental in helping millions of Americans avoid the clutches of poverty and secure dignity in their older years. Head Start, Pell Grants, and nutrition assistance have all helped lift millions of families out of destitution.

"Despite these efforts over the past 50 years, much work still remains. In New Mexico, too many of our friends and neighbors are living in poverty. Too many of our children go to bed hungry every night. Too many Americans still 'live on the outskirts of hope' just as President Johnson saw five decades ago. Our fight against poverty must not fade. As long as 20 percent of New Mexicans continue to live in poverty, we must continue to work toward solutions that provide a fair shot at the American Dream.

"Slashing nutrition assistance for families that are struggling to put food on the table and allowing unemployment insurance to expire for those who are working so hard to find a job in the face of a tough economy is no way to achieve this goal. Providing a safety net that supports families during difficult times along with implementing economic policies that invest in education, innovation, and infrastructure are critical components of an agenda that will create jobs and provide opportunities for all Americans.

"As we recognize this anniversary of President Johnson's call to action, let us recommit to work on behalf of the men, women, and children who live in poverty and address this challenge head on."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140110-4596163 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: January 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

January 7, 2014

LUJAN: SENATE ACTION ON UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE A POSITIVE FIRST STEP;
With 6,000 New Mexicans Having Lost Benefits, House Needs to Act;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 345 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District applauded Senate action today that will allow for the consideration of bipartisan legislation to extend federal unemployment benefits that expired at the end of last month. On December 28, 1.3 million Americans, including 6,000 New Mexicans, saw their unemployment benefits run out at a time when the economy in New Mexico continues to struggle in the wake of the deepest recession in a generation.

"The Senate vote to move forward on legislation to extend unemployment insurance is a positive first step toward helping our friends and neighbors who want to work and support their families, but are not finding opportunities to get ahead during these difficult economic times," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Instead of providing a lifeline for the long-term unemployed in New Mexico, House Republican leaders have sat idly by as unemployment benefits for thousands of New Mexicans expired, and as more individuals stand to lose benefits every week."

Without Congressional action, an additional 9,000 New Mexicans will lose federal unemployment benefits over the next six months. Last month, **Lujan** wrote to House Speaker John Boehner urging him to schedule a House vote on this important issue before recessing for the year. Republican leaders failed to act, allowing benefits to lapse. **Lujan** is once again calling for action in the House.

"As the House returns to Washington this week, extending unemployment benefits should be a top priority. At a time when there are three job seekers for every one job opening, an extension to this important safety net can help families continue to weather these tough times," **Lujan** added. "Not only does unemployment insurance support those who have been hit hardest by the recession, but it also assists our local businesses that feel the impact when families no longer can afford the basics of food, clothing, or rent."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-senate-action-on-unemployment-insurance-a-positive-first-step/

LOAD-DATE: January 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHM

Copyright 2014 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

January 7, 2014 Tuesday

LUJAN: SENATE ACTION ON UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE A POSITIVE FIRST STEP

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 332 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District applauded Senate action today that will allow for the consideration of bipartisan legislation to extend federal unemployment benefits that expired at the end of last month. On December 28, 1.3 million Americans, including 6,000 New Mexicans, saw their unemployment benefits run out at a time when the economy in New Mexico continues to struggle in the wake of the deepest recession in a generation.

"The Senate vote to move forward on legislation to extend unemployment insurance is a positive first step toward helping our friends and neighbors who want to work and support their families, but are not finding opportunities to get ahead during these difficult economic times," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Instead of providing a lifeline for the long-term unemployed in New Mexico, House Republican leaders have sat idly by as unemployment benefits for thousands of New Mexicans expired, and as more individuals stand to lose benefits every week."

Without Congressional action, an additional 9,000 New Mexicans will lose federal unemployment benefits over the next six months. Last month, **Lujan** wrote to House Speaker John Boehner urging him to schedule a House vote on this important issue before recessing for the year. Republican leaders failed to act, allowing benefits to lapse. **Lujan** is once again calling for action in the House.

"As the House returns to Washington this week, extending unemployment benefits should be a top priority. At a time when there are three job seekers for every one job opening, an extension to this important safety net can help families continue to weather these tough times," **Lujan** added. "Not only does unemployment insurance support those who have been hit hardest by the recession, but it also assists our local businesses that feel the impact when families no longer can afford the basics of food, clothing, or rent."

LOAD-DATE: January 9, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 States News Service

Targeted News Service

January 7, 2014 Tuesday 9:12 PM EST

Lujan: Senate Action on Unemployment Insurance a Positive First Step

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 341 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District applauded Senate action today that will allow for the consideration of bipartisan legislation to extend federal unemployment benefits that expired at the end of last month. On December 28, 1.3 million Americans, including 6,000 New Mexicans, saw their unemployment benefits run out at a time when the economy in New Mexico continues to struggle in the wake of the deepest recession in a generation.

"The Senate vote to move forward on legislation to extend unemployment insurance is a positive first step toward helping our friends and neighbors who want to work and support their families, but are not finding opportunities to get ahead during these difficult economic times," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Instead of providing a lifeline for the long-term unemployed in New Mexico, House Republican leaders have sat idly by as unemployment benefits for thousands of New Mexicans expired, and as more individuals stand to lose benefits every week."

Without Congressional action, an additional 9,000 New Mexicans will lose federal unemployment benefits over the next six months. Last month, **Lujan** wrote to House Speaker John Boehner urging him to schedule a House vote on this important issue before recessing for the year. Republican leaders failed to act, allowing benefits to lapse. **Lujan** is once again calling for action in the House.

"As the House returns to Washington this week, extending unemployment benefits should be a top priority. At a time when there are three job seekers for every one job opening, an extension to this important safety net can help families continue to weather these tough times," **Lujan** added. "Not only does unemployment insurance support those who have been hit hardest by the recession, but it also assists our local businesses that feel the impact when families no longer can afford the basics of food, clothing, or rent."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-140109-4594444 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: January 8, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2014 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

355 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Associated Press State & Local

December 28, 2013 Saturday 3:11 PM GMT

NM reps push to preserve Native American seeds

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL

LENGTH: 140 words

DATELINE: ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) - Two members of New Mexico's congressional delegation are pushing for the preservation of Native American seeds.

Legislation introduced by U.S. Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and **Ben Ray Lujan** would focus on those seeds that are used for cultural, religious, medicinal, ceremonial and agricultural purposes.

Under the measure, tribes could get grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for research, education and training programs aimed at protecting the purity of Native American seeds.

The legislation would also allow for the construction of seed storage facilities.

At Tesuque Pueblo in northern New Mexico, Tribal Gov. Mark Mitchell says environmental contaminants and other factors are threatening the integrity of the community's native seeds.

The legislation has been referred to the House Agriculture Committee.

LOAD-DATE: December 29, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

DOCUMENT-TYPE: Spot Development

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Associated Press
All Rights Reserved

356 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

December 26, 2013 Thursday

Bill introduced to protect NM seeds

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 322 words

Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-1) and **Ben Ray Luján** (NM-3) have introduced legislation to help preserve Native American seeds used for cultural, religious, medicinal, ceremonial and agricultural purposes.

The Native American Seeds Protection Act of 2013 would allow tribes to obtain grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to conduct research, education and training programs aimed at protecting the purity of Native American seeds.

The legislation would also allow the construction of seed storage facilities.

"New Mexico's rich Native American history has made countless contributions to our state's culture and traditions," said **Lujan** Grisham in a statement. "Protecting native seeds keeps tribal communities connected to their ancestors and preserves access to a critical cultural resource. Tribes are becoming increasingly concerned that current conditions threaten the purity of these native seeds. That's why I'm proud to introduce the Native American Seeds Protection Act, legislation that will expand the capacity of tribes to test, monitor and preserve their native seeds for future generations."

"Protecting native seeds is about more than protecting a critical source of food and medicines - it is about preserving the heritage and culture of Native American communities," said Rep. **Luján**, a vice chair of the Congressional Native American Caucus. "These seeds represent not only food and sustenance; they represent a way of life and cultural practices that have been passed down for generations. Native seeds also exemplify the strong connection that many New Mexico communities have to the land. This legislation will provide federal grants that will assist in the effort to protect and preserve Native American seeds and the rich culture they embody."

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: December 26, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

December 21, 2013 Saturday

Reaction varies in N.M. Supreme Court ruling

BYLINE: Arin McKenna

SECTION: TODAY'S NEWS

LENGTH: 764 words

The New Mexico Supreme Court ruling legalizing same-gender marriage prompted reactions across the United States.

U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham issued a joint statement applauding the ruling.

"Today's court ruling is a resounding victory for New Mexicans in all four corners who love one another and deserve to be treated equally under the law-just as our Constitution intended," said Udall. "Our country has come a long way in advancing marriage equality for all, and I am proud New Mexico is joining in that forward progress. I'm also glad the court has finally provided the legal clarity for the countless New Mexicans who have been in limbo for too long, and I congratulate all our families in New Mexico who will finally be treated with the respect and dignity they deserve."

"Today is a proud day for New Mexico and a significant step forward to creating a fairer, more just society. I am thrilled that the New Mexico Supreme Court found that our constitution requires marriage equality for all our citizens," said Heinrich. "This ruling stands to strengthen New Mexico families and affirms that loving same sex couples who accept the responsibility of marriage are respected and recognized in our state. We must continue our march toward full equality for all Americans."

"Today's decision by the New Mexico Supreme Court ensures that every couple can make the personal choice of marriage," said **Luján**. "Marriage equality is a matter of civil rights and treating all people who are in loving and committed relationships fairly. Gay and lesbian couples make the same contributions and sacrifices that we all do, including paying taxes, owning business and caring for their families. Now everyone will be treated equally under the law."

"This is an incredible victory for New Mexico, where we believe that all families matter and that everyone deserves the same basic rights and responsibilities that only marriage provides," said **Lujan** Grisham.

"This ruling confirms what we already know and believe - that in New Mexico, freedom means freedom for everyone. I'm thrilled that all New Mexicans now have the opportunity to marry the person they love, and I'm proud that our state is on the right side of history."

"Despite countless efforts made by County Clerks throughout New Mexico, I am proud that New Mexico will join the other 16 states who have legalized same-sex marriage and would like to commend the New Mexico Supreme Court for upholding the State's anti-discrimination provisions in the constitution and outlawing any further discrimination of same-sex couples," wrote State Representative Stephanie Garcia Richard (D-District 43).

"I have been touched by the stories of loving couples, here in District 43, that stood up against out-dated laws and for their equal rights as taxpaying citizens, to obtain marriage licenses in the towns they call home. This is a historic day and I am thrilled to continue to fight for all residents, regardless of race, gender, sexuality and mobility, during the upcoming legislative session."

New Mexico Attorney General and gubernatorial candidate Gary King, who argued for marriage equality in the case before the N.M. Supreme Court, wrote, "This ruling brings the fight for equal rights another step forward - and allows thousands of couples the right to marry the people they love, free from government interference, and protected from undue discrimination. It will allow them to visit their sick spouses in the hospital, to receive health and other benefits due to married couples, and to be counted as spouses in countless other aspects, from loan applications to tax filings."

Not all reactions were positive. Voices for Family Values wrote, "Today the New Mexico Supreme Court released their ruling which redefines marriage to mean something it was never meant to be. The unfortunate effects this will have on society are sweeping. The court chose to issue a mandate and tear down an important pillar of our society-- the traditional family. This opens new opportunities for the traditional family to be undermined and our societies threads to be ravaged."

The organization is collecting signatures from those opposed to same-sex marriage to present to the 2014 legislature.

State Sen. William Sharer (R-Farmington) expressed disappointment in the ruling and vowed to continue his push for a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage.

"If they are saying (prohibiting gay marriage) is unconstitutional," Sharer said, "we need to make it constitutional."

LOAD-DATE: December 22, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

358 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

December 20, 2013 Friday

New Mexico becomes 17th state to allow gay marriage

BYLINE: Steve Terrell, The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 1312 words

Dec. 20--The state Supreme Court ruled unanimously Thursday that it's unconstitutional to deny marriage licenses to same-sex couples in New Mexico.

News of the ruling, which came after eight county clerks in the state had started issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples earlier this year, spread quickly on social media and touched off celebrations among marriage-equality advocates.

New Mexico joins 16 other states in allowing gay marriage through legislation, court rules or voter referendums.

Justice Edward Chávez wrote in the court's opinion that although New Mexico's marriage statutes do not specifically prohibit same-gender marriages, existing state laws have had the effect of preventing same-gender couples from marrying and enjoying the rights and protections of civil marriage.

Read the New Mexico Supreme Court's opinion

Such couples have been "subjected to a history of discrimination and violence," he wrote, and barring them from getting married violates the constitution's equal protection clause. New Mexico cannot deny them the right to marry, he said, "unless the proponents of the legislation -- the opponents of same-gender marriage -- prove that the discrimination caused by the legislation is substantially related to an important government interest."

The court rejected the argument that "responsible procreation and child-rearing" is an "overriding governmental interest," in part because procreation has never been a condition of marriage under New Mexico law, and state law recognizes the right of same-gender couples to raise children.

The court declined to strike down the state's marriage laws, however, because that would be inconsistent with the Legislature's commitment to "fostering stable families." However, Chávez wrote, all the rights, protections and responsibilities of marriage shall "apply equally to both same-gender and opposite-gender married couples."

Politicians supporting gay marriage immediately began to weigh in, expressing jubilation.

City Councilor Patti Bushee and former state Democratic Party chairman Javier Gonzales, two of the three candidates running in the Santa Fe mayor's race, praised the decision, as did two Democratic gubernatorial candidates, Alan Webber and Gary King, as well as Santa Fe Mayor David Coss and current state Democratic Party Chairman Sam Bregman.

Former New Mexico Gov. Gary Johnson, a longtime Republican who ran as a Libertarian in the 2012 presidential election, sent an email, saying, "This ruling is in line with our basic values as a state. In New Mexico, we don't turn our back on any member of our families."

Democrats in New Mexico's congressional delegation -- U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham -- issued a joint news release applauding the decision.

As the news spread across the country, actor George Takei, who played Hikaru Sulu in the original Star Trek, tweeted, "Oh happy day! New Mexico makes 17!"

Gov. Susana Martinez, not a supporter of marriage equality, issued a statement calling for both sides of the issue to show each other respect.

"My personal views on this issue are well-known, and I'm confident that most New Mexicans believe, like I do, that it should have been settled by a vote of the people," Martinez said. "Instead, the Supreme Court stepped in and rendered their decision."

The governor said that while she's sure there will be "intense debate about this decision," she encouraged New Mexicans "to continue to respect one another in their discourse, as this is an important issue for many New Mexicans on both sides. As we move forward, I am hopeful that we will not be divided, as we must come together to tackle very pressing issues, like reforming education and growing our economy, in the weeks and months ahead."

Asked for comment about the decision, a spokesman for the New Mexico Conference of Catholic Bishops, which is opposed to same-sex marriage, pointed to a brief statement on the website of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

"The bishops of New Mexico recognize the New Mexico Supreme Court as the interpreter of the State Constitution. The Catholic Church respects and loves the gay and lesbian members of our community. We will continue to promote Catholic teaching of the Biblical definition of marriage to be that of one man and one woman."

State Sen. Bill Sharer, R-Farmington, a leading legislative opponent of same-sex marriage, said in a statement that he's disappointed by the court ruling. But, he added, "If they are saying [prohibiting gay marriage] is unconstitutional, we need to make it constitutional."

Sharer said he plans to introduce a constitutional amendment to reverse the court's ruling. He had planned to prefile a proposed amendment Thursday, but when the court's decision came down, he decided to redraft it to make sure it conformed with points made by the high court.

On the national level, Brian Brown, president of National Organization for Marriage, issued a statement saying,"Once again, activists judges have thrown out the historic legal understanding of marriage in New Mexico. This is a continuation of a very dangerous rush towards silencing people of faith who simply believe marriage to be the union of one man and one woman."

After oral arguments in the Supreme Court last October, Sharer had predicted the court would rule in favor of same-sex marriage but said he would seek legislation to specifically outlaw it.

Legislative opponents of gay marriage have tried for more than a decade to pass laws or constitutional amendments to prohibit homosexuals from marrying each other. Normally, such bills get stuck in the legislative committee process. With Democrats controlling the Legislature, there's not much to suggest that the result would be any different in the upcoming session.

Meanwhile, county clerks who haven't already been issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples began preparing to do so.

Sandoval County Clerk Eileen Garbagni said Thursday that her office will begin issuing marriage licenses to gay couples at 9 a.m. Friday, Dec. 20. "We've got the paperwork ready," she said. Katrina Salazar, who works at the Rio Arriba County Clerk's Office in Tierra Amarilla, said because of the ruling, her office will now begin issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples. "That's the law," she said.

The decision could have significant benefits for married gay people who are eligible for Social Security benefits or will be eligible soon.

"As the rules are currently written, state recognition of a marriage is key to the issue of Social Security retirement benefits and survivor benefits," said Brad Wright, a spokesman for the Washington, D.C.-based National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare. "The difference can be literally life-changing for some, with hundreds of dollars more per month."

The website for the Social Security Administration says the agency is developing and implementing its policies in that area.

"If you are in, or are a surviving spouse of, a same-sex marriage or other legal same-sex relationship, even if you live in a state that prohibits same-sex marriage, we encourage you to apply right away," the website says.

The issue came to a head in New Mexico this year, when same-sex couples in Las Cruces, Bernalillo and Santa Fe counties asked county clerks to issue marriage licenses. At first the clerks declined, but then judicial filings cleared the way for same-sex licenses in some counties but not others.

The case was accepted by the five-member court when all 33 county clerks across the state asked for clarity on the laws.

Contact Steve Terrell at sterrell@sfnewmexican.com Read his political blog at roundhouseroundup.com.

___ (c)2013 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: December 20, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20131220-SF-New-Mexico-becomes-17th-state-to-allow-gay-marriage-1220-20131220

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2013 The Santa Fe New Mexican

States News Service

December 20, 2013 Friday

LUJAN GRISHAM, **LUJAN** INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO PROTECT NATIVE AMERICAN SEEDS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 440 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham:

U.S. Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01) and **Ben Ray Lujan** (NM-03), both members of the Congressional Native American Caucus, have introduced legislation to help preserve Native American seeds used for cultural, religious, medicinal, ceremonial and agricultural purposes.

The Native American Seeds Protection Act of 2013 (H.R. 3782) would allow tribes, working in conjunction with qualified research entities, to obtain grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to conduct research, education and training programs aimed at protecting the purity of Native American seeds. The legislation would also allow the construction of seed storage facilities to ensure these seeds can continue to play an integral role in tribal life for generations to come.

"New Mexico's rich Native American history has made countless contributions to our state's culture and traditions," said Rep. **Lujan** Grisham. "Protecting native seeds keeps tribal communities connected to their ancestors and preserves access to a critical cultural resource. Tribes are

becoming increasingly concerned that current conditions threaten the purity of these native seeds. That's why I'm proud to introduce the Native American Seeds Protection Act, legislation that will expand the capacity of tribes to test, monitor and preserve their native seeds for future generations."

"Protecting native seeds is about more than protecting a critical source of food and medicines - it is about preserving the heritage and culture of Native American communities," said Rep. **Lujan**, a Vice Chair of the Congressional Native American Caucus. "These seeds represent not only food and sustenance; they represent a way of life and cultural practices that have been passed down for generations. Native seeds also exemplify the strong connection that many New Mexico communities have to the land. This legislation will provide federal grants that will assist in the effort to protect and preserve Native American seeds and the rich culture they embody."

"The Pueblo of Tesuque is working hard to protect our centuries-old practices of sowing and harvesting of native seeds that were handed down to us from our ancestors. However, transgenic presence, environmental contaminants and other factors threaten the integrity of our native seeds," said Pueblo of Tesuque Governor Mark Mitchell. "Congresswoman **Lujan** Grisham and Congressman **Lujan** have been true partners in working with the Pueblo to help us maintain our traditional agricultural system that we will pass on to our children and grandchildren."

LOAD-DATE: December 20, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

360 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

December 20, 2013 Friday

LUJAN, LUJAN GRISHAM INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO PROTECT NATIVE AMERICAN SEEDS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 438 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

U.S. Reps. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01) and **Ben Ray Lujan** (NM-03), both members of the Congressional Native American Caucus, have introduced legislation to help preserve Native American seeds used for cultural, religious, medicinal, ceremonial and agricultural purposes.

The Native American Seeds Protection Act of 2013 (H.R. 3782) would allow tribes, working in conjunction with qualified research entities, to obtain grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to conduct research, education and training programs aimed at protecting the purity of Native

American seeds. The legislation would also allow the construction of seed storage facilities to ensure these seeds can continue to play an integral role in tribal life for generations to come.

"New Mexico's rich Native American history has made countless contributions to our state's culture and traditions," said Rep. **Lujan** Grisham. "Protecting native seeds keeps tribal communities connected to their ancestors and preserves access to a critical cultural resource. Tribes are becoming increasingly concerned that current conditions threaten the purity of these native seeds. That's why I'm proud to introduce the Native American Seeds Protection Act, legislation that will expand the capacity of tribes to test, monitor and preserve their native seeds for future generations."

"Protecting native seeds is about more than protecting a critical source of food and medicines - it is about preserving the heritage and culture of Native American communities," said Rep. **Lujan**, a Vice Chair of the Congressional Native American Caucus. "These seeds represent not only food and sustenance; they represent a way of life and cultural practices that have been passed down for generations. Native seeds also exemplify the strong connection that many New Mexico communities have to the land. This legislation will provide federal grants that will assist in the effort to protect and preserve Native American seeds and the rich culture they embody."

"The Pueblo of Tesuque is working hard to protect our centuries-old practices of sowing and harvesting of native seeds that were handed down to us from our ancestors. However, transgenic presence, environmental contaminants and other factors threaten the integrity of our native seeds," said Pueblo of Tesuque Governor Mark Mitchell. "Congresswoman **Lujan** Grisham and Congressman **Lujan** have been true partners in working with the Pueblo to help us maintain our traditional agricultural system that we will pass on to our children and grandchildren."

LOAD-DATE: January 5, 2014

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

Targeted News Service

December 20, 2013 Friday 9:23 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: New Mexico's Democratic Lawmakers Applaud New Mexico Supreme Court Decision on Marriage Equality

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 488 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** and Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham joined together yesterday in applauding the decision by the New Mexico Supreme Court that affirms marriage equality in the State of New Mexico.

"We hold that the State of New Mexico is constitutionally required to allow same-gender couples to marry and must extend to them the rights, protections, and responsibilities that derive from civil marriage under New Mexico law," wrote Justice Edward Chavez in a unanimous 5 to 0 decision. The Court found that prohibiting individuals from marrying solely because of sexual orientation is a violation of the Equal Protection Clause in the New Mexico Constitution.

"[The] court ruling is a resounding victory for New Mexicans in all four corners who love one another and deserve to be treated equally under the law - just as our Constitution intended," said Udall issued yesterday afternoon. "Our country has come a long way in advancing marriage equality for all, and I am proud New Mexico is joining in that forward progress. I'm also glad the court has finally provided the legal clarity for the countless New Mexicans who have been in limbo for too long, and I congratulate all our families in New Mexico who will finally be treated with the respect and dignity they deserve."

"Today is a proud day for New Mexico and a significant step forward to creating a fairer, more just society. I am thrilled that the New Mexico Supreme Court found that our constitution requires marriage equality for all our citizens," said Heinrich in yesterday's statement. "This ruling stands to strengthen New Mexico families and affirms that loving same sex couples who accept the responsibility of marriage are respected and recognized in our state. We must continue our march toward full equality for all Americans."

"The decision by the New Mexico Supreme Court ensures that every couple can make the personal choice of marriage," said **Lujan**. "Marriage equality is a matter of civil rights and treating all people who are in loving and committed relationships fairly. Gay and lesbian couples make the same contributions and sacrifices that we all do, including paying taxes, owning business and caring for their families. Now everyone will be treated equally under the law."

"This is an incredible victory for New Mexico, where we believe that all families matter and that everyone deserves the same basic rights and responsibilities that only marriage provides," said **Lujan** Grisham. "This ruling confirms what we already know and believe - that in New Mexico, freedom means freedom for everyone. I'm thrilled that all New Mexicans now have the opportunity to marry the person they love, and I'm proud that our state is on the right side of history.

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage4psi-131221-30VitinMar-4586293

LOAD-DATE: December 21, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

362 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

December 19, 2013 Thursday

EDITORIAL: An essential step -- Scale back spying

BYLINE: The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: COMMENTARY

LENGTH: 787 words

Dec. 19--The decision by a federal judge earlier this week granting a preliminary injunction to block the government's collection of domestic phone records is welcome to all who believe that U.S. citizens have the right to privacy absent probable cause of wrongdoing. U.S. District Court Judge Richard J. Leon, in making his ruling, is saying that the goverment's widespread, secret spying program is likely unconstitutional.

Naturally, the ruling by Leon will not stand unchallenged. Expect more debate and more discussion about just how far the government needs to go to protect the security of citizens. But it is time to stop the debating and start restraining the nation's security agencies. People deserve, as the Fourth Amendment so clearly states, to be secure in their person -- without unwarranted government intrusion and spying. That is true whether we are talking about police breaking into a home without probable cause or government spies from the National Security Agency capturing the records of a private citizens' cellphone calls.

For New Mexicans, some of the strongest fighters against an overreaching government are our two U.S. senators, Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich. (The state's House delegation, Democratic U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Luján**, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham and Republican Steve Pearce, also are calling for less NSA spying and more accountability. All three voted last summer to defund the NSA mass surveillance program, through an amendment to the Defense Department's annual appropriation bill that failed narrowly.)

Udall, New Mexico's senior senator, has long been a champion of civil liberties and the rights of citizens to be left alone. He voted against the USA Patriot Act, passed in the post 9/11 fervor to fight terrorism no matter the cost to liberty. He correctly predicted that the Patriot Act would undermine the rights of citizens. He continues to push for scaling back mass spying and for investigations of these programs. As he said: "We can protect our national security without sacrificing our constitutional rights."

Heinrich, in a statement applauding the decision, put it well: "We have allowed the intelligence community to stray from what the Framers had in mind when they wrote the Fourth Amendment and were dealing directly with government overreach. It's increasingly clear that some of the NSA's current efforts are unnecessary, and possibly unlawful." In a closed Senate Select Committee on Intelligence hearing in October, Heinrich offered an amendment that would have stopped the NSA from collecting Americans' cellphone location information in bulk while still allowing the government to obtain individual warrants. The amendment failed by a 7-8 vote.

More broadly, Heinrich and Udall back the USA Freedom Act, legislation that would end the metadata collection of Americans' phone and other communications records currently allowed under Section 215 of the USA Patriot Act. This legislation should pass -- and it is an issue that can unite liberals and conservatives. People from all political persuasions agree that it is wrong to invade privacy so routinely.

This preliminary ruling -- made by an appointee of President George W. Bush -- is limited to the cases before the court. With numerous other lawsuits in the pipeline, though, this decision should be the beginning of the people reclaiming their right to privacy. Leon delayed his order barring the

government collecting the information pending an appeal, but it is clear he expects the plaintiffs to prevail.

Citizens know about this unprecedented mining of information because one man, Edward Snowden, leaked the existence of the program to journalists -- at considerable risk to his safety and security. Snowden, who had been a National Security Agency contractor, believed the government's spying program had to be exposed. He thought Americans deserved to know what their government was doing to their privacy, and that if made public, the programs would not survive a constitutional challenge. Today, Snowden is living in Russia and trying to find asylum from a government that still wants to arrest him and put him on trial for espionage.

His actions gave citizens important knowledge about their government's actions. A federal judge is warning that security agencies are going too far. It is up to citizens to follow through now and demand action from their elected representatives. Unless people are willing to fight for their privacy, they will sacrifice it to a security state whose appetite for information can never be satisfied.

___ (c)2013 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: December 19, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20131219-SF-EDITORIAL-An-essential-step-Scale-back-spying-1219-20131219

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2013 The Santa Fe New Mexican

Carlsbad Current-Argus (New Mexico)

December 17, 2013 Tuesday

How NM's congressional representatives voted, Dec. 8-14

BYLINE: Carlsbad Current-Argus

SECTION: NEWS

LENGTH: 561 words

The voting record for New Mexico's congressional delegation for Dec. 8-14 U.S. House

HR 3521 Department of Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Lease Authorization Act of 2013 (Passed 346-1) Steve Pearce yes, **Ben Ray Lujan** yes, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HR 1402 VA Expiring Authorities Extension Act of 2013 (Passed 353-0) Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HR 2019 Gabriella Miller Kids First Research Act (Passed 295-103) Pearce yes, **Lujan** no, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HR 2319 To clarify certain provisions of the Native American Veterans Memorial Establishment Act of 1994. (Passed 398-0) Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

S 1471 To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of the Army to reconsider decisions to inter or honor the memory of a person in a national cemetery, and for other purposes. (Passed 398-1) Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HR 3212 To ensure compliance with the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction by countries with which the United States enjoys reciprocal obligations, to establish procedures for the prompt return of children abducted to other countries, and for other purposes (Passed 398-0) Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HR 1992 To amend the requirements relating to assessment of Israels qualitative military edge over military threats, and for other purposes. (Passed 399-0) Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HJ RES 59 Making continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes (Passed 332-94) Pearce no, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

H RES 441 Providing for concurrence by the House in the Senate amendments to H.R. 3304, with an amendment. (Passed 350-69) Pearce yes, **Lujan** did not vote, **Lujan** Grisham yes. U.S. Senate

PN 527 Confirmation Patricia Ann Millett, of Virginia, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit (Confirmed 56-38) Martin Heinrich yes, Tom Udall yes.

PN 408 Confirmation Melvin L. Watt, to be Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency (Confirmed 57-41) Heinrich yes, Udall yes.

PN 528 Confirmation Cornelia T.L. Pillard, of the District of Columbia, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit. (Confirmed 51-44) Heinrich yes, Udall yes.

PN 507 Confirmation Chai Rachel Feldblum, of D.C., to be a Member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. (Confirmed 54-41) Heinrich yes, Udall yes.

PN 424 Confirmation: Elizabeth A. Wolford, of New York, to be U.S. District Judge. (Confirmed 70-29) Heinrich yes, Udall yes.

PN 460 Confirmation Landya B. McCafferty, of N.H., to be U.S. District Judge (Confirmed 79-19) Heinrich yes, Udall yes.

PN 243 Confirmation Patricia M. Wald, of D.C. to be a Member of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board (Confirmed 57-41) Heinrich yes, Udall yes.

PN 461 Confirmation Brian Morris, of Montana, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Montana. (Confirmed 75-20) Heinrich yes, Udall yes.

PN 462 Confirmation Susan P. Watters, of Montana, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Montana. (Confirmed 77-19) Heinrich yes, Udall yes.

PN 774 Confirmation Deborah Lee James, of Virginia, to be Secretary of the Air Force. (Confirmed 79-6) Heinrich yes, Udall yes.

PN 808 Confirmation Heather Anne Higginbottom to be Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources. (Confirmed 74-17) Heinrich yes, Udall yes.

LOAD-DATE: December 18, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Carlsbad Current-Argus, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

364 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Political Transcript Wire

December 13, 2013 Friday

REP. GREG WALDEN HOLDS A HEARING ON FCC OVERSIGHT

LENGTH: 21891 words

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY HOLDS A HEARING ON FCC OVERSIGHT

DECEMBER 12, 2013

SPEAKERS: REP. GREG WALDEN, R-ORE. CHAIRMAN REP. BOB LATTA, R-OHIO REP. LEE TERRY, R-NEB. REP. JOHN SHIMKUS, R-ILL. REP. MIKE ROGERS, R-MICH. REP. MARSHA BLACKBURN, R-TENN. REP. BRETT GUTHRIE, R-KY. REP. ADAM KINZINGER, R-ILL. REP. STEVE SCALISE, R-LA. REP. LEONARD LANCE, R-N.J. REP. CORY GARDNER, R-COLO. REP. MIKE POMPEO, R-KAN. REP. BILLY LONG, R-MO. REP. RENEE ELLMERS, R-N.C. REP. JOE L. BARTON, R-TEXAS EX OFFICIO REP. FRED UPTON, R-MICH. EX OFFICIO

REP. ANNA G. ESHOO, D-CALIF., RANKING MEMBER REP. BOBBY L. RUSH, D-ILL. REP. DIANA DEGETTE, D-COLO. REP. MIKE DOYLE, D-PA. REP. DORIS MATSUI, D-CALIF. REP. FRANK PALLONE JR., D-N.J. REP. JOHN D. DINGELL, D-MICH. REP. BRUCE BRALEY, D-IOWA REP. PETER WELCH, D-VT. REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M. REP. JIM MATHESON, D-UTAH REP. HENRY A. WAXMAN, D-CALIF. EX OFFICIO

WITNESSES: THOMAS E. WHEELER, CHAIRMAN, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

MIGNON L. CLYBURN, COMMISSIONER, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

JESSICA ROSENWORCEL, COMMISSIONER, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

AJIT VARADARAJ PAI, COMMISSIONER, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

MICHAEL P. O'RIELLY, COMMISSIONER, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

[*] WALDEN: I'll call to order the Subcommittee on Communication and Technology. And it's a delight to welcome all five members of the Federal Communications Commission, fully installed and bright and shiny faces and welcome to go today. We welcome you. And Chairman Wheeler and Commissioner O'Rielly, we especially welcome you and look forward to working with you to set the communications agenda for the United States.

Federal Communications Commission is the arm of our government, tasked with fostering some of the most important parts of our national economy. And among them, the telecommunications industry, the video distribution industries and the Internet.

Give the economic significance of these industries, the changes from Congress -- the charge from Congress to encourage competition, license our national spectrum assets and facilitate technological advances is one that must be discharged with transparency, accountability and a long view of the technological landscape.

It is with this in mind, that the subcommittee has worked over the last three years on efforts to improve the commission's processes. As the subcommittee with jurisdiction over the Federal Communications Commission, take this task very seriously and with great care to ensure the commission not only remains a vital institution, but one that can serve as an example for other federal agencies of accountability and efficiency.

A bipartisan majority of this subcommittee is deeply committed to this cause, and it's proud to have reported out a bipartisan FCC Process Reform Bill to the full House of Representatives, yesterday.

Chairman Wheeler, it's clear you want to improve the agency. I've appreciated our conversations and your comments. And I'd like to commend for turning your attention to this task as one of your first roles as chairman by asking one of your top advisers to review the FCC process and submit recommendations for improvement by early 2014.

While there are a number of large proceedings currently pending at the commission, many of which we will talk about today, I'm particularly concerned with returning the commission to addressing some of its long overdue responsibilities.

For example, despite multiple unsuccessful trips to the Third Circuit Court of Appeals, the commission's responsibility to address the media ownership proceeding, remains unfulfilled.

Additionally, licensing, one of the original -- licensing, one of the original reasons for the creation of the commission, has fallen woefully behind.

Of particular note is the tragic pace of processing of applications in the commission's media bureau.

Now the AM radio industry has been clamoring for the ability to use FM translators to give new life to that classic medium. And I certainly appreciate what Commissioner Pai has done, taking on this issue and it's very good work.

And as a former licensee, I actually know firsthand, the commission has been in no rush to address translator applications. In fact, my own application sat unresolved at the commission for 10 years.

To put this in context, while the commission considered my application, my wife and I actually sold our radio stations, our son went off an graduated from college and every full power television station in the country converted from analog to digital broadcasting.

Look, the commission can do better than that. The commission should do better than that. And I'm hopeful that our shared commitment will lead to improvement in that bureau.

As the only one on the panel with the unique experience of having been a licensee of commercial broadcast and still under your jurisdiction with my amateur radio license, which I'm set to renew for March, hopefully I will get approved within 10 years, I'd like to offer two pieces of advice for you as you move forward with your change.

First, where Congress has spoken, I urge you to heed the words in statute and reject calls to act in ways contrary to congressional intent. For example, in the incentive auction proceeding, some are calling on the commission to exclude bidders from participating in the auction. Others, still are calling

for excessive guard bands in the attempt to end-run requirements to license, reclaim TV band spectrum.

I'm just saying both are bad ideas.

Second, I urge you to bear in mine that even seemingly small changes in your rules can have significant impact on the market. The commission's recent decision to apply yet incomplete rules to its UHF discount has effectively frozen many plans for broadcast mergers and acquisition.

The problem here isn't that the commission wants to update or needs to update the UHF discount rule, the problem is that absent a decision how and importantly, when the commission will move forward, it has pressed paused for an indefinite period of time.

We all know that markets do not react favorable to this kind of open-ended uncertainty.

On the other hand, I applaud the recent announcement on the schedule for the spectrum incentive auctions. Both the broadcast and wireless industries are waiting with bated breath to see how the FCC addresses this first-of-a-kind auction.

To say nothing of the public safety agencies that are counting on the auction fund to fund FirstNet. The certainty of a timetable is good for both stakeholders and for the commission.

Finally, turning to those large proceedings the commission has on its plate. We're looking forward to working with you to tackle the tough issues like the I.P. transition, universal service reform and media ownership.

Chairman Upton and I recently launched a large proceeding of our own, an initiative to update the Communications Act. Each of you brings the unique perspective to your work on the commission, industry lobbyist, newspaper publisher, a couple of lawyers, even some former legislative Hill staffers. That experience, combined with your expertise on the Federal Communications Commission staff and your own work on the commission, will be valuable in our efforts as we work together to update and modernize the Communications Act.

So Congress -- or Chairman Wheeler...

(LAUGHTER)

We wouldn't want to demote you to level of congressman.

Chairman Wheeler -- yeah, our numbers aren't that great -- Commissioner O'Rielly, we especially welcome you aboard the FCC and Commissioners Clyburn, Rosenworcel and Pai, welcome back, not only the commission, but before our committee. We thank you all for joining us today, we look forward to working together in this very critical sector of America's economy to spur further innovation technology growth and jobs.

And with that, I will now yield to the ranking member of the subcommittee, my friend Ms. Eshoo from California.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman for holding this hearing, it's wonderful to see a full Federal Communications Commission before us. Welcome to each one of you, special welcome to the new chairman.

I think that you started out with 100 percent goodwill with everyone that is on this committee, I think our full committee -- in fact I think the Congress.

We have -- there have been many months where we didn't have a full commission. I want to once again thank Commissioner Clyburn for her exceptional leadership during that period of time.

Welcome to each one of the commissioners, and of course, to the newest commissioner, Mike O'Rielly, who served on the other side of that table.

When I first came to the committee, he was here when we began -- began the Telecom Act. And now, guess what, you get to trudge through that all over again, according to the chairman.

So I guess there are some things that we just never finish with.

As Chairman Wheeler announced last week, the commission has made the upcoming incentive auction of broadcast television spectrum the top priority of the commission. And I agree.

This is a rare opportunity to auction beach-front spectrum under 1 gigahertz. And the FCC has to structure rules to promote a competitive wireless landscape and ensure carriers, of all sizes, both regional and national, have an opportunity to bid competitively for license spectrum.

And it has to be done right. It's the first in the history of the world that an auction has been structured this way. And I appreciate, Mr. Chairman, and all the commissioners, your understanding, the delicacy of this needing to be done right, well and successfully.

Similarly, recognizing the enormous economic and societal benefits of unlicensed spectrum which is tucked away in one corner of my telecom heart. The FCC has an opportunity to structure a band plan that ensures the nationwide block of spectrum under 1 gigahertz, dedicated for unlicensed innovation.

With unlicensed spectrum being a critical tool to bring broadband to unserved areas, including rural America, this opportunity really must be seized.

In addition to the important role the FCC has in freeing up more spectrum for mobile broadband, I'd like to highlight four issues that the commission should make a top priority in 2014. And I think you're going to.

First during the three months since I released a draft legislation, the message from individuals, communications companies and consumer groups has been abundantly clear. Our video laws are in need of reform, they're broken.

Independent of such legislation, the commission does have an important responsibility to promote competition, consumer choice and localism across the video marketplace.

Second, I hope the commission will continue its focus on modernizing the E-Rate program to support a 21st Century digital needs of our schools and libraries.

In June, together with Commissioner Rosenworcel, we called for such an update. And I'm pleased that the White House and the FCC agree with us and have made this issue a key priority. We have to stay on it. We have to move and we have to make it much better. It's gotta be a 21st century plan.

Third, the commission should uphold, I think, the goals (ph) of Section 629 and ensure a vibrant, competitive retail set-top box market. A successor to the current CableCARD regime, whether by FCC rule, or more preferably, a voluntary industry agreement, will usher in a new generation of technologies that will give consumers giver choice and ensure that innovation flourishes.

Finally, I'm pleased that the commission has made the transition to Next Generation 911, as well as improving the indoor location accuracy of 911 calls the key priority.

In fact, later today, it's my understanding that the commission will vote on an order to improve the reliability of 911. And I look forward to continued updates as the commission proceeds with the implementation of Next Gen 911.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this morning's hearing. I look forward to the important testimony of Chairman Wheeler and each of the commissioners, most importantly, I pledge to work with each of you to make American's communications sector the most effective and the most admired in the world.

And with that, I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back.

Chair now recognizes the chairman of the full committee, Mr. Upton from Michigan, I believe.

UPTON: Great, (inaudible) Michigan.

WALDEN: (inaudible) Ohio.

UPTON: Thank you-- thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You know, today we welcome a fully constituted FCC back to the Energy and Commerce Committee. The -- the last time that we heard from the full commission was in July of 2012.

So the FCC has regulatory authority over a sector of our economy that is critical to innovation, jobs and our nation's global leadership in technology.

Communication sector is also an integral part of our daily lives, connecting us to loved ones, alerting us to natural disasters and entertaining and educating us every single day.

As the regulatory agency of these industries, the FCC has the immensely important task of promoting growth and competition. Our hearing today will examine actions that the FCC has taken since the commission last appeared and set expectations for the agency's future.

As the oversight authority for the commission, our committee works hard to ensure that the FCC functions to the benefit of America consumers as well as companies.

We also wanna make sure that this agency functions efficiently and transparently as all government agencies should.

I'm glad to say that this is not a partisan concern. Bipartisan majority on a voice vote of the full committee reported an FCC process reform bill yesterday that will help the FCC operate more openly and defectively. And we expect it to be on the House floor in the not too distant future.

And the bill is needed. There are several stalled proceedings and ambiguous projects at the commission that cause concern to me and other members of the committee. We've sent a number of letters in the past months regarding media ownership.

Subcommittee Vice Chair Latta has gone to the extent of drafting a bill to end the cable set-top box integration ban, a bill that seems to make a lot of sense, and which perhaps the FCC should have considered doing a while ago. My concern and hope is that we can start a productive dialogue today with our esteemed witnesses on these and the many other important issues pending at the commission.

Commission O'Rielly, I'd like to welcome you back to the Energy and Commerce Committee, a committee you know well, having once served here as the staff.

And Chairman Wheeler, though you're from Ohio, this is often known as the big house, now the Dingell room. Hope you appreciate the -- the green and white decor.

(LAUGHTER)

And yes, we were first party.

(LAUGHTER)

Welcome back.

And I yield to other members, Republican members.

WALDEN: The chairman now recognizes the vice chair of the Subcommittee on Communications, Mr. Latta from Ohio.

(LAUGHTER)

Home of the speaker of the House.

(LAUGHTER)

LATTA: (inaudible) number two.

But thank you very much for yielding, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you very much to our commissioner for being with us today.

And welcome to our newest members for the commission. I really appreciate you -- having you here with us today.

The communications and technology industry has been a consistent bright spot in the U.S. economy. It's created millions of American jobs, spurred significant investment and innovation and, most importantly, empowered consumers, who are the driving force behind robust competition in the communications marketplace.

As U.S.-based businesses lead the world in technological advances, we have a responsibility to ensure the FCC fosters continued growth and development in the communications sector.

This can be achieved by the FCC incorporating more transparency and accountability in its processes, operating within the bounds of its statutory authority and acting upon legislation according to congressional intent. I look forward to continuing working with Chairman Upton and the members of this committee and also Congressman Green on my H.R. 3196, which is the legislation to eliminate the integration ban on the set- top boxes and allow the marketplace to get to the next-generation innovation without the regulatory barriers being put in front of it.

I look forward to the hearing and hearing the testimony today.

And, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Thank you.

WALDEN: The chair recognizes the gentlelady from Tennessee, the vice chair of the full committee, for the remaining 40 seconds, if she wants it.

BLACKBURN: And I thank the chairman.

I want to welcome all of our commissioners and publicly commend Commissioner Clyburn for the wonderful work that she did when she served as the acting chair. We appreciate that leadership.

And, Chairman Wheeler, we look forward to having you continue and to work in a collaborative manner to find results for the private sector.

We would hope that the commission will be proactive, not get beyond its mission, but to stay focused on your core mission. Pay attention to economic analysis. Look at cost to benefit analysis. And make certain that you don't suffer mission creep, which is casting a shadow over the private sector.

With that, I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back.

The chair recognizes the ranking member of the full committee, Mr. Waxman.

WAXMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I want to welcome the members of the commission, Chairman Wheeler and all the commissioners.

And I also want to join in commending Commissioner Clyburn for the incredible job she did as acting chairwoman, from the industry agreement on interoperability to long overdue reforms on prison phone rates, your brief chairmanship will be remembered for the remarkable amount you accomplished.

Let me welcome Chairman Wheeler and Commissioner O'Rielly. I congratulate you on your appointment and confirmation, and we're pleased to have you here.

You join the FCC at a time when our country is undergoing dramatic and perhaps fundamental transformations in communications networks and technologies, and the decisions you make at the commission will no doubt have lasting impact on our nation's communications landscape.

At the top of the FCC agenda is the spectrum auctions authorized by the Public Safety and Spectrum Auction Act last year. And I'm pleased to see that the FCC is moving ahead to conduct the H Block auction in January.

In addition to allocating new wireless spectrum to address our nation's spectrum shortage, this auction will provide significant down payment for the nation-wide interoperable public safety network.

I also support, Chairman Wheeler, your recently announced timetable for the incentive auction. This auction has many layers of complexity, and I applaud your commitment to getting the technical issues right.

Congress gave the FCC the tools to unleash the economic opportunities for both licensed and unlicensed spectrum, revolutionize public safety communications, ensure a vibrant and competitive wireless market, all the while protecting consumer access to free over-the-air television.

And I think FCC must remain faithful to these goals as you implement the law.

You also must bear in mind the principles undergirding the Communications Act, as we consider the next evolution in our nation's wireless networks. Our values do not change with each successive generation of technology. Whether the infrastructure is copper or fiber optics, the commission's charge is to protect and promote the longstanding goals of competition, universal access and consumer protection.

Chairman Upton and Walden recently called for a multiyear examination of possible updates to the Communications Act, and I welcome the opportunity for a bipartisan consideration of these issues, and I hope the commission will be a partner in this endeavor.

In 2010, the commission and this committee spent many hours working to preserve the principle of an open Internet. That process led to a sensible set of rules governing the broadband market that was supported by a diverse groups of stakeholders and provided the foundation for the FCC's Open Internet Order.

I believe the Open Internet Order will be upheld in the court. But whatever the outcome, I'll be looking to you to assure that the Internet remains an open platform for innovation and economic growth.

I want to at this point yield the balance of my time to my fellow Californian and good friend, Congresswoman Matsui.

MATSUI: Thank you very much, Ranking Member Waxman for yielding me time.

It's wonderful to see the full complement of the commission here today.

I want to join in welcoming Chairman Wheeler, and who brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the FCC.

And I'd also like to congratulate and welcome Commissioner O'Rielly.

And I also would like to commend Commissioner Clyburn for her leadership during the interim period. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, the subcommittee is working diligently to find bipartisan solutions for smart and sound spectrum policy for our nation. We've worked want to create a path for DOD to reallocate the 1755 to 1780 megahertz band.

DOD and the broadcasters should be applauded for their leadership on a landmark sharing agreement.

Moreover, I've joined with Representative Guthrie to introduce H.R. 3674, the Federal Spectrum Incentive Act, which passed this committee yesterday in a bipartisan manner.

The bill is the first of its kind that offers a fresh approach that would create a federal spectrum incentive auction. I look forward to working closely with my colleagues and the administration in moving this bill to the floor.

There are tough decisions ahead, and I want to encourage also the FCC to move forward with the USF reform efforts. Modernizing the USF for broadband, particularly the lifeline program will provide a path toward universal broadband adoption in this country.

And, with that, I yield back the balance of my time.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back the balance of her time; all time's been consumed. We'll now go to our witnesses.

And, again, we thank you very much for being here today and the public service work you're all undertaking.

And, Mr. Wheeler, as chairman of the FCC, we're gonna lead off with you. So pull that microphone close, turn on the button, and you're good to go, sir.

WHEELER: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Ms. Eshoo, other members of the committee. It's a privilege to be before you today, and a privilege to be joining my colleagues here, the full component of the commission. I think we will make a great team, and I know that all of us are honored to be able to work with the quality men and women that make up the FCC.

Today is my 39th day on the job. And I have enjoyed the informal discussions that I've been able to have with many of you in the interim and look forward to today having a even more complete discussions and to working with you afterwards.

As I think everybody in their statements has indicated, we are in a very exciting time, in the midst of a great network revolution.

The lesson of history is that revolutions like that come chock full of challenges. And we're gonna have to work together on how we address those challenges.

We've tended to look at those challenges through three prisms, if you will, and to say, OK, how do we make sure, first of all, that what policies we adopt promote economic growth and maintain national leadership?

And clearly at the root of those are issues such as competition and maintaining the necessary assets, such as spectrum.

The second prism is what we've begun to call the network compact. There has, for a century, developed a set of values that represent the relationship between those who operate networks and those who use networks. Those values must be preserved regardless of the type -- of the technology used in the network.

And, thirdly, is the -- is the goal that networks work for everyone, that it's -- it's not what broadband -- it's not just the delivery of broadband, but it's what broadband enables that is what is important.

If we don't have 21st century education capabilities, if we don't make sure that Americans with disabilities have access to the capabilities of the new network, if we don't make sure that tribal Americans have opportunities to use the new networks, then we have failed in our goal.

So, those three things, economic growth, the network compact and -- and what networks enable are the three pillars of policy. But at the heart of them is competition.

It has become a joke, at least in my office, that everybody keeps -- that I keep saying, "Competition. Competition. Competition."

But that is very much what -- what we believe.

Let me do a quick look at the three areas where the commission is keeping pace with innovation, that innovative economy.

First is process reform. The committee's bipartisan effort yesterday is significant and is noted and appreciated.

On my second day, Mr. Chairman, as you noted, I began a process that will produce a report in 60 days. We're gonna look at how to enhance accountability through deadlines and tracking systems, how to expedite the licensing process, like you referenced. How to shorten the processing time of applications for review and Commissioner Pai has an interesting idea in that regard.

How to streamline consumer complaint, collection and a searchable database, which Commissioner Rosenworcel has been a champion of. And how to attack the backlog as Commissioner Clyburn did when she was chairwoman. We also wanna weed out outdated regulations, incorporate performance -- and incorporate performance measures.

Second focus is gonna be, as you have all appropriately said, the spectrum auctions, especially the incentive auction.

This committee, working with MTIA and DOD, has provided great leadership on the 1755 to 1780 band that we look forward to moving forward on that and moving that to auction.

The Guthrie-Matsui bill, which you all moved yesterday, which has been referenced, it takes the incentive auction idea and applies it to federal agencies, and that's a great step forward.

And then speaking of incentives, we have the incentive auction coming up. We're gonna have -- we have established a schedule now, we're gonna have policy recommendations in January. And we're gonna have consideration and discussion of that until spring, when we'll be making a decision. And we'll have an auction in the -- in mid-2015.

But while we're discussing spectrum and regulatory process, I would be remiss if I didn't bring up an item we will be considering today. A proposal to ask for comments on a rule to reflect the realities of new onboard aircraft technology.

And there have been lots of misconceptions about that. And let me just see if I can address these right upfront.

One, we are going to continue -- we are proposing to consider to continue the ban on mobile devices that can interfere with terrestrial networks. But where there is new onboard technology that eliminates that potential for interference, then there is no need for an interference rule.

This is the responsible thing to do, where the rationale for a rule doesn't exist, the rule shouldn't exist. We are the expert technical agency. And new technology removes the technical justification of this rule.

In that regard, I should mention that I have spoken with Transportation Secretary Foxx this morning. And he has told me that, yes, the FCC is the technical agency and that the Department of Transportation is the aviation agency and that they will be moving on a rule to address voice calls on airplanes.

I'm the last person in the world who wants to listen to somebody talking to me, while they fly across the country. But we are the technical agency and we will make the technical rules that reflect the -- the way the new technology works.

Finally, item three, you've all talked about the -- the I.P. transition -- transitions, I should say. Because it's not just one transition, it's a multi-faceted process. And at today's meeting, we're gonna hear a report from the technology transitions policy task force, which will lay out a schedule, including a plan for a January order that will invite experiments in the field, real life experiments, recommend data collection and create a framework for policy decisions.

So we have a full agenda, as you have all said. It is a privilege to be here, to be able to work with all of you and I look forward to doing that in the time coming (ph).

WALDEN: Chairman Wheeler, thank you for your public service and thank you for recognizing our concerns on the subcommittee and full committee.

And now we'll switch to -- I guess, once a chairman, always a chairman, right, highest title. Former Chairwoman Clyburn, we're delighted to have you back before the committee. Thanks for your work publicly and please go ahead with your opening statement.

CLYBURN: Thank you, Chairman Walden, Ranking Member Eshoo, and members of the committee.

Thank you, again, for allowing me to appear before you today. Since our last visit, I have had an incredible opportunity to serve as acting chair and I'm glad to note that with the support of my colleagues and the assistance of a skilled and dedicated staff, we were able to move a number of important items, which clearly advanced the public interest.

This hearing comes at a critical stage in our communications policy continuum. We are experiencing tremendous technological change that affects every aspect of our lives.

And as we look ahead to the challenges of tomorrow, I believe it is important to understand the terrain over which we have travelled. We reached a voluntary interoperability industry solution in the

lower 700 megahertz band to address an issue, that for years, have been impeding the deployment of valuable spectrum.

We launched a proceeding to modernize the FCC's schools and libraries program, known as E-Rate, to ensure that our children have the resources and connectivity they need to support digital learning and become the leaders of tomorrow.

We adopted an order to address rule call completion because it is unacceptable in today's world that calls to non-urban areas are not being completed.

We adopted an order to reform inmate calling services to finally provide relief to millions of families who have been paying unreasonably high rate to stay connected with loved ones.

We enabled the H Block spectrum auction and the AWS-3 proposal to take major steps forward on government and commercial spectrum sharing. And we made ongoing reforms to lifeline and proposed significant forfeitures to companies not following the FCC's rules.

With Chairman Wheeler and my fellow commissioners, I look forward to building on the progress we have made.

As Chairman Wheeler has made clear, the voluntary incentive auction proceeding continues to be a top commission priority for those broadcast television licensees who want to continue to use their spectrum, the act mandates that the commission makes all reasonable efforts to preserve the coverage areas and population served.

The act also has clear directives for the proceeds from the forward auction, which includes much earned contributions to the Public Safety Trust Fund and the national deficit.

Congress also gave the commission authority to propose a band plan with an appropriate balance of unlicensed and licensed spectrum.

Unlicensed spectrum plays a critical role in advancing more efficient use of spectrum and commercial wireless carriers are increasingly using unlicensed Wi-Fi services to off load their smartphone traffic.

In addition to spectrum, Chairman Wheeler has also announced that the commission will consider an order next month to launch trials regarding the ongoing technology transitions.

I do believe that trials, if structured properly, can produce helpful insights into how best to approach reform. And I will be keeping a keen eye on how the trials and future reforms affect all consumers.

Process reform is where we have an opportunity to develop an even more efficient agency.

Yesterday, the committee passed the Federal Communications Commission Process Reform Act of 2013. I am pleased that the proposed modifications to the Sunshine Act would facilitate federal commissioners participation on the Federal-State Joint Board and the Joint Conference.

I would also encourage you to review the Paperwork Reduction Act and how it can be improved. For example, the FCC is using its website to better inform consumers in the industry.

Yet, to obtain voluntary feedback on our website, the PRA requires OMB approval. As a result, the commission cannot be as responsive to users without engaging in a lengthy OMB approval process.

So as you can see, Mr. Chairman, and distinguished members of the committee, we have both challenges and opportunities ahead.

I look forward to working with each of you to address our evolving communications landscape.

I appreciate your attention this morning and will be glad to answer any questions you may have.

WALDEN: Thank you for your work, your testimony, your recommendations, and we'll now go to Commissioner Rosenworcel. Thank you for being here this morning, we're delighted to have you back and please go ahead. ROSENWORCEL: It's good to be back.

Good morning, Chairman Walden, Ranking Member Eshoo and members of the subcommittee, it is an honor to appear before you today in the company of my colleagues, new and old, at the FCC.

By some measures, communications technologies account for as much as one-sixth of our economy, no wonder. These are the networks that carry all aspects of our modern commercial and civic life.

They are changing at a breathtaking pace. Keeping up requires taking a fresh look at our policies, informed by the policies of the past, we have to think boldly about the future.

Now in the weeks ahead, we will do this, as we wrestle with the upcoming transition to Internet protocol and think about spectrum auctions, including incentive auctions.

But I think we make a mistake if we focus only on networks themselves. After all, there is great beauty and power in what we can do with them.

Our new networks can change the ways we connect, create and conduct commerce. They can change the ways we learn and seek security.

So in my brief time before you today, this is what I wanna talk about. How the broadband beneath us and the air waves all around us can improve education and improve public safety.

First, I wanna talk about the E-Rate program. E-Rate helps connects schools and libraries across the country to the Internet. It is a byproduct of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

Remember in 1996, probably everyone in this room called the Internet the information superhighway. It was a long time ago. In 1996, only 14 percent of public schools were connected to the Internet.

Today, thanks to the E-Rate, that number is north of 95 percent, which sounds good. It sounds like the job is done, but nothing could be further from the truth, because the challenge today is not connection, it is capacity.

Too many of our E-Rate schools access the Internet at speeds as low as 3 megabits, that is too slow for high definition video, it is not fast enough for the most innovative teaching tools, and it is definitely not fast enough to prepare the next generation with the stem skills that are so essential to compete.

Contrast this with efforts under way in some of our world neighbors.

In South Korea, 100 percent of schools are connected to high speed broadband and all schools are converting to digital textbooks by 2016. Ireland will have all schools connected to 100 megabits next year.

Finland will have all schools connected to 100 megabits the year after that.

Meanwhile, in both Turkey and Thailand, the government is seeking a vendor to supply tablet computers to millions of students for a new era of broadband enabled digital learning.

Now we can wait and see where the status quo takes us and let other nations lead the way, or we can chose a future where all American students have the access to the broadband that they need to compete, no matter who they are, where they live or where they go to school.

I think it's time to compete. I think it's time for E-Rate 2.0. The FCC has a rule-making proceeding under way to reboot and recharge the E-Rate program. I think we need to make it a high priority.

I think we need to find ways to bring 100 megabits to all schools in the near term, and one gigabit to all schools in the long term. While we're at it, we must find ways to reduce the bureaucracy of this program and make it easier for small and rural schools to participate.

Second, I want to talk about a number all of us know by heart, but none of us ever hopes to use. I want to talk about 9-1-1. In my time at the FCC, I have visited 9-1-1 call centers all across the country. I am always struck by the steely calm of those who answer the phones and help ensure that help is on the way.

I am also struck by how many emergency calls now come in from wireless phones. In fact, nationwide more than 70 percent of calls made to 9-1-1 are made from wireless phones. That is more than 400,000 calls per day. Now, if you use your wireless phone to call 9- 1-1 from outdoors, your location is reported, sometimes to within 50 meters under FCC location accuracy standards. But if you use your wireless phone to call 9-1-1 from indoors, you better cross your fingers because no FCC location accuracy standards apply.

I think this is an unacceptable gap in public safety communications. It deserves your attention and ours. Because no matter where you are when you call 9-1-1, you want first responders to find you. Moreover, as our networks evolve and the ways we use them change, we must make sure our public safety policies keep pace. In fact, our approaches to networks both wired and wireless need to evolve as markets evolve.

But in our efforts, we must not lose sight of why networks matter, because they can do more than connect us. They can strengthen education and enhance our security, and of course, grow our economy in new and exciting ways.

Thank you. I look forward to answering any questions you might have.

WALDEN: Commissioner Rosenworcel, thank you for your work and your testimony and your suggestions.

We go now to Commissioner Pai. Thank you for being here and thank you for all the work you've been doing. And please go ahead with your opening statement.

PAI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Walden, Ranking Member Eshoo, members of the subcommittee, thank you for holding this hearing.

It has been exactly one year since I last appeared before you and much has happened in the time since. Most notably, we have lost two colleagues and we have gained two new ones. Chairman Wheeler and Commissioner O'Rielly have gotten off to strong starts and I am pleased that we are finally back at full strength.

Over the past year, we have made progress in a number of different areas, but there is much more to be done. This morning, I will touch on two of the issues that I find most pressing: the incentive auction and E-Rate reform. A fuller list of FCC priorities from cable forbearance to AM radio is detailed in my written testimony.

First, the incentive auction. Perhaps the most daunting challenge the commission faces is the looming spectrum crunch. To meet this challenges, we are focused on implementing the responsibilities that Congress gave us in the Spectrum Act, especially with respect to the broadcast incentive auction.

The incentive auction is the commission's best chance to push a large amount of spectrum, well suited for mobile broadband, into the commercial marketplace. I support Chairman Wheeler's recent announcement setting the middle of 2015 as our new target. It is more important to get the incentive auction done right than it is to get it done right now.

If, for example, any part of our software were to fail during the incentive auction, like another government website that shall not be named, the commission by law would not get a second bite at the apple. My greatest worry about the incentive auction, however, is not with the technology. It is about participation. In order for the incentive auction to be successful, we will need robust participation by both broadcasters and wireless carriers. So the commission must avoid choices that will deter participation in both the reverse auction and the forward auction.

For the reverse auction, prices paid to broadcasters should be determined by the market, not set by administrative fiat. Any attempt to restrict payments to broadcasters, including a complicated scoring scheme, will deter broadcaster participation and risk causing the incentive auction to fail.

For the forward auction, the commission should not limit carriers' ability to participate, such as by setting a spectrum cap or narrowing the spectrum screen. This would result in less spectrum for mobile broadband and less revenue to fund national priorities that this committee has identified, and a greater chance of a failed auction.

Another issue that will impact participation in the forward auction is the size of the geographic licenses to be offered. Our NPRM proposed using economic areas, but some argue that this would make it too difficult for smaller carrier to participate in the auction. Our goal should be to allow as many carriers as possible to bid, whether they be nationwide, regional or rural.

So I am pleased to see alternative proposals for license sizes, such as the newly coined partial economic areas. If technically feasible, these proposals deserve serious consideration.

Aside from the incentive auction, there are many other opportunities when it comes to spectrum, from the H block auction next month to the possible clearing of AWS-3, to the greater unlicensed use in the 5 gigahertz band. Consistent with my all-of-the-above approach, I hope we seize all of these opportunities in the near term.

The second issue I will discuss is the Universal Service Fund's schools and libraries program, better known as E-Rate. In many ways, E-Rate has been a success, as my colleague has pointed out. But it also has had difficulties. The funding process can stretch for years. Many schools and libraries feel compelled to hire outside consultants to handle all the complexities. Others don't bother applying at all.

Services like paging are prioritized over services like connecting classrooms. And there's no meaningful transparency into either the amount or the impact of E-Rate spending.

To solve these problems, I've proposed a student-centered E-Rate program. This means an up front allocation of funding and a matching requirement, so that applicants know how much money they can spend and have greater incentives to spend that money wisely. This means simplifying the application process. This means targeting funding at next-generation technologies, while still letting local schools set their own priorities. And this means making all funding and spending decisions accessible on a central website that everyone can see.

In its first year, a student-centered approach would provide an extra $1 billion for next-generation services, all without collecting an extra dime from the American people. Accordingly, I believe it would be premature to increase the program's budget. And under no circumstances should we do so without finding corresponding savings in other parts of the Universal Service Fund.

We cannot ask Americans to pay even more in their monthly phone bills, especially when median household income in this country is now lower than it was in 2007.

Thank you once again to Chairman Walden and Ranking Member Eshoo for holding this hearing. I look forward to answering your questions and continuing to work with you and my colleagues in months to come.

WALDEN: Thank you, Commissioner Pai. We appreciate your thoughtful testimony and your recommendations. We'll now go to Commissioner O'Rielly. Welcome aboard the Federal Communications Commission. Welcome back before this committee. And you know how the rules work, so please go ahead and again thank you for being here today.

O'RIELLY: Thank you to the chairman and ranking member and members of the subcommittee.

In respect of the time of the subcommittee members, I'd like to make five points and then move on to answer your questions.

Point one, I'm truly honored to be before the subcommittee. I had the pleasure of working on the full committee staff for eight years and it was one of the greatest jobs I'll ever have. The breadth of knowledge and command of the diverse policy issues by the members of this committee are of the highest quality.

Point two, the FCC is an independent agency, not part of the executive branch. It was created by Congress and served to implement the statutes enacted by Congress. I firmly believe that our role is to follow the statute as written and not substitute our thoughts for your work. The commission has no right or authority to ignore the statute or statutory deadlines. Thankfully, I've worked on most communications policy statutes over the last 20 years and have first- hand knowledge of the intent behind many key provisions.

Point three, the commission has difficult, but exciting work ahead. If done correctly, it can have a significant positive impact on U.S. domestic product and on national productivity. Our communications companies are extremely important to the U.S. economy and we must allow them to flourish in the world marketplace. The commission's overall focus, however, must remain on the consumer.

Point four, in terms of specific items, my particular focus and attention will be on the immediate work before the commission. In the big picture, the FCC must finish rules for the incentive auctions, continue USF reform, proceed with the I.P. transition trials, and complete our media ownership proceedings.

Point five, part of the role of a FCC commissioner is to conduct outreach and provide information to the public. I take this function seriously and it's why I'm choosing to spend sometime on the issue of distracted driving caused by wireless device users. Drivers need to put away their wireless phones and focus their eyes on the drive.

Let me be clear. My view is the wireless industry is doing yeoman's work to get out the message. They're aware of the problem. They are dedicated considerable resources to finding solutions and education, and they're working hard to prevent the horrible tragedies by texting, viewing, e-mailing, tweeting, mapping, posting, among others, while driving.

It does not appear that more government regulation would be helpful in this space. Instead, I'm talking to my other colleagues to find ways to use our voice in non-regulatory, non-costly ways to educate the public and prevent senseless accidents. Thank you.

WALDEN: You win the prize -- two minutes and 37 seconds, return.

O'RIELLY: I'm familiar with this committee very well.

(LAUGHTER)

WALDEN: Yes, indeed. Some will learn along the way.

(LAUGHTER)

We appreciate all your testimony and your recommendations. And it's just good to have all five commissioners in place, or four commissioners and chair in place. As Commissioner Pai said, it has been a year to the day, I think, since we had the commissioners here. So welcome aboard.

I know we all have a lot of questions. I'm going to -- I learned at the heels of the former chairman, Mr. Dingell, about trying to get answers at a relatively rapid rate. So I'm going to try and pose some of these, not as skillfully as he does in a yes or no format, but to the extent to which you can address them rapidly, that would be good.

And I want to start, Mr. Wheeler, with you as chairman. I know you all are voting on this NPRM today. I do want to stress it would be helpful if the public got to see that. As far as I know, you and your staffs are the only ones who see it in advance. That's one of the process issues I hope you'll break through and this maybe will be the last NPRM that's not public first.

But the commission's -- I want to follow up and figure out how you're going to permit, as your testimony indicates, airlines to choose whether to allow voice calls. And here's why I ask it. Is the commission planning to waive either the common carrier obligation to complete calls, or the net neutrality rules on blocking (inaudible) packets. Both would seem to be necessary in order to prevent voice calling from aircraft.

WHEELER: So, thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, first, to your point that -- that the MPRM that we are considering today will be complete in listing the rule -- the words of the rule...

WALDEN: Right.

WHEELER: ... that we are considering. That in -- in light with the philosophy that...

WALDEN: Thank you.

WHEELER: ... you and I share, which is, let's get it out there...

WALDEN: Right.

WHEELER: ... so that people can see it. The purpose of this is to do just that, to put the language out so people can see it and give us their comments on it.

Now, to your specific question -- the -- the open Internet order specifically provides what's called the premises exemption. And that means that coffee shops, book stores and airlines mentioned by name are exempt from the order in that, under the definition of reasonable network management, which is one of the tools that are allowed, for premises owners -- which include airlines -- there is the ability to pick and choose exactly what comes over.

WALDEN: All right. We'll follow up more on the other piece that you might have to deal with, as well.

I want to ask you about Title 2. You've had a -- you haven't, but there's been a preceding open at the Commission for a long time that would -- the reclassification docket. Are you planning to keep that open, or are you planning to close it?

WHEELER: So, I think we're in a situation right now where we're waiting for a court opinion on exactly what our authorities are on a broad sense. And that there is no rush between now and then to make a decision on Title 2.

I will note, however, that, as you mentioned, this docket has been open for a long time. And it has not had the threatened chilling effect that some have worried about on investment in wireless and broadband infrastructure. This is an -- this is an issue that clearly is going to have to be dealt with, and we'll start with the court decision.

WALDEN: I've got about three more questions I want to try and get in here.

We understand the FCC's launched a study -- a multimarket study of critical information needs. Apparently, this study includes a qualitative media analysis, which would require interviewing reporters and editors to figure out how the media decides what news stories to run. Are these the kinds of questions that government entities should be asking of the news media? And with somebody with a journalism degree, I do get a little chill up my spine thinking about the government asking how these decisions are made.

Doesn't it have an effect on the -- doesn't it have an effect on the media that the regulatory body is even asking these questions? And how does it help you fulfill your Section 257 mandate, on which it's predicated?

WHEELER: So, I think this goes back to the root of the discussion you and I were having a moment about -- about making sure that the public understand what's going on.

The 257 requirement mandates lowering barriers to access to media for minorities, women, small business and other identified groups.

In order to make that kind of a judgment, you have to have facts. In order to have facts, you do studies. And what we did was, there is a study that has been proposed by a consulting firm that we were working with. And we put that out for public notice to exactly get the kind of input...

WALDEN: All right.

WHEELER: ... that you're suggesting.

WALDEN: All right, I...

WHEELER: And -- but it's not -- and this is -- I -- this is not an effort to influence the media. It...

WALDEN: I'm going to interrupt you just a second, because when you're spending somewhere between $209,918 -- and some of the questions of the media personnel include, "What's the news philosophy of the station?," "Who decides what stories are covered?," "What are the demographics of news management staff?," "Have you ever suggested coverage of what you consider to be a story with critical information of what consumers used?," "What was the reason given for the decision?"

These seem like really internal journalistic issues. Now, I -- I need to move on to one other, 'cause I'm actually over, but it's a very important question.

The quant -- quantile regression analysis -- QRA -- approach to providing universal support for rural companies -- that was part of the commission's U.S. (ph) reform efforts -- has had a negative impact -- negative impact on investment and the deployment of broadband services in rural America.

Commissioner Pai, you've been an advocate for the need to address this problem to ensure that rural Americans are not left behind. What do you recommend, Commissioner Pai, needs to be done with regard to the application of the QRA?

PAI: I thank you for the question, Mr. Chairman.

I've seen the problems on paper. The Obama administration's Department of Agriculture, for example, reported to us earlier this year that some 37 percent of funds from RUS are sitting on the table because there is so much uncertainty among rural carriers. And I've seen it in person from my home state of Kansas to carriers in rural Alaska, Because they are uncertain about what the future portends because of the QRA, they are not making additional investments in terms of broadband. And that creates a digital slide that we won't be able to bridge.

WALDEN: So, Chairman Wheeler, if I might, given the -- negative impact of the QRA -- that it's having on broadband development, especially in rural America, do you intend to reconsider its application?

WHEELER: Yes. As a matter of fact, I have asked the bureau to draft, and let me see, what an order that I could share with my colleagues would be to eliminate the QRA, and to return to the high- cost loop support model.

WALDEN: I appreciate that.

I've got other issues, obviously, with the F.M. translators for A.M., and delay in the rulemaking, dealing with cable operators and the groups utilized by them. And so, maybe we can follow up afterwards, but the committee's been kind to let me over-extend my questioning. But we're usually fairly flexible on that here.

So, now, I'll turn it over to the ranking member from California, Ms. Eshoo.

ESHOO: That's great. So, I have seven minutes, right, Mr. Chairman?

(LAUGHTER)

Mr. Chairman, you said that it's your 39th day. What I'd like to add to that is that I think your adult lifetime of work has brought you to this. So, it's not just your -- really, your 39th day.

WHEELER: That's been a long lifetime at this.

ESHOO: It's a -- it's a -- it's a wonderful path that has prepared you for this position.

I have a whole list of -- of niche issues, which is really the way we deal with all of these things.

First of all, do you think you're going to get a deal on cell phones unlocking by the end of this year?

WHEELER: I hope that we will be presenting to the commission today -- as a matter of fact, I know that we will be presenting to the commission today -- the voluntary agreement that has been reached with the wireless industry. And so, the answer to your question is strongly yes.

ESHOO: That's just terrific.

My second question to you, Mr. Chairman, is last week, as you know, I joined with my colleagues, Representatives Doyle and Matsui, to ask you to take action to prevent AT&T from implementing the significant rate hike for their special access customers. I appreciate what you have done in terms of the suspension, but I think that there's much more that needs to be done on special access reform.

Can we expect further action on special access reform?

WHEELER: I -- I -- I apologize, Ms. Eshoo, but I am currently recused...

ESHOO: OK.

WHEELER: ... from that proceeding, and so I...

ESHOO: I see.

So, how will it happen?

WHEELER: It's -- it moves ahead with the other members of the -- of the commission.

ESHOO: I see. Well, I'm just going to assume that they're going to -- that this area is going to be examined. Because we really have to have a -- reasonable rates for -- for this important service.

On -- Commissioner Rosenworcel, thank you for your testimony. I love the way you present things. It's so clear. You can feel the sense of urgency and why it's urgent.

How are you going to pursue getting this done at the commission? The whole issue of E-Rate, everything that's attached to it. You presented an eloquent case. And I think that -- that you gave a fantastic speech last week on -- on 911 and the problems that we have between indoor and outdoor.

So, on both that and the E-Rate -- maybe I should be asking the chairman what he plans to do on E-Rate. I know what you want to do. But maybe we should just switch over to Chairman Wheeler?

WHEELER: Well, I think on -- on E-Rate, that there is a leader in this commission. And that Commissioner...

ESHOO: We only need five.

WHEELER: Huh?

ESHOO: We only need five.

WHEELER: They -- they -- but I'm -- I -- as you all say, I would like to associate myself with the remarks of...

ESHOO: Good, good.

WHEELER: ... Mr. Rosenworcel.

ESHOO: Well, we'll look forward to you joining her in that effort. And maybe the next time the commission comes before us, you can tell us the steps that you're going to take.

On the -- on...

WHEELER: Let me -- if I can do one thing -- I am -- we are going to put out a schedule, just like we have for the incentive auction and the I.T. transition, to address this issue.

ESHOO: That's terrific.

On the challenge of the -- the indoor versus outdoor, and wireless, and 911, what's your plan to address this?

ROSENWORCEL: Well, as the old saying goes, you may only make one 911 call in your life, but it will be the most important call...

ESHOO: Right.

ROSENWORCEL: ... you ever make. And right now, if you make that call from your wire line phone, your first responder knows exactly where you are.

ESHOO: Right.

ROSENWORCEL: You make that call outdoors, in a field, using your wireless phone, we have location accuracy standards so that first responder can find you.

ESHOO: I'm asking what you want to do about where the challenge lies.

ROSENWORCEL: So...

ESHOO: We know it's working.

ROSENWORCEL: ... indoors...

ESHOO: Mm-hmm.

ROSENWORCEL: ... is the problem. We have no standards. And increasingly, households are cutting the cord. More than one third of households rely exclusively on their wireless phones. So, I don't think it's acceptable that when people make emergency calls, first responders can't find them.

I've recommended in that speech that you mentioned, that we start a rulemaking to address this. Because we've heard both from carriers...

ESHOO: Mm-hmm.

ROSENWORCEL: ... and from public safety officials on the front line that this is an issue that...

ESHOO: Well, good for you for identifying this and taking it up. Because I think one of the things that I taught my children from their earliest memory was, 911, and putting their little fingers on the keypad so that they would understand that.

ROSENWORCEL: Me, too.

ESHOO: And I think that you're absolutely right.

On -- Commissioner Pai, you made a wonderful comment -- something about not one dime more on phone bills.

I want to raise something with the -- with the -- with the chairman, going back to it, about below-the-line fees. Representatives Doyle, **Lujan,** Matheson, myself -- we wrote to the -- our nation's leading wire -- wireless and wireline providers, and we asked them about their practice of applying below-the-line fees on monthly bills.

I agree with Commissioner Pai. That's why I -- you know, we wrote. We have a concern about what people are paying. These things are hidden. They think that they're -- they think everything on their bill is a tax. And I have to tell you, I brought my bills in. I couldn't tell what the heck they were, who was doing what to whom, and what it was for.

So, tell me what you think the agency, or if you have -- I know there's a long list of big challenges. But these are still important issues for consumers.

What steps can the agency take under existing statute to ensure that consumers know exactly how much they're paying each month, especially prior to signing up for their service. And this whole issue of below-the-line fees.

WHEELER (?): Yeah, this -- Ms. Eshoo, this is a -- a very legitimate concern. The specific one I believe you're referencing is a re-transmission consent...

ESHOO: That too.

WHEELER (?): ... be charged -- that cable operators have just begun putting on the bill.

ESHOO: Right.

WHEELER (?): And -- and I say just begun. And I'm trying to get our arms around that and figure out just exactly what our authorities are to answer your question.

It -- it does, however, strike me that it fits right in the broader issues that the chairman and Mr. Upton and others have talked about in terms of the kinds of issues that need to be addressed in a Telecom Act re-write here, is just what is going on.

ESHOO: Yeah, but that will be like seven years from now.

WHEELER (?): If all of the sudden -- well, no -- but I -- I think that...

WALDEN: Oh no.

ESHOO: Oh well, well.

(LAUGHTER)

WALDEN: I won't speak.

ESHOO: Let's see.

WALDEN: I won't get cross-wise between you and the chairman.

ESHOO: OK. Yeah, oh no.

Thank you. That you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, Chairman Walden.

WALDEN (?): Thank you.

ESHOO: And thank you to the entire commission.

I wanna say also, a welcome to the whole new team that has come in. And we wish you well, we really do. And the chairman and the commission will operate at a higher level because of the high level of people that have come in to support the works. So congratulations to each one of you.

WALDEN: We now move on to the vice chair of the full -- of the subcommittee, Mr. Latta from Ohio for five minutes.

LATTA: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, again, thanks very much for our commission members for being with us today.

And this question I would like to ask all of you. And this question is the incentive auction legislation prohibits the FCC from excluding qualified bidders from the auction.

Unfortunately while the incentive auction process works its way up to the commission, it appears that the wireless bureau is simultaneously working on the spectrum aggregation docket to achieve the de facto of (ph) spectrum caps.

Will you commit to -- to allowing any interested bidder that complies with the statutory requirements to participate fully in the auction? And, Chairman, if I could start with you? Because I notice in your -- in your testimony, page six that, you know, you talk about the incentive auction, you had said that you're looking at voluntary market oriented approach. So if I could start with you.

WHEELER: The statute is quite explicit in that regard that the commission may not exclude somebody from participating.

LATTA: Also on just aggregating, so it would be like -- it would be wide open for everyone to be involved in that?

WHEELER: Well, it's interesting, what's been developing here, I mean, the -- the CEO of the AT&T recently came out with a statement saying, "Wait a minute, I -- I think I would like to have rules to make sure that not one party can run away with all the spectrum."

So I think that in between those positions is -- is where -- a reality exist. But the statute, I agree, is quite clear.

The statute says that -- that you would not exclude anybody and the statute also says that the commission will design an auction so as to promote economic opportunity and competition and consumer choice to sustain a healthy wireless marketplace. And we'll do both.

LATTA: Madam Clyburn?

CLYBURN: Yes, Section 64:04 is clear that any party that abides -- obeys the rules, that they are qualified to participate. It also makes clear that the commission has the authority to enforce and introduce general -- rules of general applicability that will allow for spectrum aggregation in order to promote competition.

So again, my colleague mentioned that, you know, part of the reason for -- I think, for some of the robust participation and -- and the type of ideas that we're seeing it's because we took a dual path. On the same day we released the rules, or recent -- release the notice of oppose rule making on incentive auction, we also released a notice of propose rule-makings on trying to glean information about this dual path.

So I -- I think that this, in the long run, will help and improve our information -- information dissemination and acquisition and -- and rule-making once we decide on -- on a clear path forward.

LATTA: Thank you.

Commissioner?

ROSENWORCEL: The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act says that we can have rules of general applicability, but we cannot exclude anyone from participation in the auction. I think it's easy and simple, we just have to follow the law.

LATTA: Commissioner Pai?

PAI: I would agree with my colleague and I would also point out that if you look at the end goal which is to have a successful auction that pushes out a lot of spectrum, it yields sufficient revenue to fund national priorities, and that provides a fairness to all parties involved, then we should not, preclusively, deter participation from wireless carriers by -- in adopting unduly strict spectrum policies.

LATTA: Commissioner O'Rielly?

O'RIELLY: I wanna thank my colleagues for say -- stating that the statute is clear because as many people who worked on it, it was a -- an effort to give the commission some authority in this space when members couldn't come to agreement.

I'm extremely hesitant to impose limitations on Spectrum Act, because we have certain obligations under the statute otherwise. We -- in a nice way, I -- I mean, the money has already been spent.

We have already spent the -- the money from the Spectrum Act and so we have obligations to provide $7 billion for FirstNet and we have deficit reduction numbers that -- that have already gone out the door.

So I'm worried about anything that would depress auction revenues. I'm -- I'm certainly aware of the statute and I want to remain open to considering but I'm -- I'm hesitant at this time to impose any type of limitation.

LATTA: Thank you. And many of you know that Roll Call completion has been an ongoing issue in my district. And I commend the FCC for producing the November 8 order and further notice propose rule-making to improve the commission's ability to monitor the delivery of calls to rural areas by mandating certain recording retention and recording requirements from carriers.

And Commissioner Pai, do you believe the November 8 order will resolve the Call completion problem, or does more need to be done?

PAI: Well, Congressman, I certainly hope that it will, whether it's in Toledo or Topeka, we need to figure out where the kink in the system is, whether it is in our media providers, whether it's the Last Mile (ph), what point of the network is failing.

And then, if it's a technical problem, then we can take steps to fix that technical problem. But if (inaudible) then the FCC needs to be empowered to take corrective action. So I certainly support taking the appropriate action soon, rather than later on (inaudible).

LATTA: Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, I see my time has expired and I yield back.

WALDEN: Thank the gentleman. We now turn to the ranking member of the full committee, Mr. Waxman, for five minutes.

WAXMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, I just want to indicate that under the act, the FCC may not single out a specific provider for exclusion from a system of competitive bidding.

At the same time, the FCC is permitted to adopt and enforce rules of general applicability that promote competition. Even AT&T recently acknowledged they would support rules that limit the amount of spectrum any one company could acquire as long as the rules applied evenly to all auction participants.

Chairman Wheeler, as you know I'm a strong supporter of the FCC's open Internet rules, because I believe the Internet must remain an open platform for innovation and commerce.

You've emphasized the importance of the open -- open Internet order, at the same time, you recently made comments suggesting that an Internet service provider could charge a content provider, such as Netflix, a fee, in order to guarantee the best available transmission speed.

Do you see these type of business arrangements as consistent with the FCC's open Internet rules that you support?

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Waxman for -- for raising that issue because it gives me an opportunity to get more specific than I was in Ohio.

I am a strong supporter of the open Internet rules, full stop. The rules were written in such a way as to envision opportunities for innovation and experimentation and to impose on them a balance between protecting the open Internet, protecting consumers and stimulating innovation.

New ideas, under the -- under the open Internet order, new ideas such as those you've referenced in a wireless environment, particularly, are not prohibited. But there is a clear responsibility for the commission to make sure that what takes place does not interfere with Internet access, is not anti-competitive and does not provide preferential treatment. And we will enforce that. We -- we will maintain the balance between innovation and assuring there is an open Internet.

WAXMAN: I appreciate your expanding on that issue.

While, network infrastructure and technology have changed since the passage of the 1996 Telecommunications Act, the values embedded in the act have not.

And Mr. Chairman, I know the commission will soon begin a process to collect real-world information and data on the I.P. transitions. How will the commission continue to advance the long standing goals of competition, universal access and consumer protection throughout this transition process?

WHEELER: You know, Mr. Waxman, there are many people who have described the -- the trials, the I.P. trials as -- as a technology trial. I -- I don't think they were technology trial.

We know how to build I.P. networks. They are exactly what you just raised, they're values trial. They are how do we make sure that the values that for 100 years, Americans have come to expect from their networks, continue even after the way in which that network operates changes.

That's what we're gonna be looking for in these trials. It's not whether the Gazintas and the Gazoutas work. We know that -- that can get taken care of. It is what are the values -- what -- what -- how do you preserve the values in the new technological environment.

WAXMAN: Commissioner Rosenworcel, do you wanna add anything to that.

ROSENWORCEL: I think -- I think there are so many exciting things that can come with new networks and I think we should embrace the future rather than reject it.

So I think experimenting in these kind of trials is the smart way to go. But as we move into the future, what we do has to be informed by the values that have always been a part communications policy.

And I see four, public safety, universal access, competition and consumer protection.

WAXMAN: Thank you.

Commissioner O'Rielly, I appreciate your appeal to bipartisanship in your testimony. I know you played an important role in helping us get this bipartisan legislation in the passage of the Public Safety and Spectrum Act last year, because you helped negotiate the provisions in the availability of unlicensed spectrum in the broadcast incentive auction. What's your perspective on unlicensed spectrum generally? And do you think the commission is on the right track in balancing the availability of unlicensed and licensed bands?

O'RIELLY: Yes, I'm a strong proponent of unlicensed spectrum. I'm always amazed at what the innovators and the experimenters can do with unlicensed spectrum. I think there's great opportunity in the 600 megahertz for more unlicensed spectrum. The NPRM that was put out in this situation proposed a number of different ideas where unlicensed could fit. They proposed channel 37, the guard bands -- if there are going to be guard bands, depending on what our band plan looks like.

We talked about wireless microphones. There's going to be still white space, at least in the 500, maybe in the 600 as well. And then there's going to be residual conversions depending if you're talking about converting from six megahertz broadcast channels to five megahertz wireless channels.

So, there should be opportunities in the incentive auction after our rules are complete for unlicensed spectrum. And I'm strongly supportive of those. The only difficulty is figuring out how big those guard bands should be.

WAXMAN: OK. Thank you.

And my last question is to Commissioner Pai. You stated in your testimony that 92 percent of Americans now can choose from 10 or more wire-line competitors. If that number is accurate, doesn't it demonstrate that the pro-competitive policies of the '96 Telecom Act are working? And don't you believe we should continue to support a marketplace that gives non-incumbents a fair chance to compete?

PAI: Congressman Waxman, thank you for the question.

I think what the multiplicity of choices that consumers enjoy today demonstrates is that an I.P. environment where you have -- conversion is something that we only dreamed about during the '96 act, where you have telephone companies competing with cable companies, competing with wireless companies and others to provide the same services, that we can now rely in a way we could not in 1996 on the marketplace and technological innovation to drive consumer choice.

And so to the extent that there are values of competition embedded in the 1996 act, I of course embrace those. But I think we also need to be mindful of the fact that technology can quite often out-pace where laws and regulations are. And that appears to be where we are with respect to the I.P. ...

(CROSSTALK)

WAXMAN: But do you think we should support a marketplace that gives non-incumbents a fair chance to compete?

PAI: Oh, absolutely. I think the marketplace should give every competitor a fair chance to compete.
WAXMAN: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: I now turn to the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. Rogers.

ROGERS: Thank you very much. And as the representative of Michigan State University, I want to say thank you for giving me a great weekend.

(LAUGHTER)

I do find it suspicious, however, that my phone has not worked since the game. I wonder if you might be looking into that for me, Mr. Chairman.

(LAUGHTER)

The FCC's recent Communications, Security, Reliability and Interoperability Council meeting, I understand you talked about the need to apply metrics and evaluate cybersecurity. Can you elaborate on that for me?

WHEELER: Yeah, the CSRIC, which is the shorthand for the group you're talking about, has done a terrific job in using the multi- stakeholder process to come up with rules on botnets, on DNSSEC, on router security -- important kinds of network security issues. But it's not enough just to say, "OK, here are the rules," and then walk away. The question is: Are the rules working?

And so what I've asked CSRIC to do, not for us to impose, but in the multi-stakeholder process, is to say, "How do you establish metrics to know if this is working?" Because that's the -- you know, this is the trust-but-verify kind of a situation.

ROGERS: Well, how do you find those -- how are they -- how are you working through that process to define metrics in threats that change literally by the hour?

WHEELER: But -- so on those three issues, for instance, on botnets, for instance, how can you track the movement of where botnets are going? They seem to have moved into data centers, for instance. And what do we know about that and what might that suggest. And -- and what are we seeing in terms of -- of results of the implementation of the kinds of things that CSRIC has suggested.

That's what we need to know.

ROGERS: So, and if you find that out and you find that you are in some disagreement with industry on meeting those standards, do you foresee a regulatory scheme?

WHEELER: Well, I wouldn't want to, you know, to presume a hypothetical. I would hope that we would be working with industry to identify what needs to be done. And much like we are going to announce today on cell phone unlocking, when we sat with industry and said, "Here's a problem, it's got to be solved." And by the way, we'll have metrics on that.

I think that's the preferable first approach and that's the approach that we're taking with CSRIC.

ROGERS: But when you say that, does that -- does that mean -- if I hear you correctly, that means you're at least contemplating a regulatory scheme of some sort beyond just the voluntary "here's our metrics; try to...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: That's the right question, but it's not -- the key word is "contemplating." I've talked repeatedly about what I called the "seesaw" -- the regulatory seesaw: You do this; we don't need to do this.

And so what CSRIC is doing is saying: "OK, here are the kinds of things that need to be done." I said, "Let's measure them (inaudible), because the result is that we don't." If the seesaw has to tip, it has to tip, but it only tips on the basis of need, not the basis of theory.

ROGERS: If I understood your answer right, there's a possibility you could regulate -- always a possibility. Sure. OK, we should have lots of conversations on that. I worry that by the time you process your regulatory framework, you're too late. You've missed the boat. The threat changes...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: I could not agree more. The challenge of networks and the reason why the multi-stakeholder process is preferred is because it is much more dynamic, much more flexible, moves much quicker than a regulatory process can. And then can stay flexible. And that's why I'm trying to say, "Yes, this is the preferred process to deal with it."

ROGERS: So you're not going to move away from the council.

WHEELER: I'm sorry?

ROGERS: You're not going to move away from the council model for regulation. You're going to continue to...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: The multi-stakeholder process on this is the right way to go.

ROGERS: Yes, perfect.

Can you talk about Team Telecom? It's an important complement to the CIFIUS process in terms of preventing investments or I.T. equipment purchases to prevent certainly a threat to our national security interests like Chinese attempts to gain control of I.T. and telecommunication nodes in the United States. Can you walk us through where you're at on that and give us an idea of what's your thinking?

WHEELER: Well, when issues come before the commission relative to mergers, acquisitions, whatever the case may be, the input from Team Telecom is always sought and taken into account, and is crucially important.

ROGERS: Do you see an improvement to that process? Can we do something different? You have a limited set of -- once that report comes back, you have a limited set of decisions you can make. You're either in, you're out or you disagree with the decision.

WHEELER: Correct.

ROGERS: Is there something better we should be doing there, providing some authority for you all to be -- given, again, the nature of the changing technology and how fast the changes...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: I would -- I -- I have not had to live through one of these yet, so I'm probably not qualified to opine here on the fly. I'd love to look into this and to have a discussion with you about it.

ROGERS: Super. We're looking at some reforms to CIFIUS to try to make sure we're keeping up and I look forward to dialogue...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: Great. I look forward to that.

ROGERS: Thank you very much for being here.

WALDEN: I thank the gentleman.

We now turn to committee chairman emeritus, Mr. Dingell, also from Michigan, I believe, for five minutes. Go ahead.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, I commend you for this very important hearing. And I have no comments on football or other matters.

(LAUGHTER)

I want to welcome my old friend Chairman Wheeler to the committee. We look forward to great things from you. I'm satisfied you will serve with distinction.

I want to also welcome Commissioner O'Rielly.

And I want to commend Commissioner Clyburn for her fine services as acting chairwoman. Quite frankly, your daddy would be very proud.

My questions this morning will be directed solely at Chairman Wheeler and will elicit, as you will not be surprised to hear, yes or no responses.

Chairman Wheeler, I'd like to start with the reverse auction of broadcast frequencies authorized by the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act. I note you recently announced that the commission will not conduct such an auction until 2015. That gives you an extra year.

In the meantime, do you expect to complete negotiations concerning the relocation of broadcast frequencies with Canada, Mexico and our border areas? Yes or no.

WHEELER: No, but I'm very hopeful that we will be able to move it forward. And as DTV showed, you don't have to have the signature on the page.

DINGELL: And you know -- you know that that can cause an awful lot of viewers to lose service and an awful lot of screens to go dark in our part of the country.

Chairman Wheeler, similarly, paragraph 15 of the commission's notice of proposed rulemaking for the incentive auction states, quote, "The commission expects interested parties will have an opportunity for meaningful comment on all specific repackaging methodologies it is considering before it makes a decision." Does the commission publicly commit to sharing with the public the broadcast frequency repacking methodology it adopts, as well as the variables and other inputs it may use to predict repackaging results? Yes or no.

WHEELER: I'll go beyond yes and say absolutely.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Chairman, let's move on to the forward auction of broadcast frequencies. Section 6403(c) of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act provides the commission may not grant licenses through forward auction, reassign or reallocate broadcast frequencies or remote spectrum

usage rights unless it proceeds -- unless the proceeds of the forward auction are greater than the following three factors combined of, first, the total amount of compensation the commission must pay successful bidders in the reverse auction; the costs of conducting a forward auction; and the estimated costs for the commission to pay for broadcaster reallocations.

In addition, it is in the public interest that the commission ensure the auction raises a significant amount of money in order to help build out of the first debt (ph).

Together, these constitute a significant pressure on the commission to raise sufficient revenues to accomplish these objectives, do they not?

Yes or no?

WHEELER: Yes.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Chairman, at the end will the commission adopt transparent and simple rules to encourage participation by the broadest group of wireless providers in the forward auction? Yes or no?

WHEELER: Yes. DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, it's -- let's focus our attention on intelligent transportation systems. This is of considerable importance to my part of the country and our principal industries, and the five gigahertz band.

Given that the commission licensed ITS almost 15 years ago, it is -- is it reasonable to say that it would be premature for the commission to authorize unlicensed use of the 5850-5925 megahertz band before the studies are completed that confirm such use would not cause harmful interference with ITS services and other incumbent users. Yes or no?

WHEELER: Yes, and let me go further. We will not authorize if there's harmful interference.

DINGELL: I am very comforted that you are here this morning, Mr. Chairman.

Now, Chairman Wheeler, do you believe that the commission should approve unlicensed use of the 5850-5925 megahertz band before definitively establishing no risk of harmful interference with ITS systems or practical strategies to mitigate such risk? Yes or no.

WHEELER: No. And I repeat, we'll do nothing that causes harmful interference.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Chairman, ordinately (ph) is the commission considering moving forward with rulemaking opening up only the 5350 megahertz band for unlicensed use? Yes or no?

WHEELER: So this is where I need to just ask a question, sir. The answer is yes, if it is are we considering. The answer is no, if we have decided.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to commend you for your work in advancing the transition to I.P. based networks. Will the commission consider an order in January 2014 that will address geographic trials as well as how to protect in the best way consumers using I.P. based networks? Yes or no.

WHEELER: Yes.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, you have been most gracious to me, and I thank you for this. Mr. Chairman, your comments have been most enlightening and helpful. I want to thank you and the members of the commission for your presence and assistance to us this morning.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: Thank you very much.

The gentleman yields back, and the chair now recognizes for five minutes Mr. Guthrie.

GUTHRIE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that.

Chairman Wheeler, and welcome to the FCC also.

Mr. O'Rielly (ph), let me say happy new year.

And, Commissioner Clyburn, again I echo the good work that you did in your -- your time as chairwoman.

But is -- there seems to be a lot of progress being made -- this is to Chairman Wheeler -- a lot of progress being made to free up the 1755-1780 hertz band for commercial use, megahertz band.

And I know the FCC has already sought comment on how this band should be used for commercial purposes.

Is the FCC on track to auction the 1755-1780 band, paired with the 2155-2180 band? And, if so, when will it occur?

WHEELER: So, the answer is yes, we are on track. There are some issues that still have to be worked out with NTI and DOD and -- and some other...

(CROSSTALK)

GUTHRIE: ... impediments...

WHEELER: But I think -- I'm sorry, what?

GUTHRIE: Are there some impediments that you can identify that are -- that -- you're on track, but you say there are some impediments.

WHEELER: I think these are just implementational kinds of things in -- in their agreement.

But to be specific to your question, I would hope that we could do it in the September time frame.

GUTHRIE: September time frame. Great.

Well, then, you've spent some time in the -- in the wireless industry, I know, and have seen firsthand how spectrum demand has grown exponentially. I realize that a lot of your short-term focus is on the incentive auction, on the 1755-1780 megahertz.

But, looking forward, what is the FCC doing to plan for future spectrum demand? And how can the FCC ensure that there continues to be a pipeline of new spectrum to satisfy what consumers want, the insatiable demand for band width anywhere, anytime?

So, looking, again, how do you plan for future spectrum demand beyond this? What kind of thoughts do you have beyond this...

WHEELER: Sure.

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: First, we say yea and verily to what you and Ms. Matsui have -- have done.

Applying the incentive auction concepts to government spectrum, I'm a believer that by the time that you peel everything away, it comes down to economics, no matter who you are.

GUTHRIE: Right.

WHEELER: And the economics of an agency where they can get cash to help them fulfill their mission is an important kind of decision they should make. And you've -- you've created, with Ms. Matsui, have created a structure where this can happen.

GUTHRIE: Well, we looked at that in our -- in our working group, and it just -- it's a lot of work for these agencies to do that. It's not something you can just wish away, as I learned more and more about it.

And I always say I didn't run around Kentucky saying, "Send me to Washington and I'll deliver you spectrum," and so you get -- you learn things when you get elected that you never thought you would deal with, that I found just fascinating, because, as I said, my consumers, my constituents, demand it. They want fast and -- the fast bandwidth.

WHEELER: But it's also interesting...

GUTHRIE: But it is true that we have to, we're looking at it just by law, by fiat, say you have to release spectrum. I mean, you could get numbers, well, it's gonna cost this, it's gonna cost that.

And so, it does give them a reason to go in and make this happen.

WHEELER: And the interesting thing is, so -- so I was involved in the negotiation for ADUMS 1 (ph), back in the year 2000. In the first negotiation with the Department of Defense.

And we kept saying to them, "but you're gonna get money." And they kept saying, "But we can't spend it, because it goes to the general treasury."

GUTHRIE: Right.

WHEELER: And so, what you have done is set up a structure to help compensate people. And the -- and the beauty of it is that what it does is that it -- creates a cash flow for them to be able to meet their new needs and to be able to upgrade their equipment.

And so, it's a winning situation all around.

GUTHRIE: I think -- Mrs. Matsui, I think yesterday you said win- win-win I think is -- it does for the consumers, for the agencies and for the taxpayers.

So beyond -- so the -- so in the future, what are you kind of looking at, do you think should happen, just for bandwidth and more spectrum as we move off -- move into the future?

WHEELER: I'm sorry, sir?

GUTHRIE: I mean, just as we move on into the -- beyond the immediate auctions and things, what other things do you think we can do to free spectrum?

WHEELER: Well, I think we have -- I mean -- so, first of all, we're constantly looking at how do you get the more efficient, most efficient use out of -- of the spectrum?

One of the more interesting things that we're going to be running a test on is what do you do with spectrum sharing, because there's probably -- not -- there is, in a digital world, the opportunity to -- to share spectrum. But our spectrum allocations were set up with analog assumptions.

And so, if we can share it, re-use it, it's a great opportunity, and we need to be pursuing that as well.

GUTHRIE: Yeah, a great metaphor that I always thought was -- you don't have any lane on a highway dedicated just for emergency vehicles. But when emergency vehicles come down the highway, people get out of the way.

And I think that's a great metaphor for that.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I yield back 15 seconds.

WALDEN: The chair recognizes the gentlelady from California for five minutes.

MATSUI: Thank you very much.

And let me just follow up on my partner's questions here.

I know back in the day, you were looking at the use of federal spectrum. And I think it's a concept now that has finally come to the point where we can actually do something about it.

And I believe that this is a way to really encourage the federal agencies to relinquish the noncritical spectrum. And as Congressman Guthrie says, it's not easy to do. But we worked with DOD, and when we made a lot of progress.

Now, I am also looking at what Commissioner Rosenworcel has also always said, about using the carrot-and-stick approach regarding the federal spectrum holders, and having them relinquish their spectrum.

Now, in your view, and I also want Chairman Wheeler to comment on this, too, are the financial incentives identified in the bill adequate to encourage federal agencies to relinquish noncritical spectrum?

And I think I'll go for you first, Chairman Wheeler.

WHEELER: I don't know the answer to that, because I haven't market tested it, you know. And I think that the -- is this enough incentive is a market test question.

So I'm gonna, with all due respect, punt.

What's important is the concept that has been developed. And it would seem to me that -- that once that concept is -- is codified, that then making sure that incentives are adequate is, frankly, the easier lift on the whole exercise.

MATSUI: Right. Thank you.

Commissioner Rosenworcel?

ROSENWORCEL: Thank you for the question.

I think, first of all, that the legislation that you and Congressman Guthrie have introduced is terrific. The demand on our airwaves is going up, and the supply of unencumbered spectrum is going down. It's time to be creative. This legislation is creative.

As far as the incentives go, I think it's a good starting point for conversation. Because right now, federal agencies, by some measures, have veto control over about 60 percent of our airwaves. They use their spectrum. They're mission focused, to protect our national defense, to keep our planes in the sky, to tell us what weather patterns are coming.

But they don't have structural incentives to be efficient with it. Your bill is the start of a conversation about how we should apply those incentives and if we get them right, we will have a catalyst for a lot more spectrum for new mobile broadband uses, which would be terrific thing for the economy.

MATSUI: Great. Thank you very much.

Chairman Wheeler, you've emphasized how important it is for you to lead the FCC in fact-based decision making.

In the five gigahertz proceeding, for example, this committee is looking to the FCC's engineering expertise to determine the conditions under which Wi-Fi could use a band in a way that protects the missions of federal systems and commercial systems.

How are you and your staff planning on responding to the challenge? And is this proceeding a priority for the commission?

WHEELER: So, as Commissioner O'Rielly said, I would associate myself with -- with his comment, that he's a strong supporter of -- of unlicense (ph).

The key, of course, is that you need to make sure that there's no harmful interference, as I discussed with Mr. Dingell. But I believe that if you take a look at the five gigahertz, and you look at block 1 -- NII 1 (ph). That we should be moving to ruling on that, which is something that Commissioner Pai has -- has often suggested. That when you look at -- at band two, which is DOD, and band four, which is ITS, that we have to address the questions that I was addressing with Mr. Dingell, and that is, to make sure there is no harmful interference, and there's nothing in the record that really gets to that at this point in time. But we need to build that record.

MATSUI: OK, fine. Thank you very much.

And I have to ask a broadband adoption question here. The FCC has, Chairman Wheeler, implemented broadband adoption pilots as part of the lifeline reform measures. Can you explain what the FCC plans to do here? And what is the goal of these pilot projects?

WHEELER: So, there are 14 projects that are taking place around the country that we're funding with some of the savings that we've had in other parts of the -- of the program. And we're going to be looking at, for instance, what is the impact of a lifeline-like subsidy on broadband adoption? And we're going to be looking at what are the kinds of training issues to help people understand what broadband can do for them, and the kinds of things that they can do, once they get on the Internet? Because those seem to go part and parcel. It's not just that you can access it, but also, that you can use it and you understand why you ought to be using it.

MATSUI: So, are you going to use this information (ph) to develop a responsible permanent broadband adoption program?

WHEELER: That's the goal. We're develop -- this is -- these are trials to inform our future actions. And broadband -- wireless broadband and broadband adoption are kind of the sine qua non of what the agency does.

MATSUI: I thank you.

I yield back my time.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back her time, and the chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas for five minutes.

BARTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to make a comment on the audience. This one's a lot bigger than the one upstairs with the joint hearing. And they seem to be more interested, too. So, I guess that's a...

(LAUGHTER)

... credit to this subcommittee and the -- and the FCC commissioners.

We have the NRCC commissioners -- not NRC -- NRC.

(LAUGHTER)

WALDEN (?): I think you need to be clear on that one.

BARTON: That would be news, wouldn't it? If Greg Walden was testifying upstairs?

Anyway, I just have one question. The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act requires repackaging (ph) and auctioning of the 65 megahertz of spectrum in the low-powered TV stations, of which there are hundreds, if not thousands, are not guaranteed continued existence. But Chairman, this subcommittee and myself have a bill that we hope to introduce very soon.

While it doesn't guarantee them any additional rights, it does create, I hope, a pathway, so that they may continue to -- to exist.

As the new chairman of the commission, Mr. Wheeler, do you have any thoughts on what might be done to -- to give our low-powered TV industry a chance to continue to exist?

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Barton. Yes. And they probably fall in three -- three buckets.

One, there's been a lot of talk about following the statute. And -- and, as you point out, the statute says that LPTV translators are secondary services. We -- that's what the statute says.

Second is, we have actually opened a -- a public notice on the delivery of the content of LPTVs. How do we make sure that -- that the content -- and this ends up being more of a digital technology question than anything else. And how do you -- how do you use digital technology to get the content out? Because that's the consumer protection issue here -- to make sure the consumer gets the -- the content.

And then the -- the third point here is that there may be a safeguard in the reality that rural areas don't have that great demand for spectrum for wireless services to begin with. And so, they may be operating in areas where there will be less pressure to get spectrum. But we will find out as we go through this process.

BARTON: Mr. -- Commissioner O'Rielly, you're the new kid on the block, so to speak. You haven't had a chance publicly to comment on this issue. Do you have any thoughts about low-powered TV and what might be done to help them continue to exist?

O'RIELLY: Well, the chairman's right in the sense -- and you are right to introduce legislation and working for the members on the Spectrum Act. There was a decision made by the members to not protect low-power translators. And your legislation -- I would defer to your legislation to -- to whether they may resolve that.

You -- I know you and I had a chance to talk. I know some of the low-power representatives have argued it may be beneficial financially to the government to participate. I -- I'm not sure, and I don't know if it's accurate, but we have heard that argument, as well, and probably something we'd have to explore.

BARTON: That's my only question, Mr. Chairman. With that, I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back the balance of his time. And the chair now recognizes the gentleman from Utah for five minutes.

MATHESON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate all the commissioners taking the time to be here today. I think this is a very informative hearing.

First, Chairman Wheeler, in my city Utah, we have over 750 active translators that relay signals to many rural communities that rely on broadcast television to obtain their newscasts or public service announcements (ph) and entertainment.

Now, with the increased reliance on mobile data, there's no doubt that we need to take steps to move forward to making more spectrum available. I've heard concerns that the spectrum repackaging that could result in the incentive auctions could have a negative impact on those rural communities that tend to be more dependent on broadcast television. What steps is the FCC taking to protect these viewers from possible negative impacts?

WHEELER: Well, Congressman, the -- the -- the first issue is how threatened should they feel? And the fact that they are living in rural areas, where there is less of a demand for mobile spectrum may end up being a de facto shield for them.

Secondly is, as the statute says, this is a secondary service. It does not have protection. So, the question is, how do you protect consumers, as you're suggesting, who rely on it.

That's why we've had a public notice and are seeking comments on the question of how do you get what the translator or LPTV station does in terms of content out? And how does new technology fit into that, such as digital use of the airwaves, or whatever the case may be?

But this is clearly an issue where -- where we need to be focusing on what's the effect on the consumer, rather than what's the effect on the transmission need (ph). Because you have told us how we should look at that transition.

MATHESON: I appreciate that response.

There's been a lot of back and forth on how the incentive options should be structured. I think most would agree it's imperative we maximize participation, both with reverse auctions and the forward auctions. But, Chairman Wheeler, I was wondering, what do you see as the best way for us to maximize participation, and also, revenue for the federal government in both of those options?

WHEELER: You know, I -- before I took this job, I was in the business of doing business deals. And I think that's what we're talking about right here. This is a business transaction that someone who has a license needs to make it a business decision about. And -- and how do you do that? Well, I -- and what's our role.

First of all, we need to make sure that we're getting relevant information on a timely basis into the hands of those parties to make that decision. And that's why we've scheduled the -- the auction plan. We're saying in January, we're going to begin laying out exactly what that kind of information needs to be.

Secondly, I think it's incumbent on us to have an outreach program, in which we make sure that small and large broadcasters understand how the system -- how the program's going to work, what the economics could be, and maybe even begin to think in terms of what economic models might look like. Because at the end of the day, what we're really doing is, we're -- we're saying we want the marketplace to make a decision as to what is the highest and best use of spectrum. And the marketplace can't make that kind of decision until it's informed. So, it is incumbent on us to make sure that that kind of information is in a timely manner available to those, and to help with that process.

MATHESON: Commissioner Rosenworcel, I have a question for you about the ConnectEd program. You mentioned it briefly in your opening testimony. And you also mentioned that the current E-Rate program has some bureaucratic inefficiencies built into it right now.

What can the commission do to maximize efficiency to get more bang for the buck? What can you do with your existing authority, or what do you need for Congress to do to change it to also increase those efficiencies?

ROSENWORCEL: Thank you very much for the question.

I think this program is really important, and reinvigorating it is really important for education, infrastructure, and the economy.

I think we can do more with this program just as it is. As my colleague, Commissioner Pai, noted, we do subsidize a whole bunch of old-fashioned services right now. We should phase those out over time, and focus instead on capacity and bandwidth.

And, like you mentioned, we need to reduce bureaucracy. Bureaucracy gets in the way of small and often rural schools from participating in this program.

I'd like to see us encourage greater use of consortia to improve bulk buying power, and also, have multi-year applications to reduce the administrative burden on schools that do participate.

MATHESON: I appreciate that.

Mr. Chairman, I'll yield back.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back, and the chair now recognizes for five minutes the gentleman from Nebraska.

TERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And let me begin by thanking former Acting Chair Clyburn. And during your tenure as acting chair, you finished the low-power FM, and you guys did a wonderful job on it. You really did. And I want to thank all of you for that. But former acting chair, just now Member Clyburn...

CLYBURN: The commissioner formerly known as...

(CROSSTALK)

(LAUGHTER)

TERRY: Yeah, that works. And you can have a sign for your name now.

But you were extremely communicative. I love the way you'd reach out to us. And frankly, you were so extraordinary, that I think every chairman, including the new one, should model themselves after that. We -- we don't -- it's very rare that we see that level of communication, so I just want to thank all of you.

This really is a great board. You guys are really serious about the real issues. And I like how you filter out the politics that surrounds all of this. Keep it up.

The next -- I know that the quantile regression analysis has already been discussed to some point, but I just want to let you know that that's been a long-time concern for me. I think some of the concerns that we had that it could actually displace or retard capital investment in rural America, when this is all about getting resources and capital into rural America because of its high cost. And so it really needs to be reviewed.

And Chairman Wheeler, I appreciate -- I've been told your comments on the record here today is that you understand this problem. I'll invite you and all the commissioners out to rural Nebraska. You land in my district and then we go there. But it really is becoming a problem. I have -- there's one provider in Diller, Nebraska that we have used as the model for responsible rural telecom because there are businesses there that now have high speed and they're using it to monetize their businesses there, where they truly are a worldwide business, not just the two blocks of Diller.

But there's a wind farm that they are having trouble -- the wind farm that wants to go there, that needs a broadband hookup and they're saying, "With our cap, we don't have the money; we aren't allowed to use that money in that way." So it's having serious effects. It's just not that one house that's 30 miles (inaudible) and, you know, line in and out. It's really hurting rural economic development. So I want (inaudible).

And then in my two minutes left, I want to ask the real question. And to Chairman Wheeler, and if either of the commissioners wish to step in, but I want to ask about a rule that concerns the video market. Many of us are worried that the price of cable subscriptions -- and I'll tell you that's an often and frequent call to my congressional office.

And the current market for video is seeing an expansion in the scope of current law wasn't necessarily intended to address; that the FCC has defined "buying group" of NVPDs for the purpose of program access rules in a way that excludes the NCTC, essentially the only buying group out there.

So, are there plans by the commission to look into this, to maybe change it? Do you think that the NCTC should be excluded from this process?

Chairman Wheeler?

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Terry.

I've just become aware of the issues that have been raised about this, and want to get all over it, and would ask that we be able to get back to you with what the answer is. We are now aware and will be dealing with it.

TERRY: Any of the commissioners have concerns about NCTC being excluded from this rule?

Hearing none, Mr. Pai, you actually had an expression.

(LAUGHTER)

PAI: No good expression goes unpunished.

(LAUGHTER)

No, I mean, I supported the notice that teed up a lot of the questions. And we teed up a lot of different questions (inaudible) paragraph 84 (inaudible) that order, out-lifted all the issues under consideration. And I look forward to working with Chairman Wheeler and my colleagues to ensure that the FCC takes the appropriate action to ensure that (inaudible).

TERRY: Right, and others nodded.

Mr. O'Rielly, also known as the new guy.

(CROSSTALK)

O'RIELLY: The new guy, yes. I would have to agree with Chairman Wheeler. I don't have as much information on this and I look to get up to speed on it, so I apologize that I don't.

TERRY: Yield back.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back the balance of his time.

And the chair now recognizes the gentleman from New Mexico for five minutes.

LUJAN: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

And Chairman Wheeler, welcome today; to all the commissioners, welcome. Again, as we're announcing former positions and posts, Commissioner Clyburn, I know that you're very welcome here today. It's great to hear the recognition from my colleagues with your leadership and your work.

And I don't want to speak for former Public Utility Commissioner Ray Baum either, but I'm going to invoke his name a bit. It's good to have another fellow utility commissioner here and a leader. For those of you who aren't aware, myself and Ray served at the same time as utility commissions as Commissioner Clyburn. We had a chance to do some great things together. And it's great to have you again in that leadership capacity, Commissioner Clyburn.

Chairman Wheeler, I appreciate very much the conversation about quantile regression analysis. I think you'll see that there's many rural members of Congress or members that represent rural parts of America that are on this committee. As we look at this and encouraging investment in rural America, I hope that through all these deliberations and rulemaking, that we don't lose sight of the fact that if we can make a mobile call from an airline, that we should be able to make it anywhere in rural America.

And if technology is allowing for that to occur, I don't want to hear that we're not able to anymore. So thank you again for looking at this and making sure that rural America will not be left out, Mr. Chairman.

With that being said, I would also encourage and was encouraged by the fact that in a recent report, there was some conversation about the tribal coefficient and would encourage that that is critically important as we roll out the reevaluation of the QRA.

And lastly, I want to let you know that I'm planning on introducing a piece of legislation to include the elevation of the national tribal recognition of ONAP (ph) as a permanent office. And I would hope that we might be able to work with our colleagues to elevate that, (inaudible) reports directly to the chairman, especially with the evolution of what we're seeing with the extension of utilities across rural America, including tribal lands.

Mr. Chairman, I'm intrigued very much by the conversation around the I.P. transition. I think Chairman Rogers, chairman of the Intelligence Committee, was asking about the importance of security in networks, that we not lose sight of the fact of the importance of the protection of consumers and network security.

As we're looking forward into future technology, sometimes things that we've read about in fiction or we've seen in television. There's been a lot of concern recently about security of networks, about the infringement on individuals, peering eyes, if you will, sometimes into consumer information.

And I'm intrigued by your direction to move forward with real- world experiments that will be coming forward. I'd like your thoughts on anything that you're aware of or that the FCC may be looking at with laser-based quantum encryption, point-to-point work that's happening right now with our national labs. It's been written about.

I know it makes some people nervous, but it seems to me that as we're looking to protect consumer information and intellectual property, that the more advanced that we can make our networks with technology that's currently available, that we may take to the commercial marketplaces, is something that I'd like to encourage and see, and just like to get your thoughts on that.

WHEELER: I just learned quantum regression analysis, and now you want me to know laser-based quantum encryption?

LUJAN: Yes, sir.

(LAUGHTER)

WHEELER: I look forward to learning a lot about that. I don't mean to be light, but the -- the -- let me be specific on what I can comment on.

Our networks need to be secure, period. What I was trying to say to Mr. Rogers is that the best way for attacking that is through the multi-stakeholder process and moving with dispatch. Because the bad guys sure figure out a way to get around things and that we need to make sure that our responses are flexible.

We're working obviously with the president's executive order and the various steps that he is taking, or the executive agencies are taking in that regard. But I happen to believe that -- that two challenges of the I.P. transition is going to be the security of the networks and the privacy of the information.

And if you go back to the comment that I was making I believe to Mr. Waxman, about the trials need to be about measuring values, then we need to be addressing both of those issues inside that trial. And I look forward to learning more about how laser quantum can help the.

LUJAN: I appreciate it, Chairman.

And if I may, Mr. Chairman, you know, it wasn't too long ago that when the same idea was presented, that we may be able to move data over light and laser...

WHEELER: Right, exactly.

LUJAN: ... there were a lot of discouraging thoughts that were associated with that. But as we're moving now away from copper as a new medium, where even the ability to move data on fiber can't keep up with our processing speeds. If laser-based quantum encryption is good enough to keep national security secrets preserved, I would certainly hope that we find a way to extend these protections to consumers as well.

And again, with the real threats that are taking place with theft of intellectual property, right now we know that it works point to point, but there are ways to make this work with (inaudible) we have available. This is a serious area that I have tried to take up with the Intelligence Committee. They were very cautious with their conversations with me until I presented them with publications that have talked about this in open source and an unclassified way.

So I'm hoping that we might be able to look into this more and have a serious attempt to incorporate this into our day-to-day lives.

Thanks again, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back.

And the chair now recognizes the gentleman from Colorado for five minutes.

GARDNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I want to commend all the commissioners for being here today, and congratulations on your new role and your newly retired-from role. Thank you for your service.

And Commissioner Pai, I want to thank you for your work on the quantile regression analysis, and the comments that you made at the beginning of your testimony, the question of Chairman Walden, I guess, was something that I have dealt with each and every day,

In a district bigger than the state of South Carolina, I have a number of rural telecom -- rural utilities that continue to face the uncertainty, as you have mentioned, about the QRA. And I appreciate it.

And so, Chairman Wheeler, thank you very much for your comments on that as well. I look forward to following up with you as those conversations and decisions move forward.

I wanted to ask a quick question to Commissioner Pai about the issue of connected (ph) and the E-Rate program .

Who is responsible for policing to make sure the E-Rate program is being used as it -- as appropriately, making sure there's no abuse of the program?

PAI: Congressman, thank you for the question.

In theory, the Universal Service Administrative Corp. or company (ph) overseen by us monitors it.

But in practice, given the limited resources that USAC has and given the limited resources the FCC has to oversee USAC, there's not a great deal of transparency and accountability in the system.

GARDNER: A question I had with that is two-fold. Number one, how do we ensure that there is no overlap of private sector service with E-Rate funding and programs, to make sure that we're not adding to government competition to the private sector. But, number two, if USAC has identified a problem with a E-Rate contractor or recipient, is there a way to police or perhaps are there barment issues that you can talk about?

Because I know one of the issues in Colorado is that there has been a company that is involved and has been morphed into a new company that has had significant issues with E-Rate violations, and is now involved in an other company in Colorado that is providing services to schools.

PAI: Yes, USAC has taken actions to -- such as the type you've indicated. And, as well, the Department of Justice in appropriate cases can take action where it suspects that something fraudulent has occurred.

And I know that I'm quite sure I speak for my colleagues when I say that the FCC has no interest in doing anything but enforcing the rules against people who abuse the E-Rate system.

With respect to the first part of your question, I think it's critical as we think about reforming the E-Rate program in addition to restructuring the basic planks of it that we ensure that at the end of the day, we don't supply or use our E-Rate funds to supplant or add to the problems on competitors who've, you know, taken the risk and invested private capital into pulling (ph) networks.

GARDNER: Commissioner Rosenworcel, I know you talked this as well. I don't know if you have anything to add.

ROSENWORCEL: You know, I'd echo largely the sentiment of my colleague. We wouldn't want government funds to displace private sector funds. We want to be efficient with the limited dollars we have and make sure we reach as many schools at as high speed as possible, including in rural Colorado.

And with respect to oversight, we could always benefit from more oversight. When we find bad actors in a program we have to take efforts to get them out.

GARDNER: Great. Thank you.

And Commissioner -- or Chairman Wheeler, a question I have, and this is maybe something that you need to get back to me on, are you familiar with a report on a next-generation 911 that is being put together by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in connection with a blue ribbon panel that was convened by -- I'll get the name here -- the FCC's Communications Security, Reliability and Interoperability Council?

WHEELER: Right. That's CSRIC, yes,

GARDNER: CSRIC. Are you familiar with the report that is about to come out in January?

WHEELER: I am not familiar with the report that's about to come out. GARDNER: There was a -- the blue ribbon panel that was put together...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: Right. I know taht...

(CROSSTALK)

GARDNER: Apparently there is a blue ribbon panel -- or the report is coming out in January. And there is some questionable findings in this report. And I would hope that perhaps the FCC, because I believe some of the findings are not in line with FCC ideas at all. If you could take a look at that report before it's issued and public, to make sure that when we issue a report that has the stamped seal approval of the federal government that it's in line with FCC directives and beliefs...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: Consider that done.

GARDNER: Thank you very much.

And a final question in my time, regarding the I.P. transition issues. Heading in a good direction, but -- and there's significant strides being made to transition to I.P., but, you know, it's -- talking about rural America again, how do we further encourage this transition in a way that ensures consumers remain served in the long run, and particularly in rural America?

WHEELER: I'm sorry, that consumers be served in the long run?

GARDNER: In the long run, particularly in rural America.

WHEELER: Again, it is gonna be very important, for instance in these trials that we have trials in rural areas, to begin to answer those kind of questions.

I mean, you can't go to New York City or, you know, someplace like this and run a trial and say that it applies, you know, in the cities in your district.

And so, that's gonna be one of the criteria that we're looking at.

GARDNER: Thank you.

Yield back my time.

WALDEN: Thank you.

The gentleman yields back.

And the chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri for five minutes. LONG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, Chairman Wheeler, I came to Congress with a 30-year background in the auction business, so that's how -- was my profession for 30 years before I got here, so I've got a great interest in any time that we try to conduct an auction for anything. And it's tricky to me about this reverse auction thing, because I'm not sure exactly how that's supposed to work.

But can you provide us with a timeline of actions that need to occur before the incentive auctions would begin?

WHEELER: Yes, sir. We're going to -- and we're gonna in January, which -- at next month's open meeting we're gonna have a presentation that is going to lay out both the timeline and the policy issues that need to be decided, and some recommendations on those.

Then in the spring we're going to be voting on an important order that solicits offers to do trials, sets up a measurement scheme for them, and begins to address the kinds of policy issues that will be tangential to all of that.

And then, we will go forth with trials.

LONG: Can you also tell me what the FCC is doing to ensure that the maximum amount of revenue will be generated through these auctions, which was always a concern of mine as an auctioneer?

WHEELER: The -- and -- and -- and believe me, one of ours as well, because we have the responsibility not only to fund FirstNet and the auction activities themselves, but also to contribute to pay down the federal deficit.

And I think the key to -- to how you can maximize revenue comes down to multiple things.

One is -- is, we've got to be able to attract broadcasters. We've got to have something, as I was saying previously, that -- that are rules that are understandable, are rules that we're actually being aggressive and helping people understand the economic impact of them, because, as you know, you're only gonna bid to the point that your spreadsheets say it's gonna be making sense.

So that's the first thing, that we've got to attract broadcasters.

We also have this -- well, we have this perverse challenge here that we also have to be freeing up spectrum.

LONG: Have to be what?

WHEELER: Freeing up spectrum.

LONG: Which requires people to put spectrum...

(CROSSTALK) LONG: At the end of the auction.

WHEELER: There's the key. So you have to provide the appropriate incentive to get them to free up...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: And do you foresee that happening? From what I talk to -- the people I talk to, I don't know that that's gonna happen in as large a way as what you...

WHEELER: So, the Congress told us to make it happen. And -- and we are going to do our damndest to deliver on those instructions. And I believe that we will be able to fulfill the challenge that we have been given.

And in no way, shape or form, do I underestimate the magnitude of it. I have spent more time on this issue in the last 39 days than any other issue.

And I know my colleagues all feel the same way on this. We understand that we're biting off a huge chunk here.

LONG: And there's a article where you were speaking in Ohio and, to quote out of the article, "'the protection of competition,;'Mr. Wheeler said, 'would apply to the coming auction of additional airwaves or spectrum for mobile broadband.' In April, the Justice Department told the FCC that it could help to protect competition by ensuring that the two largest companies, AT&T and Verizon,

were not allowed to use their financial might to buy up all the available spectrum being auctioned, shutting out smaller carriers."

So how do you balance that? How do you decide I want to get the most money for my product over here, but I want to limit my bidders over here? How does that...

WHEELER: I also think that -- and, as you know, the more people you get to the auction, presumably the better result.

And so, we want to make sure that we are creating an auction marketplace that will attract as many people as possible. Not -- and not just the giants.

As a former entrepreneur, we want to make sure that we have smaller wireless companies. We want to make sure there are entrepreneurial opportunities in here.

And that's one of the things that's most interesting about what we've recently put out for public notice, the proposal from the Competitive Carriers Association, the Rural Carriers Association, and the NTCA, the rural wireline association, on talking about smaller economic areas, so that they could bid for a smaller piece of geography, rather than a humongous piece, because for entrepreneurs, for smaller carriers, they can target their activities, they can take something that is a -- is a consumable bite, rather than be forced to go out and -- and -- and... (CROSSTALK)

LONG: But they (inaudible) have to put together a patchwork quilt of -- to make their system work correct, what they buy through the auction, they have to...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: So they can -- they can buy their areas, they can buy other, smaller areas, rather than having to buy -- this is -- and this is not a decision, I just want to clear. This is -- we've put this out for comment. But it is a certainly very interesting idea that...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: ... a,b, and c, and they get a and b, but then they can't get c, then a and b weren't worth anything to them...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: But that's kind of the history of the wireless industry. I've been -- we're about to conduct our 96th auction. And -- and I've been in them from the outset. And traditionally, that kind of situation has occurred. And then an aftermarket then develops in which various players say, "OK, how can I reorganize for the most efficiency?"

LONG: OK. I'm beyond my time by quite a little bit. So if I had any time, I'd yield it back.

WALDEN: The gentleman's time has expired.

And the chair now recognizes the gentlelady from North Carolina for five minutes.

ELLMERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you to the commissioners for being here today.

Commissioner Clyburn, I'm going to direct my questions to you. I have an issue that has been raised from my sheriffs back home in North Carolina. And it has to do with one of the points that you made in your opening testimony.

And I'll just read from your opening statement. "We adopted an order to reform inmate calling services to finally provide relief to millions of families and 2.7 million children who have been paying unreasonably high rates to stay connected with incarcerated loved ones."

My sheriffs back home, do have some concerns on this issue and -- so they would like me to pose some questions to you on this issue, in regard to security measures that -- that they will now be putting in place, certainly they want to be able to provide, you know, access and information and the ability to communicate with family members. But they are concerned that this order or reform regulation is saying that basically their ability to -- to put forward call-blocking through the -- is that an issue? Is that looked upon as something that -- that we want to veer away from?

CLYBURN: So let me start -- again, thank you, and it's a pleasure meeting a -- a Carolinian.

ELLMERS: Absolutely. Yes

CLYBURN: We might have argued a bit about which...

ELLMERS: Yeah.

CLYBURN: Right.

ELLMERS: That's OK, though. We're -- we're brothers, cousins, sisters.

CLYBURN: Absolutely.

ELLMERS: That's right.

CLYBURN: So let me start with the latter, in terms of the call blocking concerns that some of -- of the sheriffs and persons who run jail facilities mentioned.

So as it relates to that particular item, I want to assure you that nothing within anything that we have delivered in this order prevents any type of security in security needed type of a blocking.

So if it's -- if -- if you know, a judge or a witness, or something, you know is -- is potentially at risk, then yes, these providers can block calls.

The -- the call blocking comes into play when there is not a business relationship with -- if someone is doing business with somebody else and then the supplier -- another supplier is blocking them, that is when we have some disconnects with our rules.

But when it comes to security protocols, that is in place.

So you've mentioned what is at the epicenter of our reasoning for reform. That family members that -- those who represent those who are incarcerated, not everybody incarcerated is -- is guilty.

And -- and those who are trying to help rehabilitate those inmates have complained to us for a number of years, for well over 10 years that the ability to communicate was just financially outrageous. That it was an unaffordable regime.

So what we did, after 10 long years, was act. And we looked at -- and reminded ourselves, Communications Act, in terms of universal service principles put forward, that is the providing of just and reasonable rates for all. And so we put in a -- a mechanism that will provide that. And what we also did, not only providing a -- a means for just and reasonable rates for those families and others who use the phone service, but providing the means for just and reasonable rate of return for those carries, at the same builds in those that just and reasonable rate of returns is the -- the amount of money needed to -- to provide a state of the art security protocols.

So nothing within the framework in terms of what we, you know, put forward in terms of the order and the further order that would deal with entrust state rates, will compromise security protocols. But it will bring more certainty and more -- I -- I guess I would -- again, just affordability for those -- for those who are making calls to the incarcerated.

ELLMERS: They are also concerned about the cost involved and -- and you know, if -- if you can give some guidance in anticipation of the cost that they will have to incur as the result of this, certainly again, wanting to ensure that everyone is protected...

CLYBURN: Right.

ELLMERS: ... and the security is there. That -- and also, would you consider, at the local level, the local jails, maybe being exempt until they can, you know, come up with a plan of action?

CLYBURN: So one of the things that we have put forth in -- in this engagement is the capacity for any provider that is under distress, they can apply for a waiver process. You know, for -- for a waiver.

And so that capacity is within and means, and so they do have the ability to do so.

But one of the things that I wanted to emphasize is when we came up with this particular rate structure, we looked at a number of cost studies and cost models that included a -- a wide array of -- of facilities and came up, actually, with a cost structure that was much higher than some the petitioners wanted us to.

But we thought that we needed to take into account facilities, large and small, in order to come up with a -- a rate structure that we think it strikes the right balance.

ELLMERS: Well, thank you very much and I look forward to and certainly will be working with my law enforcement back home, working with the commission on -- on this issue, and the subcommittee.

So thank you so much. I look forward to that.

CLYBURN: Thank you, ma'am.

ELLMERS: And I yield back the remainder of my time.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back, and seeing no other members to ask questions, I wanna thank the commission for being with us today. And I know that Chairman Walden does the same.

And I also wanna thank the commission for changing your time today for your meeting to be able to be here, and I understand your meeting is at 2 O'clock. So we appreciate you accommodating the committee to appear before us today.

And seeing no further business to come for the committee, the committee stand adjourned.

END

LOAD-DATE: December 16, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 66535

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

JOURNAL-CODE: PTTW

Copyright 2013 ProQuest Information and Learning
All Rights Reserved
Copyright 2013 Roll Call, Inc.

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

December 12, 2013 Thursday

Surge seen in filings for unemployment benefits

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 262 words

The U.S. Labor Department today said the number of people filing initial claims for unemployment benefits rose by 68,000 to 368,000 for the week ending Dec. 7.

The department's four-week moving average, considered a more accurate picture of employment, also rose by 6,000 from the previous week's revised average of 322,750.

In a related matter, Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District and Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham of the First District are among 166 Democratic members of the House who are asking Speaker John Boehner not to adjourn the House for the year without bringing up an extension of federal unemployment insurance.

Those benefits are scheduled to expire on Dec. 28.

"Speaker Boehner and House Republican leaders should not send the House home for the year until an extension of unemployment benefits is passed and sent to the president for his signature," **Luján** said in a statement. "Failure to act on this critical extension during this difficult economic time would leave 6,000 unemployed workers in New Mexico without benefits at the end of the year and an additional 9,700 people without benefits in the first six months of 2014. Too many families across our state are still struggling as we work to turn the economy around, and allowing unemployment benefits to end for thousands of people who are trying to get back to work will take a toll on our families as well as our economy."

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: December 12, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

December 12, 2013 Thursday

NM senators praise deal; two reps say it has flaws

BYLINE: Michael Coleman Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. A6

LENGTH: 493 words

WASHINGTON - New Mexico's U.S. senators on Wednesday welcomed a proposed bipartisan budget agreement to avert a federal fiscal crisis, while two of the state's representatives said the deal had flaws.

Democratic Sens. Martin Heinrich and Tom Udall said the proposal, which would repeal some of the sequester cuts in fiscal 2014 and 2015, appears to be good starting point to avert a government shutdown in January. Both senators said they would review it carefully before deciding whether to vote for it.

"This bipartisan budget agreement will prevent a government shutdown and is an important step toward undoing some of the damaging across-the-board cuts from the sequester," Heinrich said. "At the very least, this agreement will give the economy the near-term stability it needs and Congress time to deal with long-term fiscal concerns. "

Udall said the deal would help restore a "rational budget process."

"It provides more time to get our economy working again while still acknowledging the need to keep our budgets in check," Udall said. "Governing from crisis to crisis has been bad for business, bad for middle-class families and bad for New Mexico, and this agreement will provide some real relief from the economically damaging sequestration cuts as well as welcome stability for our economy and the federal employees and contractors in New Mexico."

Republican Rep. Steve Pearce commended Ryan and Murray but said the deal contains "significant flaws."

"The proposal directly impacts New Mexican families by reducing New Mexico's share of receipts from commercial activity on federal lands-money that we rely on for schools and roads," Pearce said. "This budget does nothing to reduce our national debt. Our nation spends nearly a trillion more a year than we collect, but this proposal does not have any productive deficit reduction."

Democratic Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham was optimistic, saying, "While I am still reviewing the final details, this agreement can serve as the foundation for continued bipartisan negotiations that lead to a budget that provides complete relief from the sequester, gives stability to New Mexico working families and businesses, creates jobs and reduces the deficit in a balanced and responsible way."

Democratic Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** raised concerns that the deal doesn't include an extension of unemployment benefits.

"Failure to act on this critical extension during this difficult economic time would leave 6,000 unemployed workers in New Mexico without benefits at the end of the year and an additional 9,700 people without benefits in the first six months of 2014," **Luján** said.

Meanwhile, former Sen. Pete Domenici, a Republican former Senate Budget Committee chairman, praised the proposed accord.

"If this deal also leads to less drama over the debt ceiling and fiscal year 2015 appropriations, then the American people will see a much more functional Congress and a much less melodramatic fiscal discussion," Domenici said.

LOAD-DATE: December 12, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Albuquerque Journal

Congressional Documents and Publications

December 12, 2013

LUJAN STATEMENT ON BUDGET VOTE; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 302 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting for a compromise budget plan that reduces sequester cuts over the next two years.

"While this budget plan is not perfect, and neither side got everything they would have liked, it represents a compromise that takes important steps to chip away at the devastating cuts of the sequester. It rejects the calls of the extreme Tea Party elements that have demanded even deeper cuts that would harm New Mexico. Already in our state we have seen arbitrary sequester cuts negatively impact our economy and hurt our families. During this past year Head Start centers have shut down, workers were furloughed, and cuts to the national labs rippled through the state's economy.

"By reducing part of the sequester cuts and providing certainty and stability over the next two years, this plan puts Congress on a path to fund the government without legislating from one crisis to the next.

"Passing this budget plan is a small step forward; however, I am disappointed with the House's failure to act on other critical issues facing families in New Mexico. Yesterday, I called on Speaker Boehner to keep the House in session and pass an extension of unemployment benefits before recessing for the year. More work is needed to pass a Farm Bill that supports our farmers, ranchers,

and dairy producers, and that provides funding for critical nutrition programs. And House Republicans have yet to allow a vote on much-needed immigration reform to fix our broken system. With all this important work that remains, the House should stay in session until more progress is made for the people of New Mexico."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-statement-on-budget-vote/

LOAD-DATE: December 13, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMC

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Copyright 2013 CQ Transcriptions, LLC
All Rights Reserved
CQ Transcriptions

All materials herein are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of CQ Transcriptions. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.

REP. GREG WALDEN HOLDS A HEARING ON FCC OVERSIGHT

December 12, 2013 Thursday

EVENT DATE: **December 12, 2013**

TYPE: COMMITTEE HEARING

LOCATION: WASHINGTON, D.C.

COMMITTEE: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY

SPEAKER: REP. GREG WALDEN, CHAIRMAN

WITNESSES:
REP. GREG WALDEN, R-ORE. CHAIRMAN
REP. ANNA G. ESHOO, D-CALIF., RANKING MEMBER
REP. FRED UPTON, R-MICH. EX OFFICIO
REP. BOB LATTA, R-OHIO
REP. MARSHA BLACKBURN, R-TENN.
REP. HENRY A. WAXMAN, D-CALIF. EX OFFICIO
REP. DORIS MATSUI, D-CALIF.
WITNESSES: THOMAS E. WHEELER, CHAIRMAN, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

MIGNON L. CLYBURN, COMMISSIONER, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
JESSICA ROSENWORCEL, COMMISSIONER, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
AJIT VARADARAJ PAI, COMMISSIONER, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
REP. MIKE ROGERS, R-MICH.
REP. JOHN D. DINGELL, D-MICH.
REP. BRETT GUTHRIE, R-KY.
REP. JOE L. BARTON, R-TEXAS EX OFFICIO
REP. JIM MATHESON, D-UTAH
REP. LEE TERRY, R-NEB.
REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M.
REP. CORY GARDNER, R-COLO.
REP. BILLY LONG, R-MO.
REP. RENEE ELLMERS, R-N.C.

TEXT:

WALDEN: I'll call to order the Subcommittee on Communication and Technology. And it's a delight to welcome all five members of the Federal Communications Commission, fully installed and bright and shiny faces and welcome to go today.

We welcome you. And Chairman Wheeler and Commissioner O'Rielly, we especially welcome you and look forward to working with you to set the communications agenda for the United States.

Federal Communications Commission is the arm of our government, tasked with fostering some of the most important parts of our national economy. And among them, the telecommunications industry, the video distribution industries and the Internet.

Give the economic significance of these industries, the changes from Congress -- the charge from Congress to encourage competition, license our national spectrum assets and facilitate technological advances is one that must be discharged with transparency, accountability and a long view of the technological landscape.

It is with this in mind, that the subcommittee has worked over the last three years on efforts to improve the commission's processes. As the subcommittee with jurisdiction over the Federal Communications Commission, take this task very seriously and with great care to ensure the commission not only remains a vital institution, but one that can serve as an example for other federal agencies of accountability and efficiency.

A bipartisan majority of this subcommittee is deeply committed to this cause, and it's proud to have reported out a bipartisan FCC Process Reform Bill to the full House of Representatives, yesterday.

Chairman Wheeler, it's clear you want to improve the agency. I've appreciated our conversations and your comments. And I'd like to commend for turning your attention to this task as one of your first roles as chairman by asking one of your top advisers to review the FCC process and submit recommendations for improvement by early 2014.

While there are a number of large proceedings currently pending at the commission, many of which we will talk about today, I'm particularly concerned with returning the commission to addressing some of its long overdue responsibilities.

For example, despite multiple unsuccessful trips to the Third Circuit Court of Appeals, the commission's responsibility to address the media ownership proceeding, remains unfulfilled.

Additionally, licensing, one of the original -- licensing, one of the original reasons for the creation of the commission, has fallen woefully behind.

Of particular note is the tragic pace of processing of applications in the commission's media bureau.

Now the AM radio industry has been clamoring for the ability to use FM translators to give new life to that classic medium. And I certainly appreciate what Commissioner Pai has done, taking on this issue and it's very good work.

And as a former licensee, I actually know firsthand, the commission has been in no rush to address translator applications. In fact, my own application sat unresolved at the commission for 10 years.

To put this in context, while the commission considered my application, my wife and I actually sold our radio stations, our son went off an graduated from college and every full power television station in the country converted from analog to digital broadcasting.

Look, the commission can do better than that. The commission should do better than that. And I'm hopeful that our shared commitment will lead to improvement in that bureau.

As the only one on the panel with the unique experience of having been a licensee of commercial broadcast and still under your jurisdiction with my amateur radio license, which I'm set to renew for March, hopefully I will get approved within 10 years, I'd like to offer two pieces of advice for you as you move forward with your change.

First, where Congress has spoken, I urge you to heed the words in statute and reject calls to act in ways contrary to congressional intent. For example, in the incentive auction proceeding, some are calling on the commission to exclude bidders from participating in the auction. Others, still are calling for excessive guard bands in the attempt to end-run requirements to license, reclaim TV band spectrum.

I'm just saying both are bad ideas.

Second, I urge you to bear in mine that even seemingly small changes in your rules can have significant impact on the market. The commission's recent decision to apply yet incomplete rules to its UHF discount has effectively frozen many plans for broadcast mergers and acquisition.

The problem here isn't that the commission wants to update or needs to update the UHF discount rule, the problem is that absent a decision how and importantly, when the commission will move forward, it has pressed paused for an indefinite period of time.

We all know that markets do not react favorable to this kind of open-ended uncertainty.

On the other hand, I applaud the recent announcement on the schedule for the spectrum incentive auctions. Both the broadcast and wireless industries are waiting with bated breath to see how the FCC addresses this first-of-a-kind auction.

To say nothing of the public safety agencies that are counting on the auction fund to fund FirstNet. The certainty of a timetable is good for both stakeholders and for the commission.

Finally, turning to those large proceedings the commission has on its plate. We're looking forward to working with you to tackle the tough issues like the I.P. transition, universal service reform and media ownership.

Chairman Upton and I recently launched a large proceeding of our own, an initiative to update the Communications Act. Each of you brings the unique perspective to your work on the commission, industry lobbyist, newspaper publisher, a couple of lawyers, even some former legislative Hill staffers. That experience, combined with your expertise on the Federal Communications Commission staff and your own work on the commission, will be valuable in our efforts as we work together to update and modernize the Communications Act.

So Congress -- or Chairman Wheeler...

(LAUGHTER)

We wouldn't want to demote you to level of congressman.

Chairman Wheeler -- yeah, our numbers aren't that great -- Commissioner O'Rielly, we especially welcome you aboard the FCC and Commissioners Clyburn, Rosenworcel and Pai, welcome back, not only the commission, but before our committee. We thank you all for joining us today, we look forward to working together in this very critical sector of America's economy to spur further innovation technology growth and jobs.

And with that, I will now yield to the ranking member of the subcommittee, my friend Ms. Eshoo from California.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman for holding this hearing, it's wonderful to see a full Federal Communications Commission before us. Welcome to each one of you, special welcome to the new chairman.

I think that you started out with 100 percent goodwill with everyone that is on this committee, I think our full committee -- in fact I think the Congress.

We have -- there have been many months where we didn't have a full commission. I want to once again thank Commissioner Clyburn for her exceptional leadership during that period of time.

Welcome to each one of the commissioners, and of course, to the newest commissioner, Mike O'Rielly, who served on the other side of that table.

When I first came to the committee, he was here when we began -- began the Telecom Act. And now, guess what, you get to trudge through that all over again, according to the chairman.

So I guess there are some things that we just never finish with.

As Chairman Wheeler announced last week, the commission has made the upcoming incentive auction of broadcast television spectrum the top priority of the commission. And I agree.

This is a rare opportunity to auction beach-front spectrum under 1 gigahertz. And the FCC has to structure rules to promote a competitive wireless landscape and ensure carriers, of all sizes, both regional and national, have an opportunity to bid competitively for license spectrum.

And it has to be done right. It's the first in the history of the world that an auction has been structured this way. And I appreciate, Mr. Chairman, and all the commissioners, your understanding, the delicacy of this needing to be done right, well and successfully.

Similarly, recognizing the enormous economic and societal benefits of unlicensed spectrum which is tucked away in one corner of my telecom heart. The FCC has an opportunity to structure a band plan that ensures the nationwide block of spectrum under 1 gigahertz, dedicated for unlicensed innovation.

With unlicensed spectrum being a critical tool to bring broadband to unserved areas, including rural America, this opportunity really must be seized.

In addition to the important role the FCC has in freeing up more spectrum for mobile broadband, I'd like to highlight four issues that the commission should make a top priority in 2014. And I think you're going to.

First during the three months since I released a draft legislation, the message from individuals, communications companies and consumer groups has been abundantly clear. Our video laws are in need of reform, they're broken.

Independent of such legislation, the commission does have an important responsibility to promote competition, consumer choice and localism across the video marketplace.

Second, I hope the commission will continue its focus on modernizing the E-Rate program to support a 21st Century digital needs of our schools and libraries.

In June, together with Commissioner Rosenworcel, we called for such an update. And I'm pleased that the White House and the FCC agree with us and have made this issue a key priority. We have to stay on it. We have to move and we have to make it much better. It's gotta be a 21st century plan.

Third, the commission should uphold, I think, the goals (ph) of Section 629 and ensure a vibrant, competitive retail set-top box market. A successor to the current CableCARD regime, whether by FCC rule, or more preferably, a voluntary industry agreement, will usher in a new generation of technologies that will give consumers giver choice and ensure that innovation flourishes.

Finally, I'm pleased that the commission has made the transition to Next Generation 911, as well as improving the indoor location accuracy of 911 calls the key priority.

In fact, later today, it's my understanding that the commission will vote on an order to improve the reliability of 911. And I look forward to continued updates as the commission proceeds with the implementation of Next Gen 911.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this morning's hearing. I look forward to the important testimony of Chairman Wheeler and each of the commissioners, most importantly, I pledge to work with each of you to make American's communications sector the most effective and the most admired in the world.

And with that, I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back.

Chair now recognizes the chairman of the full committee, Mr. Upton from Michigan, I believe.

UPTON: Great, (inaudible) Michigan.

WALDEN: (inaudible) Ohio.

UPTON: Thank you-- thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You know, today we welcome a fully constituted FCC back to the Energy and Commerce Committee. The -- the last time that we heard from the full commission was in July of 2012.

So the FCC has regulatory authority over a sector of our economy that is critical to innovation, jobs and our nation's global leadership in technology.

Communication sector is also an integral part of our daily lives, connecting us to loved ones, alerting us to natural disasters and entertaining and educating us every single day.

As the regulatory agency of these industries, the FCC has the immensely important task of promoting growth and competition. Our hearing today will examine actions that the FCC has taken since the commission last appeared and set expectations for the agency's future.

As the oversight authority for the commission, our committee works hard to ensure that the FCC functions to the benefit of America consumers as well as companies.

We also wanna make sure that this agency functions efficiently and transparently as all government agencies should.

I'm glad to say that this is not a partisan concern. Bipartisan majority on a voice vote of the full committee reported an FCC process reform bill yesterday that will help the FCC operate more openly and defectively. And we expect it to be on the House floor in the not too distant future.

And the bill is needed. There are several stalled proceedings and ambiguous projects at the commission that cause concern to me and other members of the committee. We've sent a number of letters in the past months regarding media ownership.

Subcommittee Vice Chair Latta has gone to the extent of drafting a bill to end the cable set-top box integration ban, a bill that seems to make a lot of sense, and which perhaps the FCC should have considered doing a while ago.

My concern and hope is that we can start a productive dialogue today with our esteemed witnesses on these and the many other important issues pending at the commission.

Commission O'Rielly, I'd like to welcome you back to the Energy and Commerce Committee, a committee you know well, having once served here as the staff.

And Chairman Wheeler, though you're from Ohio, this is often known as the big house, now the Dingell room. Hope you appreciate the -- the green and white decor.

(LAUGHTER)

And yes, we were first party.

(LAUGHTER)

Welcome back.

And I yield to other members, Republican members.

WALDEN: The chairman now recognizes the vice chair of the Subcommittee on Communications, Mr. Latta from Ohio.

(LAUGHTER)

Home of the speaker of the House.

(LAUGHTER)

LATTA: (inaudible) number two.

But thank you very much for yielding, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you very much to our commissioner for being with us today.

And welcome to our newest members for the commission. I really appreciate you -- having you here with us today.

The communications and technology industry has been a consistent bright spot in the U.S. economy. It's created millions of American jobs, spurred significant investment and innovation and, most importantly, empowered consumers, who are the driving force behind robust competition in the communications marketplace.

As U.S.-based businesses lead the world in technological advances, we have a responsibility to ensure the FCC fosters continued growth and development in the communications sector.

This can be achieved by the FCC incorporating more transparency and accountability in its processes, operating within the bounds of its statutory authority and acting upon legislation according to congressional intent.

I look forward to continuing working with Chairman Upton and the members of this committee and also Congressman Green on my H.R. 3196, which is the legislation to eliminate the integration ban on the set- top boxes and allow the marketplace to get to the next-generation innovation without the regulatory barriers being put in front of it.

I look forward to the hearing and hearing the testimony today.

And, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Thank you.

WALDEN: The chair recognizes the gentlelady from Tennessee, the vice chair of the full committee, for the remaining 40 seconds, if she wants it.

BLACKBURN: And I thank the chairman.

I want to welcome all of our commissioners and publicly commend Commissioner Clyburn for the wonderful work that she did when she served as the acting chair. We appreciate that leadership.

And, Chairman Wheeler, we look forward to having you continue and to work in a collaborative manner to find results for the private sector.

We would hope that the commission will be proactive, not get beyond its mission, but to stay focused on your core mission. Pay attention to economic analysis. Look at cost to benefit analysis. And make certain that you don't suffer mission creep, which is casting a shadow over the private sector.

With that, I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back.

The chair recognizes the ranking member of the full committee, Mr. Waxman.

WAXMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I want to welcome the members of the commission, Chairman Wheeler and all the commissioners.

And I also want to join in commending Commissioner Clyburn for the incredible job she did as acting chairwoman, from the industry agreement on interoperability to long overdue reforms on prison phone rates, your brief chairmanship will be remembered for the remarkable amount you accomplished.

Let me welcome Chairman Wheeler and Commissioner O'Rielly. I congratulate you on your appointment and confirmation, and we're pleased to have you here.

You join the FCC at a time when our country is undergoing dramatic and perhaps fundamental transformations in communications networks and technologies, and the decisions you make at the commission will no doubt have lasting impact on our nation's communications landscape.

At the top of the FCC agenda is the spectrum auctions authorized by the Public Safety and Spectrum Auction Act last year. And I'm pleased to see that the FCC is moving ahead to conduct the H Block auction in January.

In addition to allocating new wireless spectrum to address our nation's spectrum shortage, this auction will provide significant down payment for the nation-wide interoperable public safety network.

I also support, Chairman Wheeler, your recently announced timetable for the incentive auction. This auction has many layers of complexity, and I applaud your commitment to getting the technical issues right.

Congress gave the FCC the tools to unleash the economic opportunities for both licensed and unlicensed spectrum, revolutionize public safety communications, ensure a vibrant and competitive wireless market, all the while protecting consumer access to free over-the-air television.

And I think FCC must remain faithful to these goals as you implement the law.

You also must bear in mind the principles undergirding the Communications Act, as we consider the next evolution in our nation's wireless networks. Our values do not change with each successive generation of technology. Whether the infrastructure is copper or fiber optics, the commission's charge is to protect and promote the longstanding goals of competition, universal access and consumer protection.

Chairman Upton and Walden recently called for a multiyear examination of possible updates to the Communications Act, and I welcome the opportunity for a bipartisan consideration of these issues, and I hope the commission will be a partner in this endeavor.

In 2010, the commission and this committee spent many hours working to preserve the principle of an open Internet. That process led to a sensible set of rules governing the broadband market that was supported by a diverse groups of stakeholders and provided the foundation for the FCC's Open Internet Order.

I believe the Open Internet Order will be upheld in the court. But whatever the outcome, I'll be looking to you to assure that the Internet remains an open platform for innovation and economic growth.

I want to at this point yield the balance of my time to my fellow Californian and good friend, Congresswoman Matsui.

MATSUI: Thank you very much, Ranking Member Waxman for yielding me time.

It's wonderful to see the full complement of the commission here today.

I want to join in welcoming Chairman Wheeler, and who brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the FCC.

And I'd also like to congratulate and welcome Commissioner O'Rielly.

And I also would like to commend Commissioner Clyburn for her leadership during the interim period. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, the subcommittee is working diligently to find bipartisan solutions for smart and sound spectrum policy for our nation. We've worked want to create a path for DOD to reallocate the 1755 to 1780 megahertz band.

DOD and the broadcasters should be applauded for their leadership on a landmark sharing agreement.

Moreover, I've joined with Representative Guthrie to introduce H.R. 3674, the Federal Spectrum Incentive Act, which passed this committee yesterday in a bipartisan manner.

The bill is the first of its kind that offers a fresh approach that would create a federal spectrum incentive auction. I look forward to working closely with my colleagues and the administration in moving this bill to the floor.

There are tough decisions ahead, and I want to encourage also the FCC to move forward with the USF reform efforts. Modernizing the USF for broadband, particularly the lifeline program will provide a path toward universal broadband adoption in this country.

And, with that, I yield back the balance of my time.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back the balance of her time; all time's been consumed. We'll now go to our witnesses.

And, again, we thank you very much for being here today and the public service work you're all undertaking.

And, Mr. Wheeler, as chairman of the FCC, we're gonna lead off with you. So pull that microphone close, turn on the button, and you're good to go, sir.

WHEELER: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Ms. Eshoo, other members of the committee. It's a privilege to be before you today, and a privilege to be joining my colleagues here, the full component of the commission. I think we will make a great team, and I know that all of us are honored to be able to work with the quality men and women that make up the FCC.

Today is my 39th day on the job. And I have enjoyed the informal discussions that I've been able to have with many of you in the interim and look forward to today having a even more complete discussions and to working with you afterwards.

As I think everybody in their statements has indicated, we are in a very exciting time, in the midst of a great network revolution.

The lesson of history is that revolutions like that come chock full of challenges. And we're gonna have to work together on how we address those challenges.

We've tended to look at those challenges through three prisms, if you will, and to say, OK, how do we make sure, first of all, that what policies we adopt promote economic growth and maintain national leadership?

And clearly at the root of those are issues such as competition and maintaining the necessary assets, such as spectrum.

The second prism is what we've begun to call the network compact. There has, for a century, developed a set of values that represent the relationship between those who operate networks and those who use networks. Those values must be preserved regardless of the type -- of the technology used in the network.

And, thirdly, is the -- is the goal that networks work for everyone, that it's -- it's not what broadband -- it's not just the delivery of broadband, but it's what broadband enables that is what is important.

If we don't have 21st century education capabilities, if we don't make sure that Americans with disabilities have access to the capabilities of the new network, if we don't make sure that tribal Americans have opportunities to use the new networks, then we have failed in our goal.

So, those three things, economic growth, the network compact and -- and what networks enable are the three pillars of policy. But at the heart of them is competition.

It has become a joke, at least in my office, that everybody keeps -- that I keep saying, "Competition. Competition. Competition."

But that is very much what -- what we believe.

Let me do a quick look at the three areas where the commission is keeping pace with innovation, that innovative economy.

First is process reform. The committee's bipartisan effort yesterday is significant and is noted and appreciated.

On my second day, Mr. Chairman, as you noted, I began a process that will produce a report in 60 days. We're gonna look at how to enhance accountability through deadlines and tracking systems, how to expedite the licensing process, like you referenced. How to shorten the processing time of applications for review and Commissioner Pai has an interesting idea in that regard.

How to streamline consumer complaint, collection and a searchable database, which Commissioner Rosenworcel has been a champion of. And how to attack the backlog as Commissioner Clyburn did when she was chairwoman.

We also wanna weed out outdated regulations, incorporate performance -- and incorporate performance measures.

Second focus is gonna be, as you have all appropriately said, the spectrum auctions, especially the incentive auction.

This committee, working with MTIA and DOD, has provided great leadership on the 1755 to 1780 band that we look forward to moving forward on that and moving that to auction.

The Guthrie-Matsui bill, which you all moved yesterday, which has been referenced, it takes the incentive auction idea and applies it to federal agencies, and that's a great step forward.

And then speaking of incentives, we have the incentive auction coming up. We're gonna have -- we have established a schedule now, we're gonna have policy recommendations in January. And we're gonna have consideration and discussion of that until spring, when we'll be making a decision. And we'll have an auction in the -- in mid-2015.

But while we're discussing spectrum and regulatory process, I would be remiss if I didn't bring up an item we will be considering today. A proposal to ask for comments on a rule to reflect the realities of new onboard aircraft technology.

And there have been lots of misconceptions about that. And let me just see if I can address these right upfront.

One, we are going to continue -- we are proposing to consider to continue the ban on mobile devices that can interfere with terrestrial networks. But where there is new onboard technology that eliminates that potential for interference, then there is no need for an interference rule.

This is the responsible thing to do, where the rationale for a rule doesn't exist, the rule shouldn't exist. We are the expert technical agency. And new technology removes the technical justification of this rule.

In that regard, I should mention that I have spoken with Transportation Secretary Foxx this morning. And he has told me that, yes, the FCC is the technical agency and that the Department of Transportation is the aviation agency and that they will be moving on a rule to address voice calls on airplanes.

I'm the last person in the world who wants to listen to somebody talking to me, while they fly across the country. But we are the technical agency and we will make the technical rules that reflect the -- the way the new technology works.

Finally, item three, you've all talked about the -- the I.P. transition -- transitions, I should say. Because it's not just one transition, it's a multi-faceted process. And at today's meeting, we're gonna

hear a report from the technology transitions policy task force, which will lay out a schedule, including a plan for a January order that will invite experiments in the field, real life experiments, recommend data collection and create a framework for policy decisions.

So we have a full agenda, as you have all said. It is a privilege to be here, to be able to work with all of you and I look forward to doing that in the time coming (ph).

WALDEN: Chairman Wheeler, thank you for your public service and thank you for recognizing our concerns on the subcommittee and full committee.

And now we'll switch to -- I guess, once a chairman, always a chairman, right, highest title. Former Chairwoman Clyburn, we're delighted to have you back before the committee. Thanks for your work publicly and please go ahead with your opening statement.

CLYBURN: Thank you, Chairman Walden, Ranking Member Eshoo, and members of the committee.

Thank you, again, for allowing me to appear before you today. Since our last visit, I have had an incredible opportunity to serve as acting chair and I'm glad to note that with the support of my colleagues and the assistance of a skilled and dedicated staff, we were able to move a number of important items, which clearly advanced the public interest.

This hearing comes at a critical stage in our communications policy continuum. We are experiencing tremendous technological change that affects every aspect of our lives.

And as we look ahead to the challenges of tomorrow, I believe it is important to understand the terrain over which we have travelled. We reached a voluntary interoperability industry solution in the lower 700 megahertz band to address an issue, that for years, have been impeding the deployment of valuable spectrum.

We launched a proceeding to modernize the FCC's schools and libraries program, known as E-Rate, to ensure that our children have the resources and connectivity they need to support digital learning and become the leaders of tomorrow.

We adopted an order to address rule call completion because it is unacceptable in today's world that calls to non-urban areas are not being completed.

We adopted an order to reform inmate calling services to finally provide relief to millions of families who have been paying unreasonably high rate to stay connected with loved ones.

We enabled the H Block spectrum auction and the AWS-3 proposal to take major steps forward on government and commercial spectrum sharing. And we made ongoing reforms to lifeline and proposed significant forfeitures to companies not following the FCC's rules.

With Chairman Wheeler and my fellow commissioners, I look forward to building on the progress we have made.

As Chairman Wheeler has made clear, the voluntary incentive auction proceeding continues to be a top commission priority for those broadcast television licensees who want to continue to use their spectrum, the act mandates that the commission makes all reasonable efforts to preserve the coverage areas and population served.

The act also has clear directives for the proceeds from the forward auction, which includes much earned contributions to the Public Safety Trust Fund and the national deficit.

Congress also gave the commission authority to propose a band plan with an appropriate balance of unlicensed and licensed spectrum.

Unlicensed spectrum plays a critical role in advancing more efficient use of spectrum and commercial wireless carriers are increasingly using unlicensed Wi-Fi services to off load their smartphone traffic.

In addition to spectrum, Chairman Wheeler has also announced that the commission will consider an order next month to launch trials regarding the ongoing technology transitions.

I do believe that trials, if structured properly, can produce helpful insights into how best to approach reform. And I will be keeping a keen eye on how the trials and future reforms affect all consumers.

Process reform is where we have an opportunity to develop an even more efficient agency.

Yesterday, the committee passed the Federal Communications Commission Process Reform Act of 2013. I am pleased that the proposed modifications to the Sunshine Act would facilitate federal commissioners participation on the Federal-State Joint Board and the Joint Conference.

I would also encourage you to review the Paperwork Reduction Act and how it can be improved. For example, the FCC is using its website to better inform consumers in the industry.

Yet, to obtain voluntary feedback on our website, the PRA requires OMB approval. As a result, the commission cannot be as responsive to users without engaging in a lengthy OMB approval process.

So as you can see, Mr. Chairman, and distinguished members of the committee, we have both challenges and opportunities ahead.

I look forward to working with each of you to address our evolving communications landscape.

I appreciate your attention this morning and will be glad to answer any questions you may have.

WALDEN: Thank you for your work, your testimony, your recommendations, and we'll now go to Commissioner Rosenworcel. Thank you for being here this morning, we're delighted to have you back and please go ahead.

ROSENWORCEL: It's good to be back.

Good morning, Chairman Walden, Ranking Member Eshoo and members of the subcommittee, it is an honor to appear before you today in the company of my colleagues, new and old, at the FCC.

By some measures, communications technologies account for as much as one-sixth of our economy, no wonder. These are the networks that carry all aspects of our modern commercial and civic life.

They are changing at a breathtaking pace. Keeping up requires taking a fresh look at our policies, informed by the policies of the past, we have to think boldly about the future.

Now in the weeks ahead, we will do this, as we wrestle with the upcoming transition to Internet protocol and think about spectrum auctions, including incentive auctions.

But I think we make a mistake if we focus only on networks themselves. After all, there is great beauty and power in what we can do with them.

Our new networks can change the ways we connect, create and conduct commerce. They can change the ways we learn and seek security.

So in my brief time before you today, this is what I wanna talk about. How the broadband beneath us and the air waves all around us can improve education and improve public safety.

First, I wanna talk about the E-Rate program. E-Rate helps connects schools and libraries across the country to the Internet. It is a byproduct of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

Remember in 1996, probably everyone in this room called the Internet the information superhighway. It was a long time ago. In 1996, only 14 percent of public schools were connected to the Internet.

Today, thanks to the E-Rate, that number is north of 95 percent, which sounds good. It sounds like the job is done, but nothing could be further from the truth, because the challenge today is not connection, it is capacity.

Too many of our E-Rate schools access the Internet at speeds as low as 3 megabits, that is too slow for high definition video, it is not fast enough for the most innovative teaching tools, and it is definitely not fast enough to prepare the next generation with the stem skills that are so essential to compete.

Contrast this with efforts under way in some of our world neighbors.

In South Korea, 100 percent of schools are connected to high speed broadband and all schools are converting to digital textbooks by 2016.

Ireland will have all schools connected to 100 megabits next year.

Finland will have all schools connected to 100 megabits the year after that.

Meanwhile, in both Turkey and Thailand, the government is seeking a vendor to supply tablet computers to millions of students for a new era of broadband enabled digital learning.

Now we can wait and see where the status quo takes us and let other nations lead the way, or we can chose a future where all American students have the access to the broadband that they need to compete, no matter who they are, where they live or where they go to school.

I think it's time to compete. I think it's time for E-Rate 2.0. The FCC has a rule-making proceeding under way to reboot and recharge the E-Rate program. I think we need to make it a high priority.

I think we need to find ways to bring 100 megabits to all schools in the near term, and one gigabit to all schools in the long term. While we're at it, we must find ways to reduce the bureaucracy of this program and make it easier for small and rural schools to participate.

Second, I want to talk about a number all of us know by heart, but none of us ever hopes to use. I want to talk about 9-1-1. In my time at the FCC, I have visited 9-1-1 call centers all across the country. I am always struck by the steely calm of those who answer the phones and help ensure that help is on the way.

I am also struck by how many emergency calls now come in from wireless phones. In fact, nationwide more than 70 percent of calls made to 9-1-1 are made from wireless phones. That is more than 400,000 calls per day. Now, if you use your wireless phone to call 9- 1-1 from outdoors, your location is reported, sometimes to within 50 meters under FCC location accuracy standards. But if you use your wireless phone to call 9-1-1 from indoors, you better cross your fingers because no FCC location accuracy standards apply.

I think this is an unacceptable gap in public safety communications. It deserves your attention and ours. Because no matter where you are when you call 9-1-1, you want first responders to find you. Moreover, as our networks evolve and the ways we use them change, we must make sure our public safety policies keep pace. In fact, our approaches to networks both wired and wireless need to evolve as markets evolve.

But in our efforts, we must not lose sight of why networks matter, because they can do more than connect us. They can strengthen education and enhance our security, and of course, grow our economy in new and exciting ways.

Thank you. I look forward to answering any questions you might have.

WALDEN: Commissioner Rosenworcel, thank you for your work and your testimony and your suggestions.

We go now to Commissioner Pai. Thank you for being here and thank you for all the work you've been doing. And please go ahead with your opening statement.

PAI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Walden, Ranking Member Eshoo, members of the subcommittee, thank you for holding this hearing.

It has been exactly one year since I last appeared before you and much has happened in the time since. Most notably, we have lost two colleagues and we have gained two new ones. Chairman Wheeler and Commissioner O'Rielly have gotten off to strong starts and I am pleased that we are finally back at full strength.

Over the past year, we have made progress in a number of different areas, but there is much more to be done. This morning, I will touch on two of the issues that I find most pressing: the incentive auction and E-Rate reform. A fuller list of FCC priorities from cable forbearance to AM radio is detailed in my written testimony.

First, the incentive auction. Perhaps the most daunting challenge the commission faces is the looming spectrum crunch. To meet this challenges, we are focused on implementing the responsibilities that Congress gave us in the Spectrum Act, especially with respect to the broadcast incentive auction.

The incentive auction is the commission's best chance to push a large amount of spectrum, well suited for mobile broadband, into the commercial marketplace. I support Chairman Wheeler's recent announcement setting the middle of 2015 as our new target. It is more important to get the incentive auction done right than it is to get it done right now.

If, for example, any part of our software were to fail during the incentive auction, like another government website that shall not be named, the commission by law would not get a second bite at the apple. My greatest worry about the incentive auction, however, is not with the technology. It is about participation. In order for the incentive auction to be successful, we will need robust participation by both broadcasters and wireless carriers. So the commission must avoid choices that will deter participation in both the reverse auction and the forward auction.

For the reverse auction, prices paid to broadcasters should be determined by the market, not set by administrative fiat. Any attempt to restrict payments to broadcasters, including a complicated scoring scheme, will deter broadcaster participation and risk causing the incentive auction to fail.

For the forward auction, the commission should not limit carriers' ability to participate, such as by setting a spectrum cap or narrowing the spectrum screen. This would result in less spectrum for mobile broadband and less revenue to fund national priorities that this committee has identified, and a greater chance of a failed auction.

Another issue that will impact participation in the forward auction is the size of the geographic licenses to be offered. Our NPRM proposed using economic areas, but some argue that this would make it too difficult for smaller carrier to participate in the auction. Our goal should be to allow as many carriers as possible to bid, whether they be nationwide, regional or rural.

So I am pleased to see alternative proposals for license sizes, such as the newly coined partial economic areas. If technically feasible, these proposals deserve serious consideration.

Aside from the incentive auction, there are many other opportunities when it comes to spectrum, from the H block auction next month to the possible clearing of AWS-3, to the greater unlicensed use in the 5 gigahertz band. Consistent with my all-of-the-above approach, I hope we seize all of these opportunities in the near term.

The second issue I will discuss is the Universal Service Fund's schools and libraries program, better known as E-Rate. In many ways, E-Rate has been a success, as my colleague has pointed out. But it also has had difficulties. The funding process can stretch for years. Many schools and libraries feel compelled to hire outside consultants to handle all the complexities. Others don't bother applying at all.

Services like paging are prioritized over services like connecting classrooms. And there's no meaningful transparency into either the amount or the impact of E-Rate spending.

To solve these problems, I've proposed a student-centered E-Rate program. This means an up front allocation of funding and a matching requirement, so that applicants know how much money they can spend and have greater incentives to spend that money wisely. This means simplifying the application process. This means targeting funding at next-generation technologies, while still letting local schools set their own priorities. And this means making all funding and spending decisions accessible on a central website that everyone can see.

In its first year, a student-centered approach would provide an extra $1 billion for next-generation services, all without collecting an extra dime from the American people. Accordingly, I believe it would be premature to increase the program's budget. And under no circumstances should we do so without finding corresponding savings in other parts of the Universal Service Fund.

We cannot ask Americans to pay even more in their monthly phone bills, especially when median household income in this country is now lower than it was in 2007.

Thank you once again to Chairman Walden and Ranking Member Eshoo for holding this hearing. I look forward to answering your questions and continuing to work with you and my colleagues in months to come.

WALDEN: Thank you, Commissioner Pai. We appreciate your thoughtful testimony and your recommendations.

We'll now go to Commissioner O'Rielly. Welcome aboard the Federal Communications Commission. Welcome back before this committee. And you know how the rules work, so please go ahead and again thank you for being here today.

O'RIELLY: Thank you to the chairman and ranking member and members of the subcommittee.

In respect of the time of the subcommittee members, I'd like to make five points and then move on to answer your questions.

Point one, I'm truly honored to be before the subcommittee. I had the pleasure of working on the full committee staff for eight years and it was one of the greatest jobs I'll ever have. The breadth of knowledge and command of the diverse policy issues by the members of this committee are of the highest quality.

Point two, the FCC is an independent agency, not part of the executive branch. It was created by Congress and served to implement the statutes enacted by Congress. I firmly believe that our role is to follow the statute as written and not substitute our thoughts for your work. The commission has no right or authority to ignore the statute or statutory deadlines. Thankfully, I've worked on most communications policy statutes over the last 20 years and have first- hand knowledge of the intent behind many key provisions.

Point three, the commission has difficult, but exciting work ahead. If done correctly, it can have a significant positive impact on U.S. domestic product and on national productivity. Our communications companies are extremely important to the U.S. economy and we must allow them to flourish in the world marketplace. The commission's overall focus, however, must remain on the consumer.

Point four, in terms of specific items, my particular focus and attention will be on the immediate work before the commission. In the big picture, the FCC must finish rules for the incentive auctions, continue USF reform, proceed with the I.P. transition trials, and complete our media ownership proceedings.

Point five, part of the role of a FCC commissioner is to conduct outreach and provide information to the public. I take this function seriously and it's why I'm choosing to spend sometime on the issue of distracted driving caused by wireless device users. Drivers need to put away their wireless phones and focus their eyes on the drive.

Let me be clear. My view is the wireless industry is doing yeoman's work to get out the message. They're aware of the problem. They are dedicated considerable resources to finding solutions and education, and they're working hard to prevent the horrible tragedies by texting, viewing, e-mailing, tweeting, mapping, posting, among others, while driving.

It does not appear that more government regulation would be helpful in this space. Instead, I'm talking to my other colleagues to find ways to use our voice in non-regulatory, non-costly ways to educate the public and prevent senseless accidents.

Thank you.

WALDEN: You win the prize -- two minutes and 37 seconds, return.

O'RIELLY: I'm familiar with this committee very well.

(LAUGHTER)

WALDEN: Yes, indeed. Some will learn along the way.

(LAUGHTER)

We appreciate all your testimony and your recommendations. And it's just good to have all five commissioners in place, or four commissioners and chair in place. As Commissioner Pai said, it has been a year to the day, I think, since we had the commissioners here. So welcome aboard.

I know we all have a lot of questions. I'm going to -- I learned at the heels of the former chairman, Mr. Dingell, about trying to get answers at a relatively rapid rate. So I'm going to try and pose some of these, not as skillfully as he does in a yes or no format, but to the extent to which you can address them rapidly, that would be good.

And I want to start, Mr. Wheeler, with you as chairman. I know you all are voting on this NPRM today. I do want to stress it would be helpful if the public got to see that. As far as I know, you and your staffs are the only ones who see it in advance. That's one of the process issues I hope you'll break through and this maybe will be the last NPRM that's not public first.

But the commission's -- I want to follow up and figure out how you're going to permit, as your testimony indicates, airlines to choose whether to allow voice calls. And here's why I ask it. Is the commission planning to waive either the common carrier obligation to complete calls, or the net neutrality rules on blocking (inaudible) packets. Both would seem to be necessary in order to prevent voice calling from aircraft.

WHEELER: So, thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, first, to your point that -- that the MPRM that we are considering today will be complete in listing the rule -- the words of the rule...

WALDEN: Right.

WHEELER: ... that we are considering. That in -- in light with the philosophy that...

WALDEN: Thank you.

WHEELER: ... you and I share, which is, let's get it out there...

WALDEN: Right.

WHEELER: ... so that people can see it.

The purpose of this is to do just that, to put the language out so people can see it and give us their comments on it.

Now, to your specific question -- the -- the open Internet order specifically provides what's called the premises exemption. And that means that coffee shops, book stores and airlines mentioned by name are exempt from the order in that, under the definition of reasonable network management, which is one of the tools that are allowed, for premises owners -- which include airlines -- there is the ability to pick and choose exactly what comes over.

WALDEN: All right. We'll follow up more on the other piece that you might have to deal with, as well.

I want to ask you about Title 2. You've had a -- you haven't, but there's been a preceding open at the Commission for a long time that would -- the reclassification docket. Are you planning to keep that open, or are you planning to close it?

WHEELER: So, I think we're in a situation right now where we're waiting for a court opinion on exactly what our authorities are on a broad sense. And that there is no rush between now and then to make a decision on Title 2.

I will note, however, that, as you mentioned, this docket has been open for a long time. And it has not had the threatened chilling effect that some have worried about on investment in wireless and broadband infrastructure. This is an -- this is an issue that clearly is going to have to be dealt with, and we'll start with the court decision.

WALDEN: I've got about three more questions I want to try and get in here.

We understand the FCC's launched a study -- a multimarket study of critical information needs. Apparently, this study includes a qualitative media analysis, which would require interviewing reporters and editors to figure out how the media decides what news stories to run. Are these the kinds of questions that government entities should be asking of the news media? And with somebody with a journalism degree, I do get a little chill up my spine thinking about the government asking how these decisions are made.

Doesn't it have an effect on the -- doesn't it have an effect on the media that the regulatory body is even asking these questions? And how does it help you fulfill your Section 257 mandate, on which it's predicated?

WHEELER: So, I think this goes back to the root of the discussion you and I were having a moment about -- about making sure that the public understand what's going on.

The 257 requirement mandates lowering barriers to access to media for minorities, women, small business and other identified groups.

In order to make that kind of a judgment, you have to have facts. In order to have facts, you do studies. And what we did was, there is a study that has been proposed by a consulting firm that we were working with. And we put that out for public notice to exactly get the kind of input...

WALDEN: All right.

WHEELER: ... that you're suggesting.

WALDEN: All right, I...

WHEELER: And -- but it's not -- and this is -- I -- this is not an effort to influence the media. It...

WALDEN: I'm going to interrupt you just a second, because when you're spending somewhere between $209,918 -- and some of the questions of the media personnel include, "What's the news philosophy of the station?," "Who decides what stories are covered?," "What are the demographics of news management staff?," "Have you ever suggested coverage of what you consider to be a story with critical information of what consumers used?," "What was the reason given for the decision?"

These seem like really internal journalistic issues. Now, I -- I need to move on to one other, 'cause I'm actually over, but it's a very important question.

The quant -- quantile regression analysis -- QRA -- approach to providing universal support for rural companies -- that was part of the commission's U.S. (ph) reform efforts -- has had a negative impact -- negative impact on investment and the deployment of broadband services in rural America.

Commissioner Pai, you've been an advocate for the need to address this problem to ensure that rural Americans are not left behind. What do you recommend, Commissioner Pai, needs to be done with regard to the application of the QRA?

PAI: I thank you for the question, Mr. Chairman.

I've seen the problems on paper. The Obama administration's Department of Agriculture, for example, reported to us earlier this year that some 37 percent of funds from RUS are sitting on the table because there is so much uncertainty among rural carriers. And I've seen it in person from my home state of Kansas to carriers in rural Alaska, Because they are uncertain about what the future portends because of the QRA, they are not making additional investments in terms of broadband. And that creates a digital slide that we won't be able to bridge.

WALDEN: So, Chairman Wheeler, if I might, given the -- negative impact of the QRA -- that it's having on broadband development, especially in rural America, do you intend to reconsider its application?

WHEELER: Yes. As a matter of fact, I have asked the bureau to draft, and let me see, what an order that I could share with my colleagues would be to eliminate the QRA, and to return to the high- cost loop support model.

WALDEN: I appreciate that.

I've got other issues, obviously, with the F.M. translators for A.M., and delay in the rulemaking, dealing with cable operators and the groups utilized by them. And so, maybe we can follow up afterwards, but the committee's been kind to let me over-extend my questioning. But we're usually fairly flexible on that here.

So, now, I'll turn it over to the ranking member from California, Ms. Eshoo.

ESHOO: That's great. So, I have seven minutes, right, Mr. Chairman?

(LAUGHTER)

Mr. Chairman, you said that it's your 39th day. What I'd like to add to that is that I think your adult lifetime of work has brought you to this. So, it's not just your -- really, your 39th day.

WHEELER: That's been a long lifetime at this.

ESHOO: It's a -- it's a -- it's a wonderful path that has prepared you for this position.

I have a whole list of -- of niche issues, which is really the way we deal with all of these things.

First of all, do you think you're going to get a deal on cell phones unlocking by the end of this year?

WHEELER: I hope that we will be presenting to the commission today -- as a matter of fact, I know that we will be presenting to the commission today -- the voluntary agreement that has been reached with the wireless industry. And so, the answer to your question is strongly yes.

ESHOO: That's just terrific.

My second question to you, Mr. Chairman, is last week, as you know, I joined with my colleagues, Representatives Doyle and Matsui, to ask you to take action to prevent AT&T from implementing the significant rate hike for their special access customers. I appreciate what you have done in terms of the suspension, but I think that there's much more that needs to be done on special access reform.

Can we expect further action on special access reform?

WHEELER: I -- I -- I apologize, Ms. Eshoo, but I am currently recused...

ESHOO: OK.

WHEELER: ... from that proceeding, and so I...

ESHOO: I see.

So, how will it happen?

WHEELER: It's -- it moves ahead with the other members of the -- of the commission.

ESHOO: I see. Well, I'm just going to assume that they're going to -- that this area is going to be examined. Because we really have to have a -- reasonable rates for -- for this important service.

On -- Commissioner Rosenworcel, thank you for your testimony. I love the way you present things. It's so clear. You can feel the sense of urgency and why it's urgent.

How are you going to pursue getting this done at the commission? The whole issue of E-Rate, everything that's attached to it. You presented an eloquent case. And I think that -- that you gave a fantastic speech last week on -- on 911 and the problems that we have between indoor and outdoor.

So, on both that and the E-Rate -- maybe I should be asking the chairman what he plans to do on E-Rate. I know what you want to do. But maybe we should just switch over to Chairman Wheeler?

WHEELER: Well, I think on -- on E-Rate, that there is a leader in this commission. And that Commissioner...

ESHOO: We only need five.

WHEELER: Huh?

ESHOO: We only need five.

WHEELER: They -- they -- but I'm -- I -- as you all say, I would like to associate myself with the remarks of...

ESHOO: Good, good.

WHEELER: ... Mr. Rosenworcel.

ESHOO: Well, we'll look forward to you joining her in that effort. And maybe the next time the commission comes before us, you can tell us the steps that you're going to take.

On the -- on...

WHEELER: Let me -- if I can do one thing -- I am -- we are going to put out a schedule, just like we have for the incentive auction and the I.T. transition, to address this issue.

ESHOO: That's terrific.

On the challenge of the -- the indoor versus outdoor, and wireless, and 911, what's your plan to address this?

ROSENWORCEL: Well, as the old saying goes, you may only make one 911 call in your life, but it will be the most important call...

ESHOO: Right.

ROSENWORCEL: ... you ever make. And right now, if you make that call from your wire line phone, your first responder knows exactly where you are.

ESHOO: Right.

ROSENWORCEL: You make that call outdoors, in a field, using your wireless phone, we have location accuracy standards so that first responder can find you.

ESHOO: I'm asking what you want to do about where the challenge lies.

ROSENWORCEL: So...

ESHOO: We know it's working.

ROSENWORCEL: ... indoors...

ESHOO: Mm-hmm.

ROSENWORCEL: ... is the problem. We have no standards. And increasingly, households are cutting the cord. More than one third of households rely exclusively on their wireless phones. So, I don't think it's acceptable that when people make emergency calls, first responders can't find them.

I've recommended in that speech that you mentioned, that we start a rulemaking to address this. Because we've heard both from carriers...

ESHOO: Mm-hmm.

ROSENWORCEL: ... and from public safety officials on the front line that this is an issue that...

ESHOO: Well, good for you for identifying this and taking it up. Because I think one of the things that I taught my children from their earliest memory was, 911, and putting their little fingers on the keypad so that they would understand that.

ROSENWORCEL: Me, too.

ESHOO: And I think that you're absolutely right.

On -- Commissioner Pai, you made a wonderful comment -- something about not one dime more on phone bills.

I want to raise something with the -- with the -- with the chairman, going back to it, about below-the-line fees. Representatives Doyle, **Lujan,** Matheson, myself -- we wrote to the -- our nation's leading wire -- wireless and wireline providers, and we asked them about their practice of applying below-the-line fees on monthly bills.

I agree with Commissioner Pai. That's why I -- you know, we wrote. We have a concern about what people are paying. These things are hidden. They think that they're -- they think everything on their bill is a tax. And I have to tell you, I brought my bills in. I couldn't tell what the heck they were, who was doing what to whom, and what it was for.

So, tell me what you think the agency, or if you have -- I know there's a long list of big challenges. But these are still important issues for consumers.

What steps can the agency take under existing statute to ensure that consumers know exactly how much they're paying each month, especially prior to signing up for their service. And this whole issue of below-the-line fees.

WHEELER (?): Yeah, this -- Ms. Eshoo, this is a -- a very legitimate concern. The specific one I believe you're referencing is a re-transmission consent...

ESHOO: That too.

WHEELER (?): ... be charged -- that cable operators have just begun putting on the bill.

ESHOO: Right.

WHEELER (?): And -- and I say just begun. And I'm trying to get our arms around that and figure out just exactly what our authorities are to answer your question.

It -- it does, however, strike me that it fits right in the broader issues that the chairman and Mr. Upton and others have talked about in terms of the kinds of issues that need to be addressed in a Telecom Act re-write here, is just what is going on.

ESHOO: Yeah, but that will be like seven years from now.

WHEELER (?): If all of the sudden -- well, no -- but I -- I think that...

WALDEN: Oh no.

ESHOO: Oh well, well.

(LAUGHTER)

WALDEN: I won't speak.

ESHOO: Let's see.

WALDEN: I won't get cross-wise between you and the chairman.

ESHOO: OK. Yeah, oh no.

Thank you. That you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, Chairman Walden.

WALDEN (?): Thank you.

ESHOO: And thank you to the entire commission.

I wanna say also, a welcome to the whole new team that has come in. And we wish you well, we really do. And the chairman and the commission will operate at a higher level because of the high level of people that have come in to support the works. So congratulations to each one of you.

WALDEN: We now move on to the vice chair of the full -- of the subcommittee, Mr. Latta from Ohio for five minutes.

LATTA: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, again, thanks very much for our commission members for being with us today.

And this question I would like to ask all of you. And this question is the incentive auction legislation prohibits the FCC from excluding qualified bidders from the auction.

Unfortunately while the incentive auction process works its way up to the commission, it appears that the wireless bureau is simultaneously working on the spectrum aggregation docket to achieve the de facto of (ph) spectrum caps.

Will you commit to -- to allowing any interested bidder that complies with the statutory requirements to participate fully in the auction? And, Chairman, if I could start with you? Because I notice in your -- in your testimony, page six that, you know, you talk about the incentive auction, you had said that you're looking at voluntary market oriented approach. So if I could start with you.

WHEELER: The statute is quite explicit in that regard that the commission may not exclude somebody from participating.

LATTA: Also on just aggregating, so it would be like -- it would be wide open for everyone to be involved in that?

WHEELER: Well, it's interesting, what's been developing here, I mean, the -- the CEO of the AT&T recently came out with a statement saying, "Wait a minute, I -- I think I would like to have rules to make sure that not one party can run away with all the spectrum."

So I think that in between those positions is -- is where -- a reality exist. But the statute, I agree, is quite clear.

The statute says that -- that you would not exclude anybody and the statute also says that the commission will design an auction so as to promote economic opportunity and competition and consumer choice to sustain a healthy wireless marketplace. And we'll do both.

LATTA: Madam Clyburn?

CLYBURN: Yes, Section 64:04 is clear that any party that abides -- obeys the rules, that they are qualified to participate. It also makes clear that the commission has the authority to enforce and introduce general -- rules of general applicability that will allow for spectrum aggregation in order to promote competition.

So again, my colleague mentioned that, you know, part of the reason for -- I think, for some of the robust participation and -- and the type of ideas that we're seeing it's because we took a dual path. On the same day we released the rules, or recent -- release the notice of oppose rule making on incentive auction, we also released a notice of propose rule-makings on trying to glean information about this dual path.

So I -- I think that this, in the long run, will help and improve our information -- information dissemination and acquisition and -- and rule-making once we decide on -- on a clear path forward.

LATTA: Thank you.

Commissioner?

ROSENWORCEL: The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act says that we can have rules of general applicability, but we cannot exclude anyone from participation in the auction. I think it's easy and simple, we just have to follow the law.

LATTA: Commissioner Pai?

PAI: I would agree with my colleague and I would also point out that if you look at the end goal which is to have a successful auction that pushes out a lot of spectrum, it yields sufficient revenue to fund national priorities, and that provides a fairness to all parties involved, then we should not, preclusively, deter participation from wireless carriers by -- in adopting unduly strict spectrum policies.

LATTA: Commissioner O'Rielly?

O'RIELLY: I wanna thank my colleagues for say -- stating that the statute is clear because as many people who worked on it, it was a -- an effort to give the commission some authority in this space when members couldn't come to agreement.

I'm extremely hesitant to impose limitations on Spectrum Act, because we have certain obligations under the statute otherwise. We -- in a nice way, I -- I mean, the money has already been spent.

We have already spent the -- the money from the Spectrum Act and so we have obligations to provide $7 billion for FirstNet and we have deficit reduction numbers that -- that have already gone out the door.

So I'm worried about anything that would depress auction revenues. I'm -- I'm certainly aware of the statute and I want to remain open to considering but I'm -- I'm hesitant at this time to impose any type of limitation.

LATTA: Thank you. And many of you know that Roll Call completion has been an ongoing issue in my district. And I commend the FCC for producing the November 8 order and further notice propose rule-making to improve the commission's ability to monitor the delivery of calls to rural areas by mandating certain recording retention and recording requirements from carriers.

And Commissioner Pai, do you believe the November 8 order will resolve the Call completion problem, or does more need to be done?

PAI: Well, Congressman, I certainly hope that it will, whether it's in Toledo or Topeka, we need to figure out where the kink in the system is, whether it is in our media providers, whether it's the Last Mile (ph), what point of the network is failing.

And then, if it's a technical problem, then we can take steps to fix that technical problem. But if (inaudible) then the FCC needs to be empowered to take corrective action. So I certainly support taking the appropriate action soon, rather than later on (inaudible).

LATTA: Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, I see my time has expired and I yield back.

WALDEN: Thank the gentleman. We now turn to the ranking member of the full committee, Mr. Waxman, for five minutes.

WAXMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, I just want to indicate that under the act, the FCC may not single out a specific provider for exclusion from a system of competitive bidding.

At the same time, the FCC is permitted to adopt and enforce rules of general applicability that promote competition. Even AT&T recently acknowledged they would support rules that limit the amount of spectrum any one company could acquire as long as the rules applied evenly to all auction participants.

Chairman Wheeler, as you know I'm a strong supporter of the FCC's open Internet rules, because I believe the Internet must remain an open platform for innovation and commerce.

You've emphasized the importance of the open -- open Internet order, at the same time, you recently made comments suggesting that an Internet service provider could charge a content provider, such as Netflix, a fee, in order to guarantee the best available transmission speed.

Do you see these type of business arrangements as consistent with the FCC's open Internet rules that you support?

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Waxman for -- for raising that issue because it gives me an opportunity to get more specific than I was in Ohio.

I am a strong supporter of the open Internet rules, full stop. The rules were written in such a way as to envision opportunities for innovation and experimentation and to impose on them a balance between protecting the open Internet, protecting consumers and stimulating innovation.

New ideas, under the -- under the open Internet order, new ideas such as those you've referenced in a wireless environment, particularly, are not prohibited. But there is a clear responsibility for the commission to make sure that what takes place does not interfere with Internet access, is not anti-competitive and does not provide preferential treatment. And we will enforce that. We -- we will maintain the balance between innovation and assuring there is an open Internet.

WAXMAN: I appreciate your expanding on that issue.

While, network infrastructure and technology have changed since the passage of the 1996 Telecommunications Act, the values embedded in the act have not.

And Mr. Chairman, I know the commission will soon begin a process to collect real-world information and data on the I.P. transitions. How will the commission continue to advance the long standing goals of competition, universal access and consumer protection throughout this transition process?

WHEELER: You know, Mr. Waxman, there are many people who have described the -- the trials, the I.P. trials as -- as a technology trial. I -- I don't think they were technology trial.

We know how to build I.P. networks. They are exactly what you just raised, they're values trial. They are how do we make sure that the values that for 100 years, Americans have come to expect from their networks, continue even after the way in which that network operates changes.

That's what we're gonna be looking for in these trials. It's not whether the Gazintas and the Gazoutas work. We know that -- that can get taken care of. It is what are the values -- what -- what -- how do you preserve the values in the new technological environment.

WAXMAN: Commissioner Rosenworcel, do you wanna add anything to that.

ROSENWORCEL: I think -- I think there are so many exciting things that can come with new networks and I think we should embrace the future rather than reject it.

So I think experimenting in these kind of trials is the smart way to go. But as we move into the future, what we do has to be informed by the values that have always been a part communications policy.

And I see four, public safety, universal access, competition and consumer protection.

WAXMAN: Thank you.

Commissioner O'Rielly, I appreciate your appeal to bipartisanship in your testimony. I know you played an important role in helping us get this bipartisan legislation in the passage of the Public Safety and Spectrum Act last year, because you helped negotiate the provisions in the availability of unlicensed spectrum in the broadcast incentive auction.

What's your perspective on unlicensed spectrum generally? And do you think the commission is on the right track in balancing the availability of unlicensed and licensed bands?

O'RIELLY: Yes, I'm a strong proponent of unlicensed spectrum. I'm always amazed at what the innovators and the experimenters can do with unlicensed spectrum. I think there's great opportunity in the 600 megahertz for more unlicensed spectrum. The NPRM that was put out in this situation proposed a number of different ideas where unlicensed could fit. They proposed channel 37, the guard bands -- if there are going to be guard bands, depending on what our band plan looks like.

We talked about wireless microphones. There's going to be still white space, at least in the 500, maybe in the 600 as well. And then there's going to be residual conversions depending if you're talking about converting from six megahertz broadcast channels to five megahertz wireless channels.

So, there should be opportunities in the incentive auction after our rules are complete for unlicensed spectrum. And I'm strongly supportive of those. The only difficulty is figuring out how big those guard bands should be.

WAXMAN: OK. Thank you.

And my last question is to Commissioner Pai. You stated in your testimony that 92 percent of Americans now can choose from 10 or more wire-line competitors. If that number is accurate, doesn't it demonstrate that the pro-competitive policies of the '96 Telecom Act are working? And don't you believe we should continue to support a marketplace that gives non-incumbents a fair chance to compete?

PAI: Congressman Waxman, thank you for the question.

I think what the multiplicity of choices that consumers enjoy today demonstrates is that an I.P. environment where you have -- conversion is something that we only dreamed about during the '96 act, where you have telephone companies competing with cable companies, competing with wireless companies and others to provide the same services, that we can now rely in a way we could not in 1996 on the marketplace and technological innovation to drive consumer choice.

And so to the extent that there are values of competition embedded in the 1996 act, I of course embrace those. But I think we also need to be mindful of the fact that technology can quite often out-pace where laws and regulations are. And that appears to be where we are with respect to the I.P. ...

(CROSSTALK)

WAXMAN: But do you think we should support a marketplace that gives non-incumbents a fair chance to compete?

PAI: Oh, absolutely. I think the marketplace should give every competitor a fair chance to compete.

WAXMAN: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: I now turn to the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. Rogers.

ROGERS: Thank you very much. And as the representative of Michigan State University, I want to say thank you for giving me a great weekend.

(LAUGHTER)

I do find it suspicious, however, that my phone has not worked since the game. I wonder if you might be looking into that for me, Mr. Chairman.

(LAUGHTER)

The FCC's recent Communications, Security, Reliability and Interoperability Council meeting, I understand you talked about the need to apply metrics and evaluate cybersecurity. Can you elaborate on that for me?

WHEELER: Yeah, the CSRIC, which is the shorthand for the group you're talking about, has done a terrific job in using the multi- stakeholder process to come up with rules on botnets, on DNSSEC, on router security -- important kinds of network security issues. But it's not enough just to say, "OK, here are the rules," and then walk away. The question is: Are the rules working?

And so what I've asked CSRIC to do, not for us to impose, but in the multi-stakeholder process, is to say, "How do you establish metrics to know if this is working?" Because that's the -- you know, this is the trust-but-verify kind of a situation.

ROGERS: Well, how do you find those -- how are they -- how are you working through that process to define metrics in threats that change literally by the hour?

WHEELER: But -- so on those three issues, for instance, on botnets, for instance, how can you track the movement of where botnets are going? They seem to have moved into data centers, for instance. And what do we know about that and what might that suggest. And -- and what are we seeing in terms of -- of results of the implementation of the kinds of things that CSRIC has suggested.

That's what we need to know.

ROGERS: So, and if you find that out and you find that you are in some disagreement with industry on meeting those standards, do you foresee a regulatory scheme?

WHEELER: Well, I wouldn't want to, you know, to presume a hypothetical. I would hope that we would be working with industry to identify what needs to be done. And much like we are going to announce today on cell phone unlocking, when we sat with industry and said, "Here's a problem, it's got to be solved." And by the way, we'll have metrics on that.

I think that's the preferable first approach and that's the approach that we're taking with CSRIC.

ROGERS: But when you say that, does that -- does that mean -- if I hear you correctly, that means you're at least contemplating a regulatory scheme of some sort beyond just the voluntary "here's our metrics; try to...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: That's the right question, but it's not -- the key word is "contemplating." I've talked repeatedly about what I called the "seesaw" -- the regulatory seesaw: You do this; we don't need to do this.

And so what CSRIC is doing is saying: "OK, here are the kinds of things that need to be done." I said, "Let's measure them (inaudible), because the result is that we don't." If the seesaw has to tip, it has to tip, but it only tips on the basis of need, not the basis of theory.

ROGERS: If I understood your answer right, there's a possibility you could regulate -- always a possibility. Sure. OK, we should have lots of conversations on that. I worry that by the time you process your regulatory framework, you're too late. You've missed the boat. The threat changes...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: I could not agree more. The challenge of networks and the reason why the multi-stakeholder process is preferred is because it is much more dynamic, much more flexible, moves much quicker than a regulatory process can. And then can stay flexible. And that's why I'm trying to say, "Yes, this is the preferred process to deal with it."

ROGERS: So you're not going to move away from the council.

WHEELER: I'm sorry?

ROGERS: You're not going to move away from the council model for regulation. You're going to continue to...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: The multi-stakeholder process on this is the right way to go.

ROGERS: Yes, perfect.

Can you talk about Team Telecom? It's an important complement to the CIFIUS process in terms of preventing investments or I.T. equipment purchases to prevent certainly a threat to our national security interests like Chinese attempts to gain control of I.T. and telecommunication nodes in the United States. Can you walk us through where you're at on that and give us an idea of what's your thinking?

WHEELER: Well, when issues come before the commission relative to mergers, acquisitions, whatever the case may be, the input from Team Telecom is always sought and taken into account, and is crucially important.

ROGERS: Do you see an improvement to that process? Can we do something different? You have a limited set of -- once that report comes back, you have a limited set of decisions you can make. You're either in, you're out or you disagree with the decision.

WHEELER: Correct.

ROGERS: Is there something better we should be doing there, providing some authority for you all to be -- given, again, the nature of the changing technology and how fast the changes...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: I would -- I -- I have not had to live through one of these yet, so I'm probably not qualified to opine here on the fly. I'd love to look into this and to have a discussion with you about it.

ROGERS: Super. We're looking at some reforms to CIFIUS to try to make sure we're keeping up and I look forward to dialogue...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: Great. I look forward to that.

ROGERS: Thank you very much for being here.

WALDEN: I thank the gentleman.

We now turn to committee chairman emeritus, Mr. Dingell, also from Michigan, I believe, for five minutes. Go ahead.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, I commend you for this very important hearing. And I have no comments on football or other matters.

(LAUGHTER)

I want to welcome my old friend Chairman Wheeler to the committee. We look forward to great things from you. I'm satisfied you will serve with distinction.

I want to also welcome Commissioner O'Rielly.

And I want to commend Commissioner Clyburn for her fine services as acting chairwoman. Quite frankly, your daddy would be very proud.

My questions this morning will be directed solely at Chairman Wheeler and will elicit, as you will not be surprised to hear, yes or no responses.

Chairman Wheeler, I'd like to start with the reverse auction of broadcast frequencies authorized by the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act. I note you recently announced that the commission will not conduct such an auction until 2015. That gives you an extra year.

In the meantime, do you expect to complete negotiations concerning the relocation of broadcast frequencies with Canada, Mexico and our border areas? Yes or no.

WHEELER: No, but I'm very hopeful that we will be able to move it forward. And as DTV showed, you don't have to have the signature on the page.

DINGELL: And you know -- you know that that can cause an awful lot of viewers to lose service and an awful lot of screens to go dark in our part of the country.

Chairman Wheeler, similarly, paragraph 15 of the commission's notice of proposed rulemaking for the incentive auction states, quote, "The commission expects interested parties will have an opportunity for meaningful comment on all specific repackaging methodologies it is considering before it makes a decision." Does the commission publicly commit to sharing with the public the broadcast frequency repacking methodology it adopts, as well as the variables and other inputs it may use to predict repackaging results? Yes or no.

WHEELER: I'll go beyond yes and say absolutely.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Chairman, let's move on to the forward auction of broadcast frequencies. Section 6403(c) of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act provides the commission may not grant licenses through forward auction, reassign or reallocate broadcast frequencies or remote spectrum usage rights unless it proceeds -- unless the proceeds of the forward auction are greater than the following three factors combined of, first, the total amount of compensation the commission must pay successful bidders in the reverse auction; the costs of conducting a forward auction; and the estimated costs for the commission to pay for broadcaster reallocations.

In addition, it is in the public interest that the commission ensure the auction raises a significant amount of money in order to help build out of the first debt (ph).

Together, these constitute a significant pressure on the commission to raise sufficient revenues to accomplish these objectives, do they not?

Yes or no?

WHEELER: Yes.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Chairman, at the end will the commission adopt transparent and simple rules to encourage participation by the broadest group of wireless providers in the forward auction? Yes or no?

WHEELER: Yes.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, it's -- let's focus our attention on intelligent transportation systems. This is of considerable importance to my part of the country and our principal industries, and the five gigahertz band.

Given that the commission licensed ITS almost 15 years ago, it is -- is it reasonable to say that it would be premature for the commission to authorize unlicensed use of the 5850-5925 megahertz band before the studies are completed that confirm such use would not cause harmful interference with ITS services and other incumbent users. Yes or no?

WHEELER: Yes, and let me go further. We will not authorize if there's harmful interference.

DINGELL: I am very comforted that you are here this morning, Mr. Chairman.

Now, Chairman Wheeler, do you believe that the commission should approve unlicensed use of the 5850-5925 megahertz band before definitively establishing no risk of harmful interference with ITS systems or practical strategies to mitigate such risk? Yes or no.

WHEELER: No. And I repeat, we'll do nothing that causes harmful interference.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Chairman, ordinately (ph) is the commission considering moving forward with rulemaking opening up only the 5350 megahertz band for unlicensed use? Yes or no?

WHEELER: So this is where I need to just ask a question, sir. The answer is yes, if it is are we considering. The answer is no, if we have decided.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to commend you for your work in advancing the transition to I.P. based networks. Will the commission consider an order in January 2014 that will address geographic trials as well as how to protect in the best way consumers using I.P. based networks? Yes or no.

WHEELER: Yes.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, you have been most gracious to me, and I thank you for this. Mr. Chairman, your comments have been most enlightening and helpful. I want to thank you and the members of the commission for your presence and assistance to us this morning.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: Thank you very much.

The gentleman yields back, and the chair now recognizes for five minutes Mr. Guthrie.

GUTHRIE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that.

Chairman Wheeler, and welcome to the FCC also.

Mr. O'Rielly (ph), let me say happy new year.

And, Commissioner Clyburn, again I echo the good work that you did in your -- your time as chairwoman.

But is -- there seems to be a lot of progress being made -- this is to Chairman Wheeler -- a lot of progress being made to free up the 1755-1780 hertz band for commercial use, megahertz band.

And I know the FCC has already sought comment on how this band should be used for commercial purposes.

Is the FCC on track to auction the 1755-1780 band, paired with the 2155-2180 band? And, if so, when will it occur?

WHEELER: So, the answer is yes, we are on track. There are some issues that still have to be worked out with NTI and DOD and -- and some other...

(CROSSTALK)

GUTHRIE: ... impediments...

WHEELER: But I think -- I'm sorry, what?

GUTHRIE: Are there some impediments that you can identify that are -- that -- you're on track, but you say there are some impediments.

WHEELER: I think these are just implementational kinds of things in -- in their agreement.

But to be specific to your question, I would hope that we could do it in the September time frame.

GUTHRIE: September time frame. Great.

Well, then, you've spent some time in the -- in the wireless industry, I know, and have seen firsthand how spectrum demand has grown exponentially. I realize that a lot of your short-term focus is on the incentive auction, on the 1755-1780 megahertz.

But, looking forward, what is the FCC doing to plan for future spectrum demand? And how can the FCC ensure that there continues to be a pipeline of new spectrum to satisfy what consumers want, the insatiable demand for band width anywhere, anytime?

So, looking, again, how do you plan for future spectrum demand beyond this? What kind of thoughts do you have beyond this...

WHEELER: Sure.

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: First, we say yea and verily to what you and Ms. Matsui have -- have done.

Applying the incentive auction concepts to government spectrum, I'm a believer that by the time that you peel everything away, it comes down to economics, no matter who you are.

GUTHRIE: Right.

WHEELER: And the economics of an agency where they can get cash to help them fulfill their mission is an important kind of decision they should make. And you've -- you've created, with Ms. Matsui, have created a structure where this can happen.

GUTHRIE: Well, we looked at that in our -- in our working group, and it just -- it's a lot of work for these agencies to do that. It's not something you can just wish away, as I learned more and more about it.

And I always say I didn't run around Kentucky saying, "Send me to Washington and I'll deliver you spectrum," and so you get -- you learn things when you get elected that you never thought you would deal with, that I found just fascinating, because, as I said, my consumers, my constituents, demand it. They want fast and -- the fast bandwidth.

WHEELER: But it's also interesting...

GUTHRIE: But it is true that we have to, we're looking at it just by law, by fiat, say you have to release spectrum. I mean, you could get numbers, well, it's gonna cost this, it's gonna cost that.

And so, it does give them a reason to go in and make this happen.

WHEELER: And the interesting thing is, so -- so I was involved in the negotiation for ADUMS 1 (ph), back in the year 2000. In the first negotiation with the Department of Defense.

And we kept saying to them, "but you're gonna get money." And they kept saying, "But we can't spend it, because it goes to the general treasury."

GUTHRIE: Right.

WHEELER: And so, what you have done is set up a structure to help compensate people. And the -- and the beauty of it is that what it does is that it -- creates a cash flow for them to be able to meet their new needs and to be able to upgrade their equipment.

And so, it's a winning situation all around.

GUTHRIE: I think -- Mrs. Matsui, I think yesterday you said win- win-win I think is -- it does for the consumers, for the agencies and for the taxpayers.

So beyond -- so the -- so in the future, what are you kind of looking at, do you think should happen, just for bandwidth and more spectrum as we move off -- move into the future?

WHEELER: I'm sorry, sir?

GUTHRIE: I mean, just as we move on into the -- beyond the immediate auctions and things, what other things do you think we can do to free spectrum?

WHEELER: Well, I think we have -- I mean -- so, first of all, we're constantly looking at how do you get the more efficient, most efficient use out of -- of the spectrum?

One of the more interesting things that we're going to be running a test on is what do you do with spectrum sharing, because there's probably -- not -- there is, in a digital world, the opportunity to -- to share spectrum. But our spectrum allocations were set up with analog assumptions.

And so, if we can share it, re-use it, it's a great opportunity, and we need to be pursuing that as well.

GUTHRIE: Yeah, a great metaphor that I always thought was -- you don't have any lane on a highway dedicated just for emergency vehicles. But when emergency vehicles come down the highway, people get out of the way.

And I think that's a great metaphor for that.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I yield back 15 seconds.

WALDEN: The chair recognizes the gentlelady from California for five minutes.

MATSUI: Thank you very much.

And let me just follow up on my partner's questions here.

I know back in the day, you were looking at the use of federal spectrum. And I think it's a concept now that has finally come to the point where we can actually do something about it.

And I believe that this is a way to really encourage the federal agencies to relinquish the noncritical spectrum. And as Congressman Guthrie says, it's not easy to do. But we worked with DOD, and when we made a lot of progress.

Now, I am also looking at what Commissioner Rosenworcel has also always said, about using the carrot-and-stick approach regarding the federal spectrum holders, and having them relinquish their spectrum.

Now, in your view, and I also want Chairman Wheeler to comment on this, too, are the financial incentives identified in the bill adequate to encourage federal agencies to relinquish noncritical spectrum?

And I think I'll go for you first, Chairman Wheeler.

WHEELER: I don't know the answer to that, because I haven't market tested it, you know. And I think that the -- is this enough incentive is a market test question.

So I'm gonna, with all due respect, punt.

What's important is the concept that has been developed. And it would seem to me that -- that once that concept is -- is codified, that then making sure that incentives are adequate is, frankly, the easier lift on the whole exercise.

MATSUI: Right. Thank you.

Commissioner Rosenworcel?

ROSENWORCEL: Thank you for the question.

I think, first of all, that the legislation that you and Congressman Guthrie have introduced is terrific. The demand on our airwaves is going up, and the supply of unencumbered spectrum is going down. It's time to be creative. This legislation is creative.

As far as the incentives go, I think it's a good starting point for conversation. Because right now, federal agencies, by some measures, have veto control over about 60 percent of our airwaves. They use their spectrum. They're mission focused, to protect our national defense, to keep our planes in the sky, to tell us what weather patterns are coming.

But they don't have structural incentives to be efficient with it. Your bill is the start of a conversation about how we should apply those incentives and if we get them right, we will have a catalyst for a lot more spectrum for new mobile broadband uses, which would be terrific thing for the economy.

MATSUI: Great. Thank you very much.

Chairman Wheeler, you've emphasized how important it is for you to lead the FCC in fact-based decision making.

In the five gigahertz proceeding, for example, this committee is looking to the FCC's engineering expertise to determine the conditions under which Wi-Fi could use a band in a way that protects the missions of federal systems and commercial systems.

How are you and your staff planning on responding to the challenge? And is this proceeding a priority for the commission?

WHEELER: So, as Commissioner O'Rielly said, I would associate myself with -- with his comment, that he's a strong supporter of -- of unlicense (ph).

The key, of course, is that you need to make sure that there's no harmful interference, as I discussed with Mr. Dingell. But I believe that if you take a look at the five gigahertz, and you look at block 1 -- NII 1 (ph). That we should be moving to ruling on that, which is something that Commissioner Pai has -- has often suggested. That when you look at -- at band two, which is DOD, and band four, which is ITS, that we have to address the questions that I was addressing with Mr. Dingell, and that is, to make sure there is no harmful interference, and there's nothing in the record that really gets to that at this point in time. But we need to build that record.

MATSUI: OK, fine. Thank you very much.

And I have to ask a broadband adoption question here. The FCC has, Chairman Wheeler, implemented broadband adoption pilots as part of the lifeline reform measures. Can you explain what the FCC plans to do here? And what is the goal of these pilot projects?

WHEELER: So, there are 14 projects that are taking place around the country that we're funding with some of the savings that we've had in other parts of the -- of the program. And we're going to be looking at, for instance, what is the impact of a lifeline-like subsidy on broadband adoption? And we're going to be looking at what are the kinds of training issues to help people understand what broadband can do for them, and the kinds of things that they can do, once they get on the Internet? Because those seem to go part and parcel. It's not just that you can access it, but also, that you can use it and you understand why you ought to be using it.

MATSUI: So, are you going to use this information (ph) to develop a responsible permanent broadband adoption program?

WHEELER: That's the goal. We're develop -- this is -- these are trials to inform our future actions. And broadband -- wireless broadband and broadband adoption are kind of the sine qua non of what the agency does.

MATSUI: I thank you.

I yield back my time.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back her time, and the chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas for five minutes.

BARTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to make a comment on the audience. This one's a lot bigger than the one upstairs with the joint hearing. And they seem to be more interested, too. So, I guess that's a...

(LAUGHTER)

... credit to this subcommittee and the -- and the FCC commissioners.

We have the NRCC commissioners -- not NRC -- NRC.

(LAUGHTER)

WALDEN (?): I think you need to be clear on that one.

BARTON: That would be news, wouldn't it? If Greg Walden was testifying upstairs?

Anyway, I just have one question.

The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act requires repackaging (ph) and auctioning of the 65 megahertz of spectrum in the low-powered TV stations, of which there are hundreds, if not thousands, are not guaranteed continued existence. But Chairman, this subcommittee and myself have a bill that we hope to introduce very soon.

While it doesn't guarantee them any additional rights, it does create, I hope, a pathway, so that they may continue to -- to exist.

As the new chairman of the commission, Mr. Wheeler, do you have any thoughts on what might be done to -- to give our low-powered TV industry a chance to continue to exist?

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Barton. Yes. And they probably fall in three -- three buckets.

One, there's been a lot of talk about following the statute. And -- and, as you point out, the statute says that LPTV translators are secondary services. We -- that's what the statute says.

Second is, we have actually opened a -- a public notice on the delivery of the content of LPTVs. How do we make sure that -- that the content -- and this ends up being more of a digital technology question than anything else. And how do you -- how do you use digital technology to get the content out? Because that's the consumer protection issue here -- to make sure the consumer gets the -- the content.

And then the -- the third point here is that there may be a safeguard in the reality that rural areas don't have that great demand for spectrum for wireless services to begin with. And so, they may be operating in areas where there will be less pressure to get spectrum. But we will find out as we go through this process.

BARTON: Mr. -- Commissioner O'Rielly, you're the new kid on the block, so to speak. You haven't had a chance publicly to comment on this issue. Do you have any thoughts about low-powered TV and what might be done to help them continue to exist?

O'RIELLY: Well, the chairman's right in the sense -- and you are right to introduce legislation and working for the members on the Spectrum Act. There was a decision made by the members to not protect low-power translators. And your legislation -- I would defer to your legislation to -- to whether they may resolve that.

You -- I know you and I had a chance to talk. I know some of the low-power representatives have argued it may be beneficial financially to the government to participate. I -- I'm not sure, and I don't know if it's accurate, but we have heard that argument, as well, and probably something we'd have to explore.

BARTON: That's my only question, Mr. Chairman. With that, I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back the balance of his time. And the chair now recognizes the gentleman from Utah for five minutes.

MATHESON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate all the commissioners taking the time to be here today. I think this is a very informative hearing.

First, Chairman Wheeler, in my city Utah, we have over 750 active translators that relay signals to many rural communities that rely on broadcast television to obtain their newscasts or public service announcements (ph) and entertainment.

Now, with the increased reliance on mobile data, there's no doubt that we need to take steps to move forward to making more spectrum available. I've heard concerns that the spectrum repackaging that could result in the incentive auctions could have a negative impact on those rural communities that tend to be more dependent on broadcast television. What steps is the FCC taking to protect these viewers from possible negative impacts?

WHEELER: Well, Congressman, the -- the -- the first issue is how threatened should they feel? And the fact that they are living in rural areas, where there is less of a demand for mobile spectrum may end up being a de facto shield for them.

Secondly is, as the statute says, this is a secondary service. It does not have protection. So, the question is, how do you protect consumers, as you're suggesting, who rely on it.

That's why we've had a public notice and are seeking comments on the question of how do you get what the translator or LPTV station does in terms of content out? And how does new technology fit into that, such as digital use of the airwaves, or whatever the case may be?

But this is clearly an issue where -- where we need to be focusing on what's the effect on the consumer, rather than what's the effect on the transmission need (ph). Because you have told us how we should look at that transition.

MATHESON: I appreciate that response.

There's been a lot of back and forth on how the incentive options should be structured. I think most would agree it's imperative we maximize participation, both with reverse auctions and the forward auctions. But, Chairman Wheeler, I was wondering, what do you see as the best way for us to maximize participation, and also, revenue for the federal government in both of those options?

WHEELER: You know, I -- before I took this job, I was in the business of doing business deals. And I think that's what we're talking about right here. This is a business transaction that someone who has a license needs to make it a business decision about. And -- and how do you do that? Well, I -- and what's our role.

First of all, we need to make sure that we're getting relevant information on a timely basis into the hands of those parties to make that decision. And that's why we've scheduled the -- the auction plan. We're saying in January, we're going to begin laying out exactly what that kind of information needs to be.

Secondly, I think it's incumbent on us to have an outreach program, in which we make sure that small and large broadcasters understand how the system -- how the program's going to work, what the economics could be, and maybe even begin to think in terms of what economic models might look like. Because at the end of the day, what we're really doing is, we're -- we're saying we want the marketplace to make a decision as to what is the highest and best use of spectrum. And the marketplace can't make that kind of decision until it's informed. So, it is incumbent on us to make sure that that kind of information is in a timely manner available to those, and to help with that process.

MATHESON: Commissioner Rosenworcel, I have a question for you about the ConnectEd program. You mentioned it briefly in your opening testimony. And you also mentioned that the current E-Rate program has some bureaucratic inefficiencies built into it right now.

What can the commission do to maximize efficiency to get more bang for the buck? What can you do with your existing authority, or what do you need for Congress to do to change it to also increase those efficiencies?

ROSENWORCEL: Thank you very much for the question.

I think this program is really important, and reinvigorating it is really important for education, infrastructure, and the economy.

I think we can do more with this program just as it is. As my colleague, Commissioner Pai, noted, we do subsidize a whole bunch of old-fashioned services right now. We should phase those out over time, and focus instead on capacity and bandwidth.

And, like you mentioned, we need to reduce bureaucracy. Bureaucracy gets in the way of small and often rural schools from participating in this program.

I'd like to see us encourage greater use of consortia to improve bulk buying power, and also, have multi-year applications to reduce the administrative burden on schools that do participate.

MATHESON: I appreciate that.

Mr. Chairman, I'll yield back.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back, and the chair now recognizes for five minutes the gentleman from Nebraska.

TERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And let me begin by thanking former Acting Chair Clyburn. And during your tenure as acting chair, you finished the low-power FM, and you guys did a wonderful job on it. You really did. And I want to thank all of you for that.

But former acting chair, just now Member Clyburn...

CLYBURN: The commissioner formerly known as...

(CROSSTALK)

(LAUGHTER)

TERRY: Yeah, that works. And you can have a sign for your name now.

But you were extremely communicative. I love the way you'd reach out to us. And frankly, you were so extraordinary, that I think every chairman, including the new one, should model themselves after that. We -- we don't -- it's very rare that we see that level of communication, so I just want to thank all of you.

This really is a great board. You guys are really serious about the real issues. And I like how you filter out the politics that surrounds all of this. Keep it up.

The next -- I know that the quantile regression analysis has already been discussed to some point, but I just want to let you know that that's been a long-time concern for me. I think some of the concerns that we had that it could actually displace or retard capital investment in rural America, when this is all about getting resources and capital into rural America because of its high cost. And so it really needs to be reviewed.

And Chairman Wheeler, I appreciate -- I've been told your comments on the record here today is that you understand this problem. I'll invite you and all the commissioners out to rural Nebraska. You land in my district and then we go there. But it really is becoming a problem. I have -- there's one provider in Diller, Nebraska that we have used as the model for responsible rural telecom because there are businesses there that now have high speed and they're using it to monetize their businesses there, where they truly are a worldwide business, not just the two blocks of Diller.

But there's a wind farm that they are having trouble -- the wind farm that wants to go there, that needs a broadband hookup and they're saying, "With our cap, we don't have the money; we aren't allowed to use that money in that way." So it's having serious effects. It's just not that one house that's 30 miles (inaudible) and, you know, line in and out. It's really hurting rural economic development. So I want (inaudible).

And then in my two minutes left, I want to ask the real question. And to Chairman Wheeler, and if either of the commissioners wish to step in, but I want to ask about a rule that concerns the video market. Many of us are worried that the price of cable subscriptions -- and I'll tell you that's an often and frequent call to my congressional office.

And the current market for video is seeing an expansion in the scope of current law wasn't necessarily intended to address; that the FCC has defined "buying group" of NVPDs for the purpose of program access rules in a way that excludes the NCTC, essentially the only buying group out there.

So, are there plans by the commission to look into this, to maybe change it? Do you think that the NCTC should be excluded from this process?

Chairman Wheeler?

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Terry.

I've just become aware of the issues that have been raised about this, and want to get all over it, and would ask that we be able to get back to you with what the answer is. We are now aware and will be dealing with it.

TERRY: Any of the commissioners have concerns about NCTC being excluded from this rule?

Hearing none, Mr. Pai, you actually had an expression.

(LAUGHTER)

PAI: No good expression goes unpunished.

(LAUGHTER)

No, I mean, I supported the notice that teed up a lot of the questions. And we teed up a lot of different questions (inaudible) paragraph 84 (inaudible) that order, out-lifted all the issues under consideration. And I look forward to working with Chairman Wheeler and my colleagues to ensure that the FCC takes the appropriate action to ensure that (inaudible).

TERRY: Right, and others nodded.

Mr. O'Rielly, also known as the new guy.

(CROSSTALK)

O'RIELLY: The new guy, yes. I would have to agree with Chairman Wheeler. I don't have as much information on this and I look to get up to speed on it, so I apologize that I don't.

TERRY: Yield back.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back the balance of his time.

And the chair now recognizes the gentleman from New Mexico for five minutes.

LUJAN: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

And Chairman Wheeler, welcome today; to all the commissioners, welcome.

Again, as we're announcing former positions and posts, Commissioner Clyburn, I know that you're very welcome here today. It's great to hear the recognition from my colleagues with your leadership and your work.

And I don't want to speak for former Public Utility Commissioner Ray Baum either, but I'm going to invoke his name a bit. It's good to have another fellow utility commissioner here and a leader. For those of you who aren't aware, myself and Ray served at the same time as utility commissions as Commissioner Clyburn. We had a chance to do some great things together. And it's great to have you again in that leadership capacity, Commissioner Clyburn.

Chairman Wheeler, I appreciate very much the conversation about quantile regression analysis. I think you'll see that there's many rural members of Congress or members that represent rural parts of America that are on this committee. As we look at this and encouraging investment in rural America, I hope that through all these deliberations and rulemaking, that we don't lose sight of the fact that if we can make a mobile call from an airline, that we should be able to make it anywhere in rural America.

And if technology is allowing for that to occur, I don't want to hear that we're not able to anymore. So thank you again for looking at this and making sure that rural America will not be left out, Mr. Chairman.

With that being said, I would also encourage and was encouraged by the fact that in a recent report, there was some conversation about the tribal coefficient and would encourage that that is critically important as we roll out the reevaluation of the QRA.

And lastly, I want to let you know that I'm planning on introducing a piece of legislation to include the elevation of the national tribal recognition of ONAP (ph) as a permanent office. And I would hope that we might be able to work with our colleagues to elevate that, (inaudible) reports directly to the chairman, especially with the evolution of what we're seeing with the extension of utilities across rural America, including tribal lands.

Mr. Chairman, I'm intrigued very much by the conversation around the I.P. transition. I think Chairman Rogers, chairman of the Intelligence Committee, was asking about the importance of security in networks, that we not lose sight of the fact of the importance of the protection of consumers and network security.

As we're looking forward into future technology, sometimes things that we've read about in fiction or we've seen in television. There's been a lot of concern recently about security of networks, about the infringement on individuals, peering eyes, if you will, sometimes into consumer information.

And I'm intrigued by your direction to move forward with real- world experiments that will be coming forward. I'd like your thoughts on anything that you're aware of or that the FCC may be looking at with laser-based quantum encryption, point-to-point work that's happening right now with our national labs. It's been written about.

I know it makes some people nervous, but it seems to me that as we're looking to protect consumer information and intellectual property, that the more advanced that we can make our networks with technology that's currently available, that we may take to the commercial marketplaces, is something that I'd like to encourage and see, and just like to get your thoughts on that.

WHEELER: I just learned quantum regression analysis, and now you want me to know laser-based quantum encryption?

LUJAN: Yes, sir.

(LAUGHTER)

WHEELER: I look forward to learning a lot about that. I don't mean to be light, but the -- the -- let me be specific on what I can comment on.

Our networks need to be secure, period. What I was trying to say to Mr. Rogers is that the best way for attacking that is through the multi-stakeholder process and moving with dispatch. Because the bad guys sure figure out a way to get around things and that we need to make sure that our responses are flexible.

We're working obviously with the president's executive order and the various steps that he is taking, or the executive agencies are taking in that regard. But I happen to believe that -- that two challenges of the I.P. transition is going to be the security of the networks and the privacy of the information.

And if you go back to the comment that I was making I believe to Mr. Waxman, about the trials need to be about measuring values, then we need to be addressing both of those issues inside that trial. And I look forward to learning more about how laser quantum can help the.

LUJAN: I appreciate it, Chairman.

And if I may, Mr. Chairman, you know, it wasn't too long ago that when the same idea was presented, that we may be able to move data over light and laser...

WHEELER: Right, exactly.

LUJAN: ... there were a lot of discouraging thoughts that were associated with that. But as we're moving now away from copper as a new medium, where even the ability to move data on fiber can't keep up with our processing speeds. If laser-based quantum encryption is good enough to keep national security secrets preserved, I would certainly hope that we find a way to extend these protections to consumers as well.

And again, with the real threats that are taking place with theft of intellectual property, right now we know that it works point to point, but there are ways to make this work with (inaudible) we have available.

This is a serious area that I have tried to take up with the Intelligence Committee. They were very cautious with their conversations with me until I presented them with publications that have talked about this in open source and an unclassified way.

So I'm hoping that we might be able to look into this more and have a serious attempt to incorporate this into our day-to-day lives.

Thanks again, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back.

And the chair now recognizes the gentleman from Colorado for five minutes.

GARDNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I want to commend all the commissioners for being here today, and congratulations on your new role and your newly retired-from role. Thank you for your service.

And Commissioner Pai, I want to thank you for your work on the quantile regression analysis, and the comments that you made at the beginning of your testimony, the question of Chairman Walden, I guess, was something that I have dealt with each and every day,

In a district bigger than the state of South Carolina, I have a number of rural telecom -- rural utilities that continue to face the uncertainty, as you have mentioned, about the QRA. And I appreciate it.

And so, Chairman Wheeler, thank you very much for your comments on that as well. I look forward to following up with you as those conversations and decisions move forward.

I wanted to ask a quick question to Commissioner Pai about the issue of connected (ph) and the E-Rate program .

Who is responsible for policing to make sure the E-Rate program is being used as it -- as appropriately, making sure there's no abuse of the program?

PAI: Congressman, thank you for the question.

In theory, the Universal Service Administrative Corp. or company (ph) overseen by us monitors it.

But in practice, given the limited resources that USAC has and given the limited resources the FCC has to oversee USAC, there's not a great deal of transparency and accountability in the system.

GARDNER: A question I had with that is two-fold. Number one, how do we ensure that there is no overlap of private sector service with E-Rate funding and programs, to make sure that we're not adding to government competition to the private sector.

But, number two, if USAC has identified a problem with a E-Rate contractor or recipient, is there a way to police or perhaps are there barment issues that you can talk about?

Because I know one of the issues in Colorado is that there has been a company that is involved and has been morphed into a new company that has had significant issues with E-Rate violations, and is now involved in an other company in Colorado that is providing services to schools.

PAI: Yes, USAC has taken actions to -- such as the type you've indicated. And, as well, the Department of Justice in appropriate cases can take action where it suspects that something fraudulent has occurred.

And I know that I'm quite sure I speak for my colleagues when I say that the FCC has no interest in doing anything but enforcing the rules against people who abuse the E-Rate system.

With respect to the first part of your question, I think it's critical as we think about reforming the E-Rate program in addition to restructuring the basic planks of it that we ensure that at the end of the day, we don't supply or use our E-Rate funds to supplant or add to the problems on competitors who've, you know, taken the risk and invested private capital into pulling (ph) networks.

GARDNER: Commissioner Rosenworcel, I know you talked this as well. I don't know if you have anything to add.

ROSENWORCEL: You know, I'd echo largely the sentiment of my colleague. We wouldn't want government funds to displace private sector funds. We want to be efficient with the limited dollars we have and make sure we reach as many schools at as high speed as possible, including in rural Colorado.

And with respect to oversight, we could always benefit from more oversight. When we find bad actors in a program we have to take efforts to get them out.

GARDNER: Great. Thank you.

And Commissioner -- or Chairman Wheeler, a question I have, and this is maybe something that you need to get back to me on, are you familiar with a report on a next-generation 911 that is being put together by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in connection with a blue ribbon panel that was convened by -- I'll get the name here -- the FCC's Communications Security, Reliability and Interoperability Council?

WHEELER: Right. That's CSRIC, yes,

GARDNER: CSRIC. Are you familiar with the report that is about to come out in January?

WHEELER: I am not familiar with the report that's about to come out.

GARDNER: There was a -- the blue ribbon panel that was put together...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: Right. I know taht...

(CROSSTALK)

GARDNER: Apparently there is a blue ribbon panel -- or the report is coming out in January. And there is some questionable findings in this report. And I would hope that perhaps the FCC, because I believe some of the findings are not in line with FCC ideas at all. If you could take a look at that report before it's issued and public, to make sure that when we issue a report that has the stamped seal approval of the federal government that it's in line with FCC directives and beliefs...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: Consider that done.

GARDNER: Thank you very much.

And a final question in my time, regarding the I.P. transition issues. Heading in a good direction, but -- and there's significant strides being made to transition to I.P., but, you know, it's -- talking about rural America again, how do we further encourage this transition in a way that ensures consumers remain served in the long run, and particularly in rural America?

WHEELER: I'm sorry, that consumers be served in the long run?

GARDNER: In the long run, particularly in rural America.

WHEELER: Again, it is gonna be very important, for instance in these trials that we have trials in rural areas, to begin to answer those kind of questions.

I mean, you can't go to New York City or, you know, someplace like this and run a trial and say that it applies, you know, in the cities in your district.

And so, that's gonna be one of the criteria that we're looking at.

GARDNER: Thank you.

Yield back my time.

WALDEN: Thank you.

The gentleman yields back.

And the chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri for five minutes.

LONG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, Chairman Wheeler, I came to Congress with a 30-year background in the auction business, so that's how -- was my profession for 30 years before I got here, so I've got a great interest in any time

that we try to conduct an auction for anything. And it's tricky to me about this reverse auction thing, because I'm not sure exactly how that's supposed to work.

But can you provide us with a timeline of actions that need to occur before the incentive auctions would begin?

WHEELER: Yes, sir. We're going to -- and we're gonna in January, which -- at next month's open meeting we're gonna have a presentation that is going to lay out both the timeline and the policy issues that need to be decided, and some recommendations on those.

Then in the spring we're going to be voting on an important order that solicits offers to do trials, sets up a measurement scheme for them, and begins to address the kinds of policy issues that will be tangential to all of that.

And then, we will go forth with trials.

LONG: Can you also tell me what the FCC is doing to ensure that the maximum amount of revenue will be generated through these auctions, which was always a concern of mine as an auctioneer?

WHEELER: The -- and -- and -- and believe me, one of ours as well, because we have the responsibility not only to fund FirstNet and the auction activities themselves, but also to contribute to pay down the federal deficit.

And I think the key to -- to how you can maximize revenue comes down to multiple things.

One is -- is, we've got to be able to attract broadcasters. We've got to have something, as I was saying previously, that -- that are rules that are understandable, are rules that we're actually being aggressive and helping people understand the economic impact of them, because, as you know, you're only gonna bid to the point that your spreadsheets say it's gonna be making sense.

So that's the first thing, that we've got to attract broadcasters.

We also have this -- well, we have this perverse challenge here that we also have to be freeing up spectrum.

LONG: Have to be what?

WHEELER: Freeing up spectrum.

LONG: Which requires people to put spectrum...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: At the end of the auction.

WHEELER: There's the key. So you have to provide the appropriate incentive to get them to free up...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: And do you foresee that happening? From what I talk to -- the people I talk to, I don't know that that's gonna happen in as large a way as what you...

WHEELER: So, the Congress told us to make it happen. And -- and we are going to do our damndest to deliver on those instructions. And I believe that we will be able to fulfill the challenge that we have been given.

And in no way, shape or form, do I underestimate the magnitude of it. I have spent more time on this issue in the last 39 days than any other issue.

And I know my colleagues all feel the same way on this. We understand that we're biting off a huge chunk here.

LONG: And there's a article where you were speaking in Ohio and, to quote out of the article, "'the protection of competition,;'Mr. Wheeler said, 'would apply to the coming auction of additional airwaves or spectrum for mobile broadband.' In April, the Justice Department told the FCC that it could help to protect competition by ensuring that the two largest companies, AT&T and Verizon, were not allowed to use their financial might to buy up all the available spectrum being auctioned, shutting out smaller carriers."

So how do you balance that? How do you decide I want to get the most money for my product over here, but I want to limit my bidders over here? How does that...

WHEELER: I also think that -- and, as you know, the more people you get to the auction, presumably the better result.

And so, we want to make sure that we are creating an auction marketplace that will attract as many people as possible. Not -- and not just the giants.

As a former entrepreneur, we want to make sure that we have smaller wireless companies. We want to make sure there are entrepreneurial opportunities in here.

And that's one of the things that's most interesting about what we've recently put out for public notice, the proposal from the Competitive Carriers Association, the Rural Carriers Association, and the NTCA, the rural wireline association, on talking about smaller economic areas, so that they could bid for a smaller piece of geography, rather than a humongous piece, because for entrepreneurs, for smaller carriers, they can target their activities, they can take something that is a -- is a consumable bite, rather than be forced to go out and -- and -- and...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: But they (inaudible) have to put together a patchwork quilt of -- to make their system work correct, what they buy through the auction, they have to...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: So they can -- they can buy their areas, they can buy other, smaller areas, rather than having to buy -- this is -- and this is not a decision, I just want to clear. This is -- we've put this out for comment. But it is a certainly very interesting idea that...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: ... a,b, and c, and they get a and b, but then they can't get c, then a and b weren't worth anything to them...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: But that's kind of the history of the wireless industry. I've been -- we're about to conduct our 96th auction. And -- and I've been in them from the outset. And traditionally, that kind of situation has occurred. And then an aftermarket then develops in which various players say, "OK, how can I reorganize for the most efficiency?"

LONG: OK. I'm beyond my time by quite a little bit. So if I had any time, I'd yield it back.

WALDEN: The gentleman's time has expired.

And the chair now recognizes the gentlelady from North Carolina for five minutes.

ELLMERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you to the commissioners for being here today.

Commissioner Clyburn, I'm going to direct my questions to you. I have an issue that has been raised from my sheriffs back home in North Carolina. And it has to do with one of the points that you made in your opening testimony.

And I'll just read from your opening statement. "We adopted an order to reform inmate calling services to finally provide relief to millions of families and 2.7 million children who have been paying unreasonably high rates to stay connected with incarcerated loved ones."

My sheriffs back home, do have some concerns on this issue and -- so they would like me to pose some questions to you on this issue, in regard to security measures that -- that they will now be putting in place, certainly they want to be able to provide, you know, access and information and the ability to communicate with family members.

But they are concerned that this order or reform regulation is saying that basically their ability to -- to put forward call-blocking through the -- is that an issue? Is that looked upon as something that -- that we want to veer away from?

CLYBURN: So let me start -- again, thank you, and it's a pleasure meeting a -- a Carolinian.

ELLMERS: Absolutely. Yes

CLYBURN: We might have argued a bit about which...

ELLMERS: Yeah.

CLYBURN: Right.

ELLMERS: That's OK, though. We're -- we're brothers, cousins, sisters.

CLYBURN: Absolutely.

ELLMERS: That's right.

CLYBURN: So let me start with the latter, in terms of the call blocking concerns that some of -- of the sheriffs and persons who run jail facilities mentioned.

So as it relates to that particular item, I want to assure you that nothing within anything that we have delivered in this order prevents any type of security in security needed type of a blocking.

So if it's -- if -- if you know, a judge or a witness, or something, you know is -- is potentially at risk, then yes, these providers can block calls.

The -- the call blocking comes into play when there is not a business relationship with -- if someone is doing business with somebody else and then the supplier -- another supplier is blocking them, that is when we have some disconnects with our rules.

But when it comes to security protocols, that is in place.

So you've mentioned what is at the epicenter of our reasoning for reform. That family members that -- those who represent those who are incarcerated, not everybody incarcerated is -- is guilty.

And -- and those who are trying to help rehabilitate those inmates have complained to us for a number of years, for well over 10 years that the ability to communicate was just financially outrageous. That it was an unaffordable regime.

So what we did, after 10 long years, was act. And we looked at -- and reminded ourselves, Communications Act, in terms of universal service principles put forward, that is the providing of just and reasonable rates for all.

And so we put in a -- a mechanism that will provide that. And what we also did, not only providing a -- a means for just and reasonable rates for those families and others who use the phone service, but providing the means for just and reasonable rate of return for those carries, at the same builds in those that just and reasonable rate of returns is the -- the amount of money needed to -- to provide a state of the art security protocols.

So nothing within the framework in terms of what we, you know, put forward in terms of the order and the further order that would deal with entrust state rates, will compromise security protocols. But it will bring more certainty and more -- I -- I guess I would -- again, just affordability for those -- for those who are making calls to the incarcerated.

ELLMERS: They are also concerned about the cost involved and -- and you know, if -- if you can give some guidance in anticipation of the cost that they will have to incur as the result of this, certainly again, wanting to ensure that everyone is protected...

CLYBURN: Right.

ELLMERS: ... and the security is there. That -- and also, would you consider, at the local level, the local jails, maybe being exempt until they can, you know, come up with a plan of action?

CLYBURN: So one of the things that we have put forth in -- in this engagement is the capacity for any provider that is under distress, they can apply for a waiver process. You know, for -- for a waiver.

And so that capacity is within and means, and so they do have the ability to do so.

But one of the things that I wanted to emphasize is when we came up with this particular rate structure, we looked at a number of cost studies and cost models that included a -- a wide array of -- of facilities and came up, actually, with a cost structure that was much higher than some the petitioners wanted us to.

But we thought that we needed to take into account facilities, large and small, in order to come up with a -- a rate structure that we think it strikes the right balance.

ELLMERS: Well, thank you very much and I look forward to and certainly will be working with my law enforcement back home, working with the commission on -- on this issue, and the subcommittee.

So thank you so much. I look forward to that.

CLYBURN: Thank you, ma'am.

ELLMERS: And I yield back the remainder of my time.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back, and seeing no other members to ask questions, I wanna thank the commission for being with us today. And I know that Chairman Walden does the same.

And I also wanna thank the commission for changing your time today for your meeting to be able to be here, and I understand your meeting is at 2 O'clock. So we appreciate you accommodating the committee to appear before us today.

And seeing no further business to come for the committee, the committee stand adjourned.

END

LOAD-DATE: December 14, 2013

369 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Copyright 2013 CQ Transcriptions, LLC
All Rights Reserved
Financial Markets Regulatory Wire

All materials herein are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of CQ Transcriptions. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.

REP. GREG WALDEN HOLDS A HEARING ON FCC OVERSIGHT

December 12, 2013 Thursday

EVENT DATE: **December 12, 2013**

TYPE: COMMITTEE HEARING

LOCATION: WASHINGTON, D.C.

COMMITTEE: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY

SPEAKER: REP. GREG WALDEN, CHAIRMAN

WITNESSES:
REP. GREG WALDEN, R-ORE. CHAIRMAN
REP. ANNA G. ESHOO, D-CALIF., RANKING MEMBER
REP. FRED UPTON, R-MICH. EX OFFICIO
REP. BOB LATTA, R-OHIO
REP. MARSHA BLACKBURN, R-TENN.
REP. HENRY A. WAXMAN, D-CALIF. EX OFFICIO
REP. DORIS MATSUI, D-CALIF.
WITNESSES: THOMAS E. WHEELER, CHAIRMAN, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
MIGNON L. CLYBURN, COMMISSIONER, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
JESSICA ROSENWORCEL, COMMISSIONER, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
AJIT VARADARAJ PAI, COMMISSIONER, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
REP. MIKE ROGERS, R-MICH.
REP. JOHN D. DINGELL, D-MICH.
REP. BRETT GUTHRIE, R-KY.
REP. JOE L. BARTON, R-TEXAS EX OFFICIO
REP. JIM MATHESON, D-UTAH
REP. LEE TERRY, R-NEB.
REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M.
REP. CORY GARDNER, R-COLO.
REP. BILLY LONG, R-MO.
REP. RENEE ELLMERS, R-N.C.

TEXT:

WALDEN: I'll call to order the Subcommittee on Communication and Technology. And it's a delight to welcome all five members of the Federal Communications Commission, fully installed and bright and shiny faces and welcome to go today.

We welcome you. And Chairman Wheeler and Commissioner O'Rielly, we especially welcome you and look forward to working with you to set the communications agenda for the United States.

Federal Communications Commission is the arm of our government, tasked with fostering some of the most important parts of our national economy. And among them, the telecommunications industry, the video distribution industries and the Internet.

Give the economic significance of these industries, the changes from Congress -- the charge from Congress to encourage competition, license our national spectrum assets and facilitate technological advances is one that must be discharged with transparency, accountability and a long view of the technological landscape.

It is with this in mind, that the subcommittee has worked over the last three years on efforts to improve the commission's processes. As the subcommittee with jurisdiction over the Federal Communications Commission, take this task very seriously and with great care to ensure the commission not only remains a vital institution, but one that can serve as an example for other federal agencies of accountability and efficiency.

A bipartisan majority of this subcommittee is deeply committed to this cause, and it's proud to have reported out a bipartisan FCC Process Reform Bill to the full House of Representatives, yesterday.

Chairman Wheeler, it's clear you want to improve the agency. I've appreciated our conversations and your comments. And I'd like to commend for turning your attention to this task as one of your first roles as chairman by asking one of your top advisers to review the FCC process and submit recommendations for improvement by early 2014.

While there are a number of large proceedings currently pending at the commission, many of which we will talk about today, I'm particularly concerned with returning the commission to addressing some of its long overdue responsibilities.

For example, despite multiple unsuccessful trips to the Third Circuit Court of Appeals, the commission's responsibility to address the media ownership proceeding, remains unfulfilled.

Additionally, licensing, one of the original -- licensing, one of the original reasons for the creation of the commission, has fallen woefully behind.

Of particular note is the tragic pace of processing of applications in the commission's media bureau.

Now the AM radio industry has been clamoring for the ability to use FM translators to give new life to that classic medium. And I certainly appreciate what Commissioner Pai has done, taking on this issue and it's very good work.

And as a former licensee, I actually know firsthand, the commission has been in no rush to address translator applications. In fact, my own application sat unresolved at the commission for 10 years.

To put this in context, while the commission considered my application, my wife and I actually sold our radio stations, our son went off an graduated from college and every full power television station in the country converted from analog to digital broadcasting.

Look, the commission can do better than that. The commission should do better than that. And I'm hopeful that our shared commitment will lead to improvement in that bureau.

As the only one on the panel with the unique experience of having been a licensee of commercial broadcast and still under your jurisdiction with my amateur radio license, which I'm set to renew for

March, hopefully I will get approved within 10 years, I'd like to offer two pieces of advice for you as you move forward with your change.

First, where Congress has spoken, I urge you to heed the words in statute and reject calls to act in ways contrary to congressional intent. For example, in the incentive auction proceeding, some are calling on the commission to exclude bidders from participating in the auction. Others, still are calling for excessive guard bands in the attempt to end-run requirements to license, reclaim TV band spectrum.

I'm just saying both are bad ideas.

Second, I urge you to bear in mine that even seemingly small changes in your rules can have significant impact on the market. The commission's recent decision to apply yet incomplete rules to its UHF discount has effectively frozen many plans for broadcast mergers and acquisition.

The problem here isn't that the commission wants to update or needs to update the UHF discount rule, the problem is that absent a decision how and importantly, when the commission will move forward, it has pressed paused for an indefinite period of time.

We all know that markets do not react favorable to this kind of open-ended uncertainty.

On the other hand, I applaud the recent announcement on the schedule for the spectrum incentive auctions. Both the broadcast and wireless industries are waiting with bated breath to see how the FCC addresses this first-of-a-kind auction.

To say nothing of the public safety agencies that are counting on the auction fund to fund FirstNet. The certainty of a timetable is good for both stakeholders and for the commission.

Finally, turning to those large proceedings the commission has on its plate. We're looking forward to working with you to tackle the tough issues like the I.P. transition, universal service reform and media ownership.

Chairman Upton and I recently launched a large proceeding of our own, an initiative to update the Communications Act. Each of you brings the unique perspective to your work on the commission, industry lobbyist, newspaper publisher, a couple of lawyers, even some former legislative Hill staffers. That experience, combined with your expertise on the Federal Communications Commission staff and your own work on the commission, will be valuable in our efforts as we work together to update and modernize the Communications Act.

So Congress -- or Chairman Wheeler...

(LAUGHTER)

We wouldn't want to demote you to level of congressman.

Chairman Wheeler -- yeah, our numbers aren't that great -- Commissioner O'Rielly, we especially welcome you aboard the FCC and Commissioners Clyburn, Rosenworcel and Pai, welcome back, not only the commission, but before our committee. We thank you all for joining us today, we look forward to working together in this very critical sector of America's economy to spur further innovation technology growth and jobs.

And with that, I will now yield to the ranking member of the subcommittee, my friend Ms. Eshoo from California.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman for holding this hearing, it's wonderful to see a full Federal Communications Commission before us. Welcome to each one of you, special welcome to the new chairman.

I think that you started out with 100 percent goodwill with everyone that is on this committee, I think our full committee -- in fact I think the Congress.

We have -- there have been many months where we didn't have a full commission. I want to once again thank Commissioner Clyburn for her exceptional leadership during that period of time.

Welcome to each one of the commissioners, and of course, to the newest commissioner, Mike O'Rielly, who served on the other side of that table.

When I first came to the committee, he was here when we began -- began the Telecom Act. And now, guess what, you get to trudge through that all over again, according to the chairman.

So I guess there are some things that we just never finish with.

As Chairman Wheeler announced last week, the commission has made the upcoming incentive auction of broadcast television spectrum the top priority of the commission. And I agree.

This is a rare opportunity to auction beach-front spectrum under 1 gigahertz. And the FCC has to structure rules to promote a competitive wireless landscape and ensure carriers, of all sizes, both regional and national, have an opportunity to bid competitively for license spectrum.

And it has to be done right. It's the first in the history of the world that an auction has been structured this way. And I appreciate, Mr. Chairman, and all the commissioners, your understanding, the delicacy of this needing to be done right, well and successfully.

Similarly, recognizing the enormous economic and societal benefits of unlicensed spectrum which is tucked away in one corner of my telecom heart. The FCC has an opportunity to structure a band plan that ensures the nationwide block of spectrum under 1 gigahertz, dedicated for unlicensed innovation.

With unlicensed spectrum being a critical tool to bring broadband to unserved areas, including rural America, this opportunity really must be seized.

In addition to the important role the FCC has in freeing up more spectrum for mobile broadband, I'd like to highlight four issues that the commission should make a top priority in 2014. And I think you're going to.

First during the three months since I released a draft legislation, the message from individuals, communications companies and consumer groups has been abundantly clear. Our video laws are in need of reform, they're broken.

Independent of such legislation, the commission does have an important responsibility to promote competition, consumer choice and localism across the video marketplace.

Second, I hope the commission will continue its focus on modernizing the E-Rate program to support a 21st Century digital needs of our schools and libraries.

In June, together with Commissioner Rosenworcel, we called for such an update. And I'm pleased that the White House and the FCC agree with us and have made this issue a key priority. We have to stay on it. We have to move and we have to make it much better. It's gotta be a 21st century plan.

Third, the commission should uphold, I think, the goals (ph) of Section 629 and ensure a vibrant, competitive retail set-top box market. A successor to the current CableCARD regime, whether by FCC rule, or more preferably, a voluntary industry agreement, will usher in a new generation of technologies that will give consumers giver choice and ensure that innovation flourishes.

Finally, I'm pleased that the commission has made the transition to Next Generation 911, as well as improving the indoor location accuracy of 911 calls the key priority.

In fact, later today, it's my understanding that the commission will vote on an order to improve the reliability of 911. And I look forward to continued updates as the commission proceeds with the implementation of Next Gen 911.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this morning's hearing. I look forward to the important testimony of Chairman Wheeler and each of the commissioners, most importantly, I pledge to work with each of you to make American's communications sector the most effective and the most admired in the world.

And with that, I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back.

Chair now recognizes the chairman of the full committee, Mr. Upton from Michigan, I believe.

UPTON: Great, (inaudible) Michigan.

WALDEN: (inaudible) Ohio.

UPTON: Thank you-- thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You know, today we welcome a fully constituted FCC back to the Energy and Commerce Committee. The -- the last time that we heard from the full commission was in July of 2012.

So the FCC has regulatory authority over a sector of our economy that is critical to innovation, jobs and our nation's global leadership in technology.

Communication sector is also an integral part of our daily lives, connecting us to loved ones, alerting us to natural disasters and entertaining and educating us every single day.

As the regulatory agency of these industries, the FCC has the immensely important task of promoting growth and competition. Our hearing today will examine actions that the FCC has taken since the commission last appeared and set expectations for the agency's future.

As the oversight authority for the commission, our committee works hard to ensure that the FCC functions to the benefit of America consumers as well as companies.

We also wanna make sure that this agency functions efficiently and transparently as all government agencies should.

I'm glad to say that this is not a partisan concern. Bipartisan majority on a voice vote of the full committee reported an FCC process reform bill yesterday that will help the FCC operate more openly and defectively. And we expect it to be on the House floor in the not too distant future.

And the bill is needed. There are several stalled proceedings and ambiguous projects at the commission that cause concern to me and other members of the committee. We've sent a number of letters in the past months regarding media ownership.

Subcommittee Vice Chair Latta has gone to the extent of drafting a bill to end the cable set-top box integration ban, a bill that seems to make a lot of sense, and which perhaps the FCC should have considered doing a while ago.

My concern and hope is that we can start a productive dialogue today with our esteemed witnesses on these and the many other important issues pending at the commission.

Commission O'Rielly, I'd like to welcome you back to the Energy and Commerce Committee, a committee you know well, having once served here as the staff.

And Chairman Wheeler, though you're from Ohio, this is often known as the big house, now the Dingell room. Hope you appreciate the -- the green and white decor.

(LAUGHTER)

And yes, we were first party.

(LAUGHTER)

Welcome back.

And I yield to other members, Republican members.

WALDEN: The chairman now recognizes the vice chair of the Subcommittee on Communications, Mr. Latta from Ohio.

(LAUGHTER)

Home of the speaker of the House.

(LAUGHTER)

LATTA: (inaudible) number two.

But thank you very much for yielding, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you very much to our commissioner for being with us today.

And welcome to our newest members for the commission. I really appreciate you -- having you here with us today.

The communications and technology industry has been a consistent bright spot in the U.S. economy. It's created millions of American jobs, spurred significant investment and innovation and, most importantly, empowered consumers, who are the driving force behind robust competition in the communications marketplace.

As U.S.-based businesses lead the world in technological advances, we have a responsibility to ensure the FCC fosters continued growth and development in the communications sector.

This can be achieved by the FCC incorporating more transparency and accountability in its processes, operating within the bounds of its statutory authority and acting upon legislation according to congressional intent.

I look forward to continuing working with Chairman Upton and the members of this committee and also Congressman Green on my H.R. 3196, which is the legislation to eliminate the integration ban on the set- top boxes and allow the marketplace to get to the next-generation innovation without the regulatory barriers being put in front of it.

I look forward to the hearing and hearing the testimony today.

And, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Thank you.

WALDEN: The chair recognizes the gentlelady from Tennessee, the vice chair of the full committee, for the remaining 40 seconds, if she wants it.

BLACKBURN: And I thank the chairman.

I want to welcome all of our commissioners and publicly commend Commissioner Clyburn for the wonderful work that she did when she served as the acting chair. We appreciate that leadership.

And, Chairman Wheeler, we look forward to having you continue and to work in a collaborative manner to find results for the private sector.

We would hope that the commission will be proactive, not get beyond its mission, but to stay focused on your core mission. Pay attention to economic analysis. Look at cost to benefit analysis. And make certain that you don't suffer mission creep, which is casting a shadow over the private sector.

With that, I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back.

The chair recognizes the ranking member of the full committee, Mr. Waxman.

WAXMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I want to welcome the members of the commission, Chairman Wheeler and all the commissioners.

And I also want to join in commending Commissioner Clyburn for the incredible job she did as acting chairwoman, from the industry agreement on interoperability to long overdue reforms on prison phone rates, your brief chairmanship will be remembered for the remarkable amount you accomplished.

Let me welcome Chairman Wheeler and Commissioner O'Rielly. I congratulate you on your appointment and confirmation, and we're pleased to have you here.

You join the FCC at a time when our country is undergoing dramatic and perhaps fundamental transformations in communications networks and technologies, and the decisions you make at the commission will no doubt have lasting impact on our nation's communications landscape.

At the top of the FCC agenda is the spectrum auctions authorized by the Public Safety and Spectrum Auction Act last year. And I'm pleased to see that the FCC is moving ahead to conduct the H Block auction in January.

In addition to allocating new wireless spectrum to address our nation's spectrum shortage, this auction will provide significant down payment for the nation-wide interoperable public safety network.

I also support, Chairman Wheeler, your recently announced timetable for the incentive auction. This auction has many layers of complexity, and I applaud your commitment to getting the technical issues right.

Congress gave the FCC the tools to unleash the economic opportunities for both licensed and unlicensed spectrum, revolutionize public safety communications, ensure a vibrant and competitive wireless market, all the while protecting consumer access to free over-the-air television.

And I think FCC must remain faithful to these goals as you implement the law.

You also must bear in mind the principles undergirding the Communications Act, as we consider the next evolution in our nation's wireless networks. Our values do not change with each successive generation of technology. Whether the infrastructure is copper or fiber optics, the commission's charge is to protect and promote the longstanding goals of competition, universal access and consumer protection.

Chairman Upton and Walden recently called for a multiyear examination of possible updates to the Communications Act, and I welcome the opportunity for a bipartisan consideration of these issues, and I hope the commission will be a partner in this endeavor.

In 2010, the commission and this committee spent many hours working to preserve the principle of an open Internet. That process led to a sensible set of rules governing the broadband market that was supported by a diverse groups of stakeholders and provided the foundation for the FCC's Open Internet Order.

I believe the Open Internet Order will be upheld in the court. But whatever the outcome, I'll be looking to you to assure that the Internet remains an open platform for innovation and economic growth.

I want to at this point yield the balance of my time to my fellow Californian and good friend, Congresswoman Matsui.

MATSUI: Thank you very much, Ranking Member Waxman for yielding me time.

It's wonderful to see the full complement of the commission here today.

I want to join in welcoming Chairman Wheeler, and who brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the FCC.

And I'd also like to congratulate and welcome Commissioner O'Rielly.

And I also would like to commend Commissioner Clyburn for her leadership during the interim period. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, the subcommittee is working diligently to find bipartisan solutions for smart and sound spectrum policy for our nation. We've worked want to create a path for DOD to reallocate the 1755 to 1780 megahertz band.

DOD and the broadcasters should be applauded for their leadership on a landmark sharing agreement.

Moreover, I've joined with Representative Guthrie to introduce H.R. 3674, the Federal Spectrum Incentive Act, which passed this committee yesterday in a bipartisan manner.

The bill is the first of its kind that offers a fresh approach that would create a federal spectrum incentive auction. I look forward to working closely with my colleagues and the administration in moving this bill to the floor.

There are tough decisions ahead, and I want to encourage also the FCC to move forward with the USF reform efforts. Modernizing the USF for broadband, particularly the lifeline program will provide a path toward universal broadband adoption in this country.

And, with that, I yield back the balance of my time.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back the balance of her time; all time's been consumed. We'll now go to our witnesses.

And, again, we thank you very much for being here today and the public service work you're all undertaking.

And, Mr. Wheeler, as chairman of the FCC, we're gonna lead off with you. So pull that microphone close, turn on the button, and you're good to go, sir.

WHEELER: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Ms. Eshoo, other members of the committee. It's a privilege to be before you today, and a privilege to be joining my colleagues here, the full component of the commission. I think we will make a great team, and I know that all of us are honored to be able to work with the quality men and women that make up the FCC.

Today is my 39th day on the job. And I have enjoyed the informal discussions that I've been able to have with many of you in the interim and look forward to today having a even more complete discussions and to working with you afterwards.

As I think everybody in their statements has indicated, we are in a very exciting time, in the midst of a great network revolution.

The lesson of history is that revolutions like that come chock full of challenges. And we're gonna have to work together on how we address those challenges.

We've tended to look at those challenges through three prisms, if you will, and to say, OK, how do we make sure, first of all, that what policies we adopt promote economic growth and maintain national leadership?

And clearly at the root of those are issues such as competition and maintaining the necessary assets, such as spectrum.

The second prism is what we've begun to call the network compact. There has, for a century, developed a set of values that represent the relationship between those who operate networks and those who use networks. Those values must be preserved regardless of the type -- of the technology used in the network.

And, thirdly, is the -- is the goal that networks work for everyone, that it's -- it's not what broadband -- it's not just the delivery of broadband, but it's what broadband enables that is what is important.

If we don't have 21st century education capabilities, if we don't make sure that Americans with disabilities have access to the capabilities of the new network, if we don't make sure that tribal Americans have opportunities to use the new networks, then we have failed in our goal.

So, those three things, economic growth, the network compact and -- and what networks enable are the three pillars of policy. But at the heart of them is competition.

It has become a joke, at least in my office, that everybody keeps -- that I keep saying, "Competition. Competition. Competition."

But that is very much what -- what we believe.

Let me do a quick look at the three areas where the commission is keeping pace with innovation, that innovative economy.

First is process reform. The committee's bipartisan effort yesterday is significant and is noted and appreciated.

On my second day, Mr. Chairman, as you noted, I began a process that will produce a report in 60 days. We're gonna look at how to enhance accountability through deadlines and tracking systems, how to expedite the licensing process, like you referenced. How to shorten the processing time of applications for review and Commissioner Pai has an interesting idea in that regard.

How to streamline consumer complaint, collection and a searchable database, which Commissioner Rosenworcel has been a champion of. And how to attack the backlog as Commissioner Clyburn did when she was chairwoman.

We also wanna weed out outdated regulations, incorporate performance -- and incorporate performance measures.

Second focus is gonna be, as you have all appropriately said, the spectrum auctions, especially the incentive auction.

This committee, working with MTIA and DOD, has provided great leadership on the 1755 to 1780 band that we look forward to moving forward on that and moving that to auction.

The Guthrie-Matsui bill, which you all moved yesterday, which has been referenced, it takes the incentive auction idea and applies it to federal agencies, and that's a great step forward.

And then speaking of incentives, we have the incentive auction coming up. We're gonna have -- we have established a schedule now, we're gonna have policy recommendations in January. And we're gonna have consideration and discussion of that until spring, when we'll be making a decision. And we'll have an auction in the -- in mid-2015.

But while we're discussing spectrum and regulatory process, I would be remiss if I didn't bring up an item we will be considering today. A proposal to ask for comments on a rule to reflect the realities of new onboard aircraft technology.

And there have been lots of misconceptions about that. And let me just see if I can address these right upfront.

One, we are going to continue -- we are proposing to consider to continue the ban on mobile devices that can interfere with terrestrial networks. But where there is new onboard technology that eliminates that potential for interference, then there is no need for an interference rule.

This is the responsible thing to do, where the rationale for a rule doesn't exist, the rule shouldn't exist. We are the expert technical agency. And new technology removes the technical justification of this rule.

In that regard, I should mention that I have spoken with Transportation Secretary Foxx this morning. And he has told me that, yes, the FCC is the technical agency and that the Department of Transportation is the aviation agency and that they will be moving on a rule to address voice calls on airplanes.

I'm the last person in the world who wants to listen to somebody talking to me, while they fly across the country. But we are the technical agency and we will make the technical rules that reflect the -- the way the new technology works.

Finally, item three, you've all talked about the -- the I.P. transition -- transitions, I should say. Because it's not just one transition, it's a multi-faceted process. And at today's meeting, we're gonna hear a report from the technology transitions policy task force, which will lay out a schedule, including a plan for a January order that will invite experiments in the field, real life experiments, recommend data collection and create a framework for policy decisions.

So we have a full agenda, as you have all said. It is a privilege to be here, to be able to work with all of you and I look forward to doing that in the time coming (ph).

WALDEN: Chairman Wheeler, thank you for your public service and thank you for recognizing our concerns on the subcommittee and full committee.

And now we'll switch to -- I guess, once a chairman, always a chairman, right, highest title. Former Chairwoman Clyburn, we're delighted to have you back before the committee. Thanks for your work publicly and please go ahead with your opening statement.

CLYBURN: Thank you, Chairman Walden, Ranking Member Eshoo, and members of the committee.

Thank you, again, for allowing me to appear before you today. Since our last visit, I have had an incredible opportunity to serve as acting chair and I'm glad to note that with the support of my colleagues and the assistance of a skilled and dedicated staff, we were able to move a number of important items, which clearly advanced the public interest.

This hearing comes at a critical stage in our communications policy continuum. We are experiencing tremendous technological change that affects every aspect of our lives.

And as we look ahead to the challenges of tomorrow, I believe it is important to understand the terrain over which we have travelled. We reached a voluntary interoperability industry solution in the lower 700 megahertz band to address an issue, that for years, have been impeding the deployment of valuable spectrum.

We launched a proceeding to modernize the FCC's schools and libraries program, known as E-Rate, to ensure that our children have the resources and connectivity they need to support digital learning and become the leaders of tomorrow.

We adopted an order to address rule call completion because it is unacceptable in today's world that calls to non-urban areas are not being completed.

We adopted an order to reform inmate calling services to finally provide relief to millions of families who have been paying unreasonably high rate to stay connected with loved ones.

We enabled the H Block spectrum auction and the AWS-3 proposal to take major steps forward on government and commercial spectrum sharing. And we made ongoing reforms to lifeline and proposed significant forfeitures to companies not following the FCC's rules.

With Chairman Wheeler and my fellow commissioners, I look forward to building on the progress we have made.

As Chairman Wheeler has made clear, the voluntary incentive auction proceeding continues to be a top commission priority for those broadcast television licensees who want to continue to use their spectrum, the act mandates that the commission makes all reasonable efforts to preserve the coverage areas and population served.

The act also has clear directives for the proceeds from the forward auction, which includes much earned contributions to the Public Safety Trust Fund and the national deficit.

Congress also gave the commission authority to propose a band plan with an appropriate balance of unlicensed and licensed spectrum.

Unlicensed spectrum plays a critical role in advancing more efficient use of spectrum and commercial wireless carriers are increasingly using unlicensed Wi-Fi services to off load their smartphone traffic.

In addition to spectrum, Chairman Wheeler has also announced that the commission will consider an order next month to launch trials regarding the ongoing technology transitions.

I do believe that trials, if structured properly, can produce helpful insights into how best to approach reform. And I will be keeping a keen eye on how the trials and future reforms affect all consumers.

Process reform is where we have an opportunity to develop an even more efficient agency.

Yesterday, the committee passed the Federal Communications Commission Process Reform Act of 2013. I am pleased that the proposed modifications to the Sunshine Act would facilitate federal commissioners participation on the Federal-State Joint Board and the Joint Conference.

I would also encourage you to review the Paperwork Reduction Act and how it can be improved. For example, the FCC is using its website to better inform consumers in the industry.

Yet, to obtain voluntary feedback on our website, the PRA requires OMB approval. As a result, the commission cannot be as responsive to users without engaging in a lengthy OMB approval process.

So as you can see, Mr. Chairman, and distinguished members of the committee, we have both challenges and opportunities ahead.

I look forward to working with each of you to address our evolving communications landscape.

I appreciate your attention this morning and will be glad to answer any questions you may have.

WALDEN: Thank you for your work, your testimony, your recommendations, and we'll now go to Commissioner Rosenworcel. Thank you for being here this morning, we're delighted to have you back and please go ahead.

ROSENWORCEL: It's good to be back.

Good morning, Chairman Walden, Ranking Member Eshoo and members of the subcommittee, it is an honor to appear before you today in the company of my colleagues, new and old, at the FCC.

By some measures, communications technologies account for as much as one-sixth of our economy, no wonder. These are the networks that carry all aspects of our modern commercial and civic life.

They are changing at a breathtaking pace. Keeping up requires taking a fresh look at our policies, informed by the policies of the past, we have to think boldly about the future.

Now in the weeks ahead, we will do this, as we wrestle with the upcoming transition to Internet protocol and think about spectrum auctions, including incentive auctions.

But I think we make a mistake if we focus only on networks themselves. After all, there is great beauty and power in what we can do with them.

Our new networks can change the ways we connect, create and conduct commerce. They can change the ways we learn and seek security.

So in my brief time before you today, this is what I wanna talk about. How the broadband beneath us and the air waves all around us can improve education and improve public safety.

First, I wanna talk about the E-Rate program. E-Rate helps connects schools and libraries across the country to the Internet. It is a byproduct of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

Remember in 1996, probably everyone in this room called the Internet the information superhighway. It was a long time ago. In 1996, only 14 percent of public schools were connected to the Internet.

Today, thanks to the E-Rate, that number is north of 95 percent, which sounds good. It sounds like the job is done, but nothing could be further from the truth, because the challenge today is not connection, it is capacity.

Too many of our E-Rate schools access the Internet at speeds as low as 3 megabits, that is too slow for high definition video, it is not fast enough for the most innovative teaching tools, and it is definitely not fast enough to prepare the next generation with the stem skills that are so essential to compete.

Contrast this with efforts under way in some of our world neighbors.

In South Korea, 100 percent of schools are connected to high speed broadband and all schools are converting to digital textbooks by 2016.

Ireland will have all schools connected to 100 megabits next year.

Finland will have all schools connected to 100 megabits the year after that.

Meanwhile, in both Turkey and Thailand, the government is seeking a vendor to supply tablet computers to millions of students for a new era of broadband enabled digital learning.

Now we can wait and see where the status quo takes us and let other nations lead the way, or we can chose a future where all American students have the access to the broadband that they need to compete, no matter who they are, where they live or where they go to school.

I think it's time to compete. I think it's time for E-Rate 2.0. The FCC has a rule-making proceeding under way to reboot and recharge the E-Rate program. I think we need to make it a high priority.

I think we need to find ways to bring 100 megabits to all schools in the near term, and one gigabit to all schools in the long term. While we're at it, we must find ways to reduce the bureaucracy of this program and make it easier for small and rural schools to participate.

Second, I want to talk about a number all of us know by heart, but none of us ever hopes to use. I want to talk about 9-1-1. In my time at the FCC, I have visited 9-1-1 call centers all across the country. I am always struck by the steely calm of those who answer the phones and help ensure that help is on the way.

I am also struck by how many emergency calls now come in from wireless phones. In fact, nationwide more than 70 percent of calls made to 9-1-1 are made from wireless phones. That is more than 400,000 calls per day. Now, if you use your wireless phone to call 9- 1-1 from outdoors, your location is reported, sometimes to within 50 meters under FCC location accuracy standards. But if you use your wireless phone to call 9-1-1 from indoors, you better cross your fingers because no FCC location accuracy standards apply.

I think this is an unacceptable gap in public safety communications. It deserves your attention and ours. Because no matter where you are when you call 9-1-1, you want first responders to find you. Moreover, as our networks evolve and the ways we use them change, we must make sure our public safety policies keep pace. In fact, our approaches to networks both wired and wireless need to evolve as markets evolve.

But in our efforts, we must not lose sight of why networks matter, because they can do more than connect us. They can strengthen education and enhance our security, and of course, grow our economy in new and exciting ways.

Thank you. I look forward to answering any questions you might have.

WALDEN: Commissioner Rosenworcel, thank you for your work and your testimony and your suggestions.

We go now to Commissioner Pai. Thank you for being here and thank you for all the work you've been doing. And please go ahead with your opening statement.

PAI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Walden, Ranking Member Eshoo, members of the subcommittee, thank you for holding this hearing.

It has been exactly one year since I last appeared before you and much has happened in the time since. Most notably, we have lost two colleagues and we have gained two new ones. Chairman

Wheeler and Commissioner O'Rielly have gotten off to strong starts and I am pleased that we are finally back at full strength.

Over the past year, we have made progress in a number of different areas, but there is much more to be done. This morning, I will touch on two of the issues that I find most pressing: the incentive auction and E-Rate reform. A fuller list of FCC priorities from cable forbearance to AM radio is detailed in my written testimony.

First, the incentive auction. Perhaps the most daunting challenge the commission faces is the looming spectrum crunch. To meet this challenges, we are focused on implementing the responsibilities that Congress gave us in the Spectrum Act, especially with respect to the broadcast incentive auction.

The incentive auction is the commission's best chance to push a large amount of spectrum, well suited for mobile broadband, into the commercial marketplace. I support Chairman Wheeler's recent announcement setting the middle of 2015 as our new target. It is more important to get the incentive auction done right than it is to get it done right now.

If, for example, any part of our software were to fail during the incentive auction, like another government website that shall not be named, the commission by law would not get a second bite at the apple. My greatest worry about the incentive auction, however, is not with the technology. It is about participation. In order for the incentive auction to be successful, we will need robust participation by both broadcasters and wireless carriers. So the commission must avoid choices that will deter participation in both the reverse auction and the forward auction.

For the reverse auction, prices paid to broadcasters should be determined by the market, not set by administrative fiat. Any attempt to restrict payments to broadcasters, including a complicated scoring scheme, will deter broadcaster participation and risk causing the incentive auction to fail.

For the forward auction, the commission should not limit carriers' ability to participate, such as by setting a spectrum cap or narrowing the spectrum screen. This would result in less spectrum for mobile broadband and less revenue to fund national priorities that this committee has identified, and a greater chance of a failed auction.

Another issue that will impact participation in the forward auction is the size of the geographic licenses to be offered. Our NPRM proposed using economic areas, but some argue that this would make it too difficult for smaller carrier to participate in the auction. Our goal should be to allow as many carriers as possible to bid, whether they be nationwide, regional or rural.

So I am pleased to see alternative proposals for license sizes, such as the newly coined partial economic areas. If technically feasible, these proposals deserve serious consideration.

Aside from the incentive auction, there are many other opportunities when it comes to spectrum, from the H block auction next month to the possible clearing of AWS-3, to the greater unlicensed use in the 5 gigahertz band. Consistent with my all-of-the-above approach, I hope we seize all of these opportunities in the near term.

The second issue I will discuss is the Universal Service Fund's schools and libraries program, better known as E-Rate. In many ways, E-Rate has been a success, as my colleague has pointed out. But it also has had difficulties. The funding process can stretch for years. Many schools and libraries feel compelled to hire outside consultants to handle all the complexities. Others don't bother applying at all.

Services like paging are prioritized over services like connecting classrooms. And there's no meaningful transparency into either the amount or the impact of E-Rate spending.

To solve these problems, I've proposed a student-centered E-Rate program. This means an up front allocation of funding and a matching requirement, so that applicants know how much money they

can spend and have greater incentives to spend that money wisely. This means simplifying the application process. This means targeting funding at next-generation technologies, while still letting local schools set their own priorities. And this means making all funding and spending decisions accessible on a central website that everyone can see.

In its first year, a student-centered approach would provide an extra $1 billion for next-generation services, all without collecting an extra dime from the American people. Accordingly, I believe it would be premature to increase the program's budget. And under no circumstances should we do so without finding corresponding savings in other parts of the Universal Service Fund.

We cannot ask Americans to pay even more in their monthly phone bills, especially when median household income in this country is now lower than it was in 2007.

Thank you once again to Chairman Walden and Ranking Member Eshoo for holding this hearing. I look forward to answering your questions and continuing to work with you and my colleagues in months to come.

WALDEN: Thank you, Commissioner Pai. We appreciate your thoughtful testimony and your recommendations.

We'll now go to Commissioner O'Rielly. Welcome aboard the Federal Communications Commission. Welcome back before this committee. And you know how the rules work, so please go ahead and again thank you for being here today.

O'RIELLY: Thank you to the chairman and ranking member and members of the subcommittee.

In respect of the time of the subcommittee members, I'd like to make five points and then move on to answer your questions.

Point one, I'm truly honored to be before the subcommittee. I had the pleasure of working on the full committee staff for eight years and it was one of the greatest jobs I'll ever have. The breadth of knowledge and command of the diverse policy issues by the members of this committee are of the highest quality.

Point two, the FCC is an independent agency, not part of the executive branch. It was created by Congress and served to implement the statutes enacted by Congress. I firmly believe that our role is to follow the statute as written and not substitute our thoughts for your work. The commission has no right or authority to ignore the statute or statutory deadlines. Thankfully, I've worked on most communications policy statutes over the last 20 years and have first- hand knowledge of the intent behind many key provisions.

Point three, the commission has difficult, but exciting work ahead. If done correctly, it can have a significant positive impact on U.S. domestic product and on national productivity. Our communications companies are extremely important to the U.S. economy and we must allow them to flourish in the world marketplace. The commission's overall focus, however, must remain on the consumer.

Point four, in terms of specific items, my particular focus and attention will be on the immediate work before the commission. In the big picture, the FCC must finish rules for the incentive auctions, continue USF reform, proceed with the I.P. transition trials, and complete our media ownership proceedings.

Point five, part of the role of a FCC commissioner is to conduct outreach and provide information to the public. I take this function seriously and it's why I'm choosing to spend sometime on the issue of distracted driving caused by wireless device users. Drivers need to put away their wireless phones and focus their eyes on the drive.

Let me be clear. My view is the wireless industry is doing yeoman's work to get out the message. They're aware of the problem. They are dedicated considerable resources to finding solutions and education, and they're working hard to prevent the horrible tragedies by texting, viewing, e-mailing, tweeting, mapping, posting, among others, while driving.

It does not appear that more government regulation would be helpful in this space. Instead, I'm talking to my other colleagues to find ways to use our voice in non-regulatory, non-costly ways to educate the public and prevent senseless accidents.

Thank you.

WALDEN: You win the prize -- two minutes and 37 seconds, return.

O'RIELLY: I'm familiar with this committee very well.

(LAUGHTER)

WALDEN: Yes, indeed. Some will learn along the way.

(LAUGHTER)

We appreciate all your testimony and your recommendations. And it's just good to have all five commissioners in place, or four commissioners and chair in place. As Commissioner Pai said, it has been a year to the day, I think, since we had the commissioners here. So welcome aboard.

I know we all have a lot of questions. I'm going to -- I learned at the heels of the former chairman, Mr. Dingell, about trying to get answers at a relatively rapid rate. So I'm going to try and pose some of these, not as skillfully as he does in a yes or no format, but to the extent to which you can address them rapidly, that would be good.

And I want to start, Mr. Wheeler, with you as chairman. I know you all are voting on this NPRM today. I do want to stress it would be helpful if the public got to see that. As far as I know, you and your staffs are the only ones who see it in advance. That's one of the process issues I hope you'll break through and this maybe will be the last NPRM that's not public first.

But the commission's -- I want to follow up and figure out how you're going to permit, as your testimony indicates, airlines to choose whether to allow voice calls. And here's why I ask it. Is the commission planning to waive either the common carrier obligation to complete calls, or the net neutrality rules on blocking (inaudible) packets. Both would seem to be necessary in order to prevent voice calling from aircraft.

WHEELER: So, thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, first, to your point that -- that the MPRM that we are considering today will be complete in listing the rule -- the words of the rule...

WALDEN: Right.

WHEELER: ... that we are considering. That in -- in light with the philosophy that...

WALDEN: Thank you.

WHEELER: ... you and I share, which is, let's get it out there...

WALDEN: Right.

WHEELER: ... so that people can see it.

The purpose of this is to do just that, to put the language out so people can see it and give us their comments on it.

Now, to your specific question -- the -- the open Internet order specifically provides what's called the premises exemption. And that means that coffee shops, book stores and airlines mentioned by name are exempt from the order in that, under the definition of reasonable network management, which is one of the tools that are allowed, for premises owners -- which include airlines -- there is the ability to pick and choose exactly what comes over.

WALDEN: All right. We'll follow up more on the other piece that you might have to deal with, as well.

I want to ask you about Title 2. You've had a -- you haven't, but there's been a preceding open at the Commission for a long time that would -- the reclassification docket. Are you planning to keep that open, or are you planning to close it?

WHEELER: So, I think we're in a situation right now where we're waiting for a court opinion on exactly what our authorities are on a broad sense. And that there is no rush between now and then to make a decision on Title 2.

I will note, however, that, as you mentioned, this docket has been open for a long time. And it has not had the threatened chilling effect that some have worried about on investment in wireless and broadband infrastructure. This is an -- this is an issue that clearly is going to have to be dealt with, and we'll start with the court decision.

WALDEN: I've got about three more questions I want to try and get in here.

We understand the FCC's launched a study -- a multimarket study of critical information needs. Apparently, this study includes a qualitative media analysis, which would require interviewing reporters and editors to figure out how the media decides what news stories to run. Are these the kinds of questions that government entities should be asking of the news media? And with somebody with a journalism degree, I do get a little chill up my spine thinking about the government asking how these decisions are made.

Doesn't it have an effect on the -- doesn't it have an effect on the media that the regulatory body is even asking these questions? And how does it help you fulfill your Section 257 mandate, on which it's predicated?

WHEELER: So, I think this goes back to the root of the discussion you and I were having a moment about -- about making sure that the public understand what's going on.

The 257 requirement mandates lowering barriers to access to media for minorities, women, small business and other identified groups.

In order to make that kind of a judgment, you have to have facts. In order to have facts, you do studies. And what we did was, there is a study that has been proposed by a consulting firm that we were working with. And we put that out for public notice to exactly get the kind of input...

WALDEN: All right.

WHEELER: ... that you're suggesting.

WALDEN: All right, I...

WHEELER: And -- but it's not -- and this is -- I -- this is not an effort to influence the media. It...

WALDEN: I'm going to interrupt you just a second, because when you're spending somewhere between $209,918 -- and some of the questions of the media personnel include, "What's the news philosophy of the station?," "Who decides what stories are covered?," "What are the demographics of news management staff?," "Have you ever suggested coverage of what you consider to be a story with critical information of what consumers used?," "What was the reason given for the decision?"

These seem like really internal journalistic issues. Now, I -- I need to move on to one other, 'cause I'm actually over, but it's a very important question.

The quant -- quantile regression analysis -- QRA -- approach to providing universal support for rural companies -- that was part of the commission's U.S. (ph) reform efforts -- has had a negative impact -- negative impact on investment and the deployment of broadband services in rural America.

Commissioner Pai, you've been an advocate for the need to address this problem to ensure that rural Americans are not left behind. What do you recommend, Commissioner Pai, needs to be done with regard to the application of the QRA?

PAI: I thank you for the question, Mr. Chairman.

I've seen the problems on paper. The Obama administration's Department of Agriculture, for example, reported to us earlier this year that some 37 percent of funds from RUS are sitting on the table because there is so much uncertainty among rural carriers. And I've seen it in person from my home state of Kansas to carriers in rural Alaska, Because they are uncertain about what the future portends because of the QRA, they are not making additional investments in terms of broadband. And that creates a digital slide that we won't be able to bridge.

WALDEN: So, Chairman Wheeler, if I might, given the -- negative impact of the QRA -- that it's having on broadband development, especially in rural America, do you intend to reconsider its application?

WHEELER: Yes. As a matter of fact, I have asked the bureau to draft, and let me see, what an order that I could share with my colleagues would be to eliminate the QRA, and to return to the high- cost loop support model.

WALDEN: I appreciate that.

I've got other issues, obviously, with the F.M. translators for A.M., and delay in the rulemaking, dealing with cable operators and the groups utilized by them. And so, maybe we can follow up afterwards, but the committee's been kind to let me over-extend my questioning. But we're usually fairly flexible on that here.

So, now, I'll turn it over to the ranking member from California, Ms. Eshoo.

ESHOO: That's great. So, I have seven minutes, right, Mr. Chairman?

(LAUGHTER)

Mr. Chairman, you said that it's your 39th day. What I'd like to add to that is that I think your adult lifetime of work has brought you to this. So, it's not just your -- really, your 39th day.

WHEELER: That's been a long lifetime at this.

ESHOO: It's a -- it's a -- it's a wonderful path that has prepared you for this position.

I have a whole list of -- of niche issues, which is really the way we deal with all of these things.

First of all, do you think you're going to get a deal on cell phones unlocking by the end of this year?

WHEELER: I hope that we will be presenting to the commission today -- as a matter of fact, I know that we will be presenting to the commission today -- the voluntary agreement that has been reached with the wireless industry. And so, the answer to your question is strongly yes.

ESHOO: That's just terrific.

My second question to you, Mr. Chairman, is last week, as you know, I joined with my colleagues, Representatives Doyle and Matsui, to ask you to take action to prevent AT&T from implementing the significant rate hike for their special access customers. I appreciate what you have done in terms of the suspension, but I think that there's much more that needs to be done on special access reform.

Can we expect further action on special access reform?

WHEELER: I -- I -- I apologize, Ms. Eshoo, but I am currently recused...

ESHOO: OK.

WHEELER: ... from that proceeding, and so I...

ESHOO: I see.

So, how will it happen?

WHEELER: It's -- it moves ahead with the other members of the -- of the commission.

ESHOO: I see. Well, I'm just going to assume that they're going to -- that this area is going to be examined. Because we really have to have a -- reasonable rates for -- for this important service.

On -- Commissioner Rosenworcel, thank you for your testimony. I love the way you present things. It's so clear. You can feel the sense of urgency and why it's urgent.

How are you going to pursue getting this done at the commission? The whole issue of E-Rate, everything that's attached to it. You presented an eloquent case. And I think that -- that you gave a fantastic speech last week on -- on 911 and the problems that we have between indoor and outdoor.

So, on both that and the E-Rate -- maybe I should be asking the chairman what he plans to do on E-Rate. I know what you want to do. But maybe we should just switch over to Chairman Wheeler?

WHEELER: Well, I think on -- on E-Rate, that there is a leader in this commission. And that Commissioner...

ESHOO: We only need five.

WHEELER: Huh?

ESHOO: We only need five.

WHEELER: They -- they -- but I'm -- I -- as you all say, I would like to associate myself with the remarks of...

ESHOO: Good, good.

WHEELER: ... Mr. Rosenworcel.

ESHOO: Well, we'll look forward to you joining her in that effort. And maybe the next time the commission comes before us, you can tell us the steps that you're going to take.

On the -- on...

WHEELER: Let me -- if I can do one thing -- I am -- we are going to put out a schedule, just like we have for the incentive auction and the I.T. transition, to address this issue.

ESHOO: That's terrific.

On the challenge of the -- the indoor versus outdoor, and wireless, and 911, what's your plan to address this?

ROSENWORCEL: Well, as the old saying goes, you may only make one 911 call in your life, but it will be the most important call...

ESHOO: Right.

ROSENWORCEL: ... you ever make. And right now, if you make that call from your wire line phone, your first responder knows exactly where you are.

ESHOO: Right.

ROSENWORCEL: You make that call outdoors, in a field, using your wireless phone, we have location accuracy standards so that first responder can find you.

ESHOO: I'm asking what you want to do about where the challenge lies.

ROSENWORCEL: So...

ESHOO: We know it's working.

ROSENWORCEL: ... indoors...

ESHOO: Mm-hmm.

ROSENWORCEL: ... is the problem. We have no standards. And increasingly, households are cutting the cord. More than one third of households rely exclusively on their wireless phones. So, I don't think it's acceptable that when people make emergency calls, first responders can't find them.

I've recommended in that speech that you mentioned, that we start a rulemaking to address this. Because we've heard both from carriers...

ESHOO: Mm-hmm.

ROSENWORCEL: ... and from public safety officials on the front line that this is an issue that...

ESHOO: Well, good for you for identifying this and taking it up. Because I think one of the things that I taught my children from their earliest memory was, 911, and putting their little fingers on the keypad so that they would understand that.

ROSENWORCEL: Me, too.

ESHOO: And I think that you're absolutely right.

On -- Commissioner Pai, you made a wonderful comment -- something about not one dime more on phone bills.

I want to raise something with the -- with the -- with the chairman, going back to it, about below-the-line fees. Representatives Doyle, **Lujan,** Matheson, myself -- we wrote to the -- our nation's leading wire -- wireless and wireline providers, and we asked them about their practice of applying below-the-line fees on monthly bills.

I agree with Commissioner Pai. That's why I -- you know, we wrote. We have a concern about what people are paying. These things are hidden. They think that they're -- they think everything on their bill is a tax. And I have to tell you, I brought my bills in. I couldn't tell what the heck they were, who was doing what to whom, and what it was for.

So, tell me what you think the agency, or if you have -- I know there's a long list of big challenges. But these are still important issues for consumers.

What steps can the agency take under existing statute to ensure that consumers know exactly how much they're paying each month, especially prior to signing up for their service. And this whole issue of below-the-line fees.

WHEELER (?): Yeah, this -- Ms. Eshoo, this is a -- a very legitimate concern. The specific one I believe you're referencing is a re-transmission consent...

ESHOO: That too.

WHEELER (?): ... be charged -- that cable operators have just begun putting on the bill.

ESHOO: Right.

WHEELER (?): And -- and I say just begun. And I'm trying to get our arms around that and figure out just exactly what our authorities are to answer your question.

It -- it does, however, strike me that it fits right in the broader issues that the chairman and Mr. Upton and others have talked about in terms of the kinds of issues that need to be addressed in a Telecom Act re-write here, is just what is going on.

ESHOO: Yeah, but that will be like seven years from now.

WHEELER (?): If all of the sudden -- well, no -- but I -- I think that...

WALDEN: Oh no.

ESHOO: Oh well, well.

(LAUGHTER)

WALDEN: I won't speak.

ESHOO: Let's see.

WALDEN: I won't get cross-wise between you and the chairman.

ESHOO: OK. Yeah, oh no.

Thank you. That you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, Chairman Walden.

WALDEN (?): Thank you.

ESHOO: And thank you to the entire commission.

I wanna say also, a welcome to the whole new team that has come in. And we wish you well, we really do. And the chairman and the commission will operate at a higher level because of the high level of people that have come in to support the works. So congratulations to each one of you.

WALDEN: We now move on to the vice chair of the full -- of the subcommittee, Mr. Latta from Ohio for five minutes.

LATTA: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, again, thanks very much for our commission members for being with us today.

And this question I would like to ask all of you. And this question is the incentive auction legislation prohibits the FCC from excluding qualified bidders from the auction.

Unfortunately while the incentive auction process works its way up to the commission, it appears that the wireless bureau is simultaneously working on the spectrum aggregation docket to achieve the de facto of (ph) spectrum caps.

Will you commit to -- to allowing any interested bidder that complies with the statutory requirements to participate fully in the auction? And, Chairman, if I could start with you? Because I notice in your -- in your testimony, page six that, you know, you talk about the incentive auction, you had said that you're looking at voluntary market oriented approach. So if I could start with you.

WHEELER: The statute is quite explicit in that regard that the commission may not exclude somebody from participating.

LATTA: Also on just aggregating, so it would be like -- it would be wide open for everyone to be involved in that?

WHEELER: Well, it's interesting, what's been developing here, I mean, the -- the CEO of the AT&T recently came out with a statement saying, "Wait a minute, I -- I think I would like to have rules to make sure that not one party can run away with all the spectrum."

So I think that in between those positions is -- is where -- a reality exist. But the statute, I agree, is quite clear.

The statute says that -- that you would not exclude anybody and the statute also says that the commission will design an auction so as to promote economic opportunity and competition and consumer choice to sustain a healthy wireless marketplace. And we'll do both.

LATTA: Madam Clyburn?

CLYBURN: Yes, Section 64:04 is clear that any party that abides -- obeys the rules, that they are qualified to participate. It also makes clear that the commission has the authority to enforce and introduce general -- rules of general applicability that will allow for spectrum aggregation in order to promote competition.

So again, my colleague mentioned that, you know, part of the reason for -- I think, for some of the robust participation and -- and the type of ideas that we're seeing it's because we took a dual path. On the same day we released the rules, or recent -- release the notice of oppose rule making on incentive auction, we also released a notice of propose rule-makings on trying to glean information about this dual path.

So I -- I think that this, in the long run, will help and improve our information -- information dissemination and acquisition and -- and rule-making once we decide on -- on a clear path forward.

LATTA: Thank you.

Commissioner?

ROSENWORCEL: The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act says that we can have rules of general applicability, but we cannot exclude anyone from participation in the auction. I think it's easy and simple, we just have to follow the law.

LATTA: Commissioner Pai?

PAI: I would agree with my colleague and I would also point out that if you look at the end goal which is to have a successful auction that pushes out a lot of spectrum, it yields sufficient revenue to fund national priorities, and that provides a fairness to all parties involved, then we should not,

preclusively, deter participation from wireless carriers by -- in adopting unduly strict spectrum policies.

LATTA: Commissioner O'Rielly?

O'RIELLY: I wanna thank my colleagues for say -- stating that the statute is clear because as many people who worked on it, it was a -- an effort to give the commission some authority in this space when members couldn't come to agreement.

I'm extremely hesitant to impose limitations on Spectrum Act, because we have certain obligations under the statute otherwise. We -- in a nice way, I -- I mean, the money has already been spent.

We have already spent the -- the money from the Spectrum Act and so we have obligations to provide $7 billion for FirstNet and we have deficit reduction numbers that -- that have already gone out the door.

So I'm worried about anything that would depress auction revenues. I'm -- I'm certainly aware of the statute and I want to remain open to considering but I'm -- I'm hesitant at this time to impose any type of limitation.

LATTA: Thank you. And many of you know that Roll Call completion has been an ongoing issue in my district. And I commend the FCC for producing the November 8 order and further notice propose rule-making to improve the commission's ability to monitor the delivery of calls to rural areas by mandating certain recording retention and recording requirements from carriers.

And Commissioner Pai, do you believe the November 8 order will resolve the Call completion problem, or does more need to be done?

PAI: Well, Congressman, I certainly hope that it will, whether it's in Toledo or Topeka, we need to figure out where the kink in the system is, whether it is in our media providers, whether it's the Last Mile (ph), what point of the network is failing.

And then, if it's a technical problem, then we can take steps to fix that technical problem. But if (inaudible) then the FCC needs to be empowered to take corrective action. So I certainly support taking the appropriate action soon, rather than later on (inaudible).

LATTA: Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, I see my time has expired and I yield back.

WALDEN: Thank the gentleman. We now turn to the ranking member of the full committee, Mr. Waxman, for five minutes.

WAXMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, I just want to indicate that under the act, the FCC may not single out a specific provider for exclusion from a system of competitive bidding.

At the same time, the FCC is permitted to adopt and enforce rules of general applicability that promote competition. Even AT&T recently acknowledged they would support rules that limit the amount of spectrum any one company could acquire as long as the rules applied evenly to all auction participants.

Chairman Wheeler, as you know I'm a strong supporter of the FCC's open Internet rules, because I believe the Internet must remain an open platform for innovation and commerce.

You've emphasized the importance of the open -- open Internet order, at the same time, you recently made comments suggesting that an Internet service provider could charge a content provider, such as Netflix, a fee, in order to guarantee the best available transmission speed.

Do you see these type of business arrangements as consistent with the FCC's open Internet rules that you support?

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Waxman for -- for raising that issue because it gives me an opportunity to get more specific than I was in Ohio.

I am a strong supporter of the open Internet rules, full stop. The rules were written in such a way as to envision opportunities for innovation and experimentation and to impose on them a balance between protecting the open Internet, protecting consumers and stimulating innovation.

New ideas, under the -- under the open Internet order, new ideas such as those you've referenced in a wireless environment, particularly, are not prohibited. But there is a clear responsibility for the commission to make sure that what takes place does not interfere with Internet access, is not anti-competitive and does not provide preferential treatment. And we will enforce that. We -- we will maintain the balance between innovation and assuring there is an open Internet.

WAXMAN: I appreciate your expanding on that issue.

While, network infrastructure and technology have changed since the passage of the 1996 Telecommunications Act, the values embedded in the act have not.

And Mr. Chairman, I know the commission will soon begin a process to collect real-world information and data on the I.P. transitions. How will the commission continue to advance the long standing goals of competition, universal access and consumer protection throughout this transition process?

WHEELER: You know, Mr. Waxman, there are many people who have described the -- the trials, the I.P. trials as -- as a technology trial. I -- I don't think they were technology trial.

We know how to build I.P. networks. They are exactly what you just raised, they're values trial. They are how do we make sure that the values that for 100 years, Americans have come to expect from their networks, continue even after the way in which that network operates changes.

That's what we're gonna be looking for in these trials. It's not whether the Gazintas and the Gazoutas work. We know that -- that can get taken care of. It is what are the values -- what -- what -- how do you preserve the values in the new technological environment.

WAXMAN: Commissioner Rosenworcel, do you wanna add anything to that.

ROSENWORCEL: I think -- I think there are so many exciting things that can come with new networks and I think we should embrace the future rather than reject it.

So I think experimenting in these kind of trials is the smart way to go. But as we move into the future, what we do has to be informed by the values that have always been a part communications policy.

And I see four, public safety, universal access, competition and consumer protection.

WAXMAN: Thank you.

Commissioner O'Rielly, I appreciate your appeal to bipartisanship in your testimony. I know you played an important role in helping us get this bipartisan legislation in the passage of the Public Safety and Spectrum Act last year, because you helped negotiate the provisions in the availability of unlicensed spectrum in the broadcast incentive auction.

What's your perspective on unlicensed spectrum generally? And do you think the commission is on the right track in balancing the availability of unlicensed and licensed bands?

O'RIELLY: Yes, I'm a strong proponent of unlicensed spectrum. I'm always amazed at what the innovators and the experimenters can do with unlicensed spectrum. I think there's great opportunity in the 600 megahertz for more unlicensed spectrum. The NPRM that was put out in this situation

proposed a number of different ideas where unlicensed could fit. They proposed channel 37, the guard bands -- if there are going to be guard bands, depending on what our band plan looks like.

We talked about wireless microphones. There's going to be still white space, at least in the 500, maybe in the 600 as well. And then there's going to be residual conversions depending if you're talking about converting from six megahertz broadcast channels to five megahertz wireless channels.

So, there should be opportunities in the incentive auction after our rules are complete for unlicensed spectrum. And I'm strongly supportive of those. The only difficulty is figuring out how big those guard bands should be.

WAXMAN: OK. Thank you.

And my last question is to Commissioner Pai. You stated in your testimony that 92 percent of Americans now can choose from 10 or more wire-line competitors. If that number is accurate, doesn't it demonstrate that the pro-competitive policies of the '96 Telecom Act are working? And don't you believe we should continue to support a marketplace that gives non-incumbents a fair chance to compete?

PAI: Congressman Waxman, thank you for the question.

I think what the multiplicity of choices that consumers enjoy today demonstrates is that an I.P. environment where you have -- conversion is something that we only dreamed about during the '96 act, where you have telephone companies competing with cable companies, competing with wireless companies and others to provide the same services, that we can now rely in a way we could not in 1996 on the marketplace and technological innovation to drive consumer choice.

And so to the extent that there are values of competition embedded in the 1996 act, I of course embrace those. But I think we also need to be mindful of the fact that technology can quite often out-pace where laws and regulations are. And that appears to be where we are with respect to the I.P. ...

(CROSSTALK)

WAXMAN: But do you think we should support a marketplace that gives non-incumbents a fair chance to compete?

PAI: Oh, absolutely. I think the marketplace should give every competitor a fair chance to compete.

WAXMAN: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: I now turn to the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. Rogers.

ROGERS: Thank you very much. And as the representative of Michigan State University, I want to say thank you for giving me a great weekend.

(LAUGHTER)

I do find it suspicious, however, that my phone has not worked since the game. I wonder if you might be looking into that for me, Mr. Chairman.

(LAUGHTER)

The FCC's recent Communications, Security, Reliability and Interoperability Council meeting, I understand you talked about the need to apply metrics and evaluate cybersecurity. Can you elaborate on that for me?

WHEELER: Yeah, the CSRIC, which is the shorthand for the group you're talking about, has done a terrific job in using the multi- stakeholder process to come up with rules on botnets, on DNSSEC, on router security -- important kinds of network security issues. But it's not enough just to say, "OK, here are the rules," and then walk away. The question is: Are the rules working?

And so what I've asked CSRIC to do, not for us to impose, but in the multi-stakeholder process, is to say, "How do you establish metrics to know if this is working?" Because that's the -- you know, this is the trust-but-verify kind of a situation.

ROGERS: Well, how do you find those -- how are they -- how are you working through that process to define metrics in threats that change literally by the hour?

WHEELER: But -- so on those three issues, for instance, on botnets, for instance, how can you track the movement of where botnets are going? They seem to have moved into data centers, for instance. And what do we know about that and what might that suggest. And -- and what are we seeing in terms of -- of results of the implementation of the kinds of things that CSRIC has suggested.

That's what we need to know.

ROGERS: So, and if you find that out and you find that you are in some disagreement with industry on meeting those standards, do you foresee a regulatory scheme?

WHEELER: Well, I wouldn't want to, you know, to presume a hypothetical. I would hope that we would be working with industry to identify what needs to be done. And much like we are going to announce today on cell phone unlocking, when we sat with industry and said, "Here's a problem, it's got to be solved." And by the way, we'll have metrics on that.

I think that's the preferable first approach and that's the approach that we're taking with CSRIC.

ROGERS: But when you say that, does that -- does that mean -- if I hear you correctly, that means you're at least contemplating a regulatory scheme of some sort beyond just the voluntary "here's our metrics; try to...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: That's the right question, but it's not -- the key word is "contemplating." I've talked repeatedly about what I called the "seesaw" -- the regulatory seesaw: You do this; we don't need to do this.

And so what CSRIC is doing is saying: "OK, here are the kinds of things that need to be done." I said, "Let's measure them (inaudible), because the result is that we don't." If the seesaw has to tip, it has to tip, but it only tips on the basis of need, not the basis of theory.

ROGERS: If I understood your answer right, there's a possibility you could regulate -- always a possibility. Sure. OK, we should have lots of conversations on that. I worry that by the time you process your regulatory framework, you're too late. You've missed the boat. The threat changes...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: I could not agree more. The challenge of networks and the reason why the multi-stakeholder process is preferred is because it is much more dynamic, much more flexible, moves much quicker than a regulatory process can. And then can stay flexible. And that's why I'm trying to say, "Yes, this is the preferred process to deal with it."

ROGERS: So you're not going to move away from the council.

WHEELER: I'm sorry?

ROGERS: You're not going to move away from the council model for regulation. You're going to continue to...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: The multi-stakeholder process on this is the right way to go.

ROGERS: Yes, perfect.

Can you talk about Team Telecom? It's an important complement to the CIFIUS process in terms of preventing investments or I.T. equipment purchases to prevent certainly a threat to our national security interests like Chinese attempts to gain control of I.T. and telecommunication nodes in the United States. Can you walk us through where you're at on that and give us an idea of what's your thinking?

WHEELER: Well, when issues come before the commission relative to mergers, acquisitions, whatever the case may be, the input from Team Telecom is always sought and taken into account, and is crucially important.

ROGERS: Do you see an improvement to that process? Can we do something different? You have a limited set of -- once that report comes back, you have a limited set of decisions you can make. You're either in, you're out or you disagree with the decision.

WHEELER: Correct.

ROGERS: Is there something better we should be doing there, providing some authority for you all to be -- given, again, the nature of the changing technology and how fast the changes...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: I would -- I -- I have not had to live through one of these yet, so I'm probably not qualified to opine here on the fly. I'd love to look into this and to have a discussion with you about it.

ROGERS: Super. We're looking at some reforms to CIFIUS to try to make sure we're keeping up and I look forward to dialogue...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: Great. I look forward to that.

ROGERS: Thank you very much for being here.

WALDEN: I thank the gentleman.

We now turn to committee chairman emeritus, Mr. Dingell, also from Michigan, I believe, for five minutes. Go ahead.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, I commend you for this very important hearing. And I have no comments on football or other matters.

(LAUGHTER)

I want to welcome my old friend Chairman Wheeler to the committee. We look forward to great things from you. I'm satisfied you will serve with distinction.

I want to also welcome Commissioner O'Rielly.

And I want to commend Commissioner Clyburn for her fine services as acting chairwoman. Quite frankly, your daddy would be very proud.

My questions this morning will be directed solely at Chairman Wheeler and will elicit, as you will not be surprised to hear, yes or no responses.

Chairman Wheeler, I'd like to start with the reverse auction of broadcast frequencies authorized by the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act. I note you recently announced that the commission will not conduct such an auction until 2015. That gives you an extra year.

In the meantime, do you expect to complete negotiations concerning the relocation of broadcast frequencies with Canada, Mexico and our border areas? Yes or no.

WHEELER: No, but I'm very hopeful that we will be able to move it forward. And as DTV showed, you don't have to have the signature on the page.

DINGELL: And you know -- you know that that can cause an awful lot of viewers to lose service and an awful lot of screens to go dark in our part of the country.

Chairman Wheeler, similarly, paragraph 15 of the commission's notice of proposed rulemaking for the incentive auction states, quote, "The commission expects interested parties will have an opportunity for meaningful comment on all specific repackaging methodologies it is considering before it makes a decision." Does the commission publicly commit to sharing with the public the broadcast frequency repacking methodology it adopts, as well as the variables and other inputs it may use to predict repackaging results? Yes or no.

WHEELER: I'll go beyond yes and say absolutely.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Chairman, let's move on to the forward auction of broadcast frequencies. Section 6403(c) of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act provides the commission may not grant licenses through forward auction, reassign or reallocate broadcast frequencies or remote spectrum usage rights unless it proceeds -- unless the proceeds of the forward auction are greater than the following three factors combined of, first, the total amount of compensation the commission must pay successful bidders in the reverse auction; the costs of conducting a forward auction; and the estimated costs for the commission to pay for broadcaster reallocations.

In addition, it is in the public interest that the commission ensure the auction raises a significant amount of money in order to help build out of the first debt (ph).

Together, these constitute a significant pressure on the commission to raise sufficient revenues to accomplish these objectives, do they not?

Yes or no?

WHEELER: Yes.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Chairman, at the end will the commission adopt transparent and simple rules to encourage participation by the broadest group of wireless providers in the forward auction? Yes or no?

WHEELER: Yes.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, it's -- let's focus our attention on intelligent transportation systems. This is of considerable importance to my part of the country and our principal industries, and the five gigahertz band.

Given that the commission licensed ITS almost 15 years ago, it is -- is it reasonable to say that it would be premature for the commission to authorize unlicensed use of the 5850-5925 megahertz

band before the studies are completed that confirm such use would not cause harmful interference with ITS services and other incumbent users. Yes or no?

WHEELER: Yes, and let me go further. We will not authorize if there's harmful interference.

DINGELL: I am very comforted that you are here this morning, Mr. Chairman.

Now, Chairman Wheeler, do you believe that the commission should approve unlicensed use of the 5850-5925 megahertz band before definitively establishing no risk of harmful interference with ITS systems or practical strategies to mitigate such risk? Yes or no.

WHEELER: No. And I repeat, we'll do nothing that causes harmful interference.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Chairman, ordinately (ph) is the commission considering moving forward with rulemaking opening up only the 5350 megahertz band for unlicensed use? Yes or no?

WHEELER: So this is where I need to just ask a question, sir. The answer is yes, if it is are we considering. The answer is no, if we have decided.

DINGELL: Now, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to commend you for your work in advancing the transition to I.P. based networks. Will the commission consider an order in January 2014 that will address geographic trials as well as how to protect in the best way consumers using I.P. based networks? Yes or no.

WHEELER: Yes.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, you have been most gracious to me, and I thank you for this. Mr. Chairman, your comments have been most enlightening and helpful. I want to thank you and the members of the commission for your presence and assistance to us this morning.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WALDEN: Thank you very much.

The gentleman yields back, and the chair now recognizes for five minutes Mr. Guthrie.

GUTHRIE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that.

Chairman Wheeler, and welcome to the FCC also.

Mr. O'Rielly (ph), let me say happy new year.

And, Commissioner Clyburn, again I echo the good work that you did in your -- your time as chairwoman.

But is -- there seems to be a lot of progress being made -- this is to Chairman Wheeler -- a lot of progress being made to free up the 1755-1780 hertz band for commercial use, megahertz band.

And I know the FCC has already sought comment on how this band should be used for commercial purposes.

Is the FCC on track to auction the 1755-1780 band, paired with the 2155-2180 band? And, if so, when will it occur?

WHEELER: So, the answer is yes, we are on track. There are some issues that still have to be worked out with NTI and DOD and -- and some other...

(CROSSTALK)

GUTHRIE: ... impediments...

WHEELER: But I think -- I'm sorry, what?

GUTHRIE: Are there some impediments that you can identify that are -- that -- you're on track, but you say there are some impediments.

WHEELER: I think these are just implementational kinds of things in -- in their agreement.

But to be specific to your question, I would hope that we could do it in the September time frame.

GUTHRIE: September time frame. Great.

Well, then, you've spent some time in the -- in the wireless industry, I know, and have seen firsthand how spectrum demand has grown exponentially. I realize that a lot of your short-term focus is on the incentive auction, on the 1755-1780 megahertz.

But, looking forward, what is the FCC doing to plan for future spectrum demand? And how can the FCC ensure that there continues to be a pipeline of new spectrum to satisfy what consumers want, the insatiable demand for band width anywhere, anytime?

So, looking, again, how do you plan for future spectrum demand beyond this? What kind of thoughts do you have beyond this...

WHEELER: Sure.

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: First, we say yea and verily to what you and Ms. Matsui have -- have done.

Applying the incentive auction concepts to government spectrum, I'm a believer that by the time that you peel everything away, it comes down to economics, no matter who you are.

GUTHRIE: Right.

WHEELER: And the economics of an agency where they can get cash to help them fulfill their mission is an important kind of decision they should make. And you've -- you've created, with Ms. Matsui, have created a structure where this can happen.

GUTHRIE: Well, we looked at that in our -- in our working group, and it just -- it's a lot of work for these agencies to do that. It's not something you can just wish away, as I learned more and more about it.

And I always say I didn't run around Kentucky saying, "Send me to Washington and I'll deliver you spectrum," and so you get -- you learn things when you get elected that you never thought you would deal with, that I found just fascinating, because, as I said, my consumers, my constituents, demand it. They want fast and -- the fast bandwidth.

WHEELER: But it's also interesting...

GUTHRIE: But it is true that we have to, we're looking at it just by law, by fiat, say you have to release spectrum. I mean, you could get numbers, well, it's gonna cost this, it's gonna cost that.

And so, it does give them a reason to go in and make this happen.

WHEELER: And the interesting thing is, so -- so I was involved in the negotiation for ADUMS 1 (ph), back in the year 2000. In the first negotiation with the Department of Defense.

And we kept saying to them, "but you're gonna get money." And they kept saying, "But we can't spend it, because it goes to the general treasury."

GUTHRIE: Right.

WHEELER: And so, what you have done is set up a structure to help compensate people. And the -- and the beauty of it is that what it does is that it -- creates a cash flow for them to be able to meet their new needs and to be able to upgrade their equipment.

And so, it's a winning situation all around.

GUTHRIE: I think -- Mrs. Matsui, I think yesterday you said win- win-win I think is -- it does for the consumers, for the agencies and for the taxpayers.

So beyond -- so the -- so in the future, what are you kind of looking at, do you think should happen, just for bandwidth and more spectrum as we move off -- move into the future?

WHEELER: I'm sorry, sir?

GUTHRIE: I mean, just as we move on into the -- beyond the immediate auctions and things, what other things do you think we can do to free spectrum?

WHEELER: Well, I think we have -- I mean -- so, first of all, we're constantly looking at how do you get the more efficient, most efficient use out of -- of the spectrum?

One of the more interesting things that we're going to be running a test on is what do you do with spectrum sharing, because there's probably -- not -- there is, in a digital world, the opportunity to -- to share spectrum. But our spectrum allocations were set up with analog assumptions.

And so, if we can share it, re-use it, it's a great opportunity, and we need to be pursuing that as well.

GUTHRIE: Yeah, a great metaphor that I always thought was -- you don't have any lane on a highway dedicated just for emergency vehicles. But when emergency vehicles come down the highway, people get out of the way.

And I think that's a great metaphor for that.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I yield back 15 seconds.

WALDEN: The chair recognizes the gentlelady from California for five minutes.

MATSUI: Thank you very much.

And let me just follow up on my partner's questions here.

I know back in the day, you were looking at the use of federal spectrum. And I think it's a concept now that has finally come to the point where we can actually do something about it.

And I believe that this is a way to really encourage the federal agencies to relinquish the noncritical spectrum. And as Congressman Guthrie says, it's not easy to do. But we worked with DOD, and when we made a lot of progress.

Now, I am also looking at what Commissioner Rosenworcel has also always said, about using the carrot-and-stick approach regarding the federal spectrum holders, and having them relinquish their spectrum.

Now, in your view, and I also want Chairman Wheeler to comment on this, too, are the financial incentives identified in the bill adequate to encourage federal agencies to relinquish noncritical spectrum?

And I think I'll go for you first, Chairman Wheeler.

WHEELER: I don't know the answer to that, because I haven't market tested it, you know. And I think that the -- is this enough incentive is a market test question.

So I'm gonna, with all due respect, punt.

What's important is the concept that has been developed. And it would seem to me that -- that once that concept is -- is codified, that then making sure that incentives are adequate is, frankly, the easier lift on the whole exercise.

MATSUI: Right. Thank you.

Commissioner Rosenworcel?

ROSENWORCEL: Thank you for the question.

I think, first of all, that the legislation that you and Congressman Guthrie have introduced is terrific. The demand on our airwaves is going up, and the supply of unencumbered spectrum is going down. It's time to be creative. This legislation is creative.

As far as the incentives go, I think it's a good starting point for conversation. Because right now, federal agencies, by some measures, have veto control over about 60 percent of our airwaves. They use their spectrum. They're mission focused, to protect our national defense, to keep our planes in the sky, to tell us what weather patterns are coming.

But they don't have structural incentives to be efficient with it. Your bill is the start of a conversation about how we should apply those incentives and if we get them right, we will have a catalyst for a lot more spectrum for new mobile broadband uses, which would be terrific thing for the economy.

MATSUI: Great. Thank you very much.

Chairman Wheeler, you've emphasized how important it is for you to lead the FCC in fact-based decision making.

In the five gigahertz proceeding, for example, this committee is looking to the FCC's engineering expertise to determine the conditions under which Wi-Fi could use a band in a way that protects the missions of federal systems and commercial systems.

How are you and your staff planning on responding to the challenge? And is this proceeding a priority for the commission?

WHEELER: So, as Commissioner O'Rielly said, I would associate myself with -- with his comment, that he's a strong supporter of -- of unlicense (ph).

The key, of course, is that you need to make sure that there's no harmful interference, as I discussed with Mr. Dingell. But I believe that if you take a look at the five gigahertz, and you look at block 1 -- NII 1 (ph). That we should be moving to ruling on that, which is something that Commissioner Pai has -- has often suggested. That when you look at -- at band two, which is DOD, and band four, which is ITS, that we have to address the questions that I was addressing with Mr. Dingell, and that is, to make sure there is no harmful interference, and there's nothing in the record that really gets to that at this point in time. But we need to build that record.

MATSUI: OK, fine. Thank you very much.

And I have to ask a broadband adoption question here. The FCC has, Chairman Wheeler, implemented broadband adoption pilots as part of the lifeline reform measures. Can you explain what the FCC plans to do here? And what is the goal of these pilot projects?

WHEELER: So, there are 14 projects that are taking place around the country that we're funding with some of the savings that we've had in other parts of the -- of the program. And we're going to be looking at, for instance, what is the impact of a lifeline-like subsidy on broadband adoption? And we're going to be looking at what are the kinds of training issues to help people understand what broadband can do for them, and the kinds of things that they can do, once they get on the Internet? Because those seem to go part and parcel. It's not just that you can access it, but also, that you can use it and you understand why you ought to be using it.

MATSUI: So, are you going to use this information (ph) to develop a responsible permanent broadband adoption program?

WHEELER: That's the goal. We're develop -- this is -- these are trials to inform our future actions. And broadband -- wireless broadband and broadband adoption are kind of the sine qua non of what the agency does.

MATSUI: I thank you.

I yield back my time.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back her time, and the chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas for five minutes.

BARTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to make a comment on the audience. This one's a lot bigger than the one upstairs with the joint hearing. And they seem to be more interested, too. So, I guess that's a...

(LAUGHTER)

... credit to this subcommittee and the -- and the FCC commissioners.

We have the NRCC commissioners -- not NRC -- NRC.

(LAUGHTER)

WALDEN (?): I think you need to be clear on that one.

BARTON: That would be news, wouldn't it? If Greg Walden was testifying upstairs?

Anyway, I just have one question.

The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act requires repackaging (ph) and auctioning of the 65 megahertz of spectrum in the low-powered TV stations, of which there are hundreds, if not thousands, are not guaranteed continued existence. But Chairman, this subcommittee and myself have a bill that we hope to introduce very soon.

While it doesn't guarantee them any additional rights, it does create, I hope, a pathway, so that they may continue to -- to exist.

As the new chairman of the commission, Mr. Wheeler, do you have any thoughts on what might be done to -- to give our low-powered TV industry a chance to continue to exist?

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Barton. Yes. And they probably fall in three -- three buckets.

One, there's been a lot of talk about following the statute. And -- and, as you point out, the statute says that LPTV translators are secondary services. We -- that's what the statute says.

Second is, we have actually opened a -- a public notice on the delivery of the content of LPTVs. How do we make sure that -- that the content -- and this ends up being more of a digital technology question than anything else. And how do you -- how do you use digital technology to get the content out? Because that's the consumer protection issue here -- to make sure the consumer gets the -- the content.

And then the -- the third point here is that there may be a safeguard in the reality that rural areas don't have that great demand for spectrum for wireless services to begin with. And so, they may be operating in areas where there will be less pressure to get spectrum. But we will find out as we go through this process.

BARTON: Mr. -- Commissioner O'Rielly, you're the new kid on the block, so to speak. You haven't had a chance publicly to comment on this issue. Do you have any thoughts about low-powered TV and what might be done to help them continue to exist?

O'RIELLY: Well, the chairman's right in the sense -- and you are right to introduce legislation and working for the members on the Spectrum Act. There was a decision made by the members to not protect low-power translators. And your legislation -- I would defer to your legislation to -- to whether they may resolve that.

You -- I know you and I had a chance to talk. I know some of the low-power representatives have argued it may be beneficial financially to the government to participate. I -- I'm not sure, and I don't know if it's accurate, but we have heard that argument, as well, and probably something we'd have to explore.

BARTON: That's my only question, Mr. Chairman. With that, I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back the balance of his time. And the chair now recognizes the gentleman from Utah for five minutes.

MATHESON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate all the commissioners taking the time to be here today. I think this is a very informative hearing.

First, Chairman Wheeler, in my city Utah, we have over 750 active translators that relay signals to many rural communities that rely on broadcast television to obtain their newscasts or public service announcements (ph) and entertainment.

Now, with the increased reliance on mobile data, there's no doubt that we need to take steps to move forward to making more spectrum available. I've heard concerns that the spectrum repackaging that could result in the incentive auctions could have a negative impact on those rural communities that tend to be more dependent on broadcast television. What steps is the FCC taking to protect these viewers from possible negative impacts?

WHEELER: Well, Congressman, the -- the -- the first issue is how threatened should they feel? And the fact that they are living in rural areas, where there is less of a demand for mobile spectrum may end up being a de facto shield for them.

Secondly is, as the statute says, this is a secondary service. It does not have protection. So, the question is, how do you protect consumers, as you're suggesting, who rely on it.

That's why we've had a public notice and are seeking comments on the question of how do you get what the translator or LPTV station does in terms of content out? And how does new technology fit into that, such as digital use of the airwaves, or whatever the case may be?

But this is clearly an issue where -- where we need to be focusing on what's the effect on the consumer, rather than what's the effect on the transmission need (ph). Because you have told us how we should look at that transition.

MATHESON: I appreciate that response.

There's been a lot of back and forth on how the incentive options should be structured. I think most would agree it's imperative we maximize participation, both with reverse auctions and the forward auctions. But, Chairman Wheeler, I was wondering, what do you see as the best way for us to maximize participation, and also, revenue for the federal government in both of those options?

WHEELER: You know, I -- before I took this job, I was in the business of doing business deals. And I think that's what we're talking about right here. This is a business transaction that someone who has a license needs to make it a business decision about. And -- and how do you do that? Well, I -- and what's our role.

First of all, we need to make sure that we're getting relevant information on a timely basis into the hands of those parties to make that decision. And that's why we've scheduled the -- the auction plan. We're saying in January, we're going to begin laying out exactly what that kind of information needs to be.

Secondly, I think it's incumbent on us to have an outreach program, in which we make sure that small and large broadcasters understand how the system -- how the program's going to work, what the economics could be, and maybe even begin to think in terms of what economic models might look like. Because at the end of the day, what we're really doing is, we're -- we're saying we want the marketplace to make a decision as to what is the highest and best use of spectrum. And the marketplace can't make that kind of decision until it's informed. So, it is incumbent on us to make sure that that kind of information is in a timely manner available to those, and to help with that process.

MATHESON: Commissioner Rosenworcel, I have a question for you about the ConnectEd program. You mentioned it briefly in your opening testimony. And you also mentioned that the current E-Rate program has some bureaucratic inefficiencies built into it right now.

What can the commission do to maximize efficiency to get more bang for the buck? What can you do with your existing authority, or what do you need for Congress to do to change it to also increase those efficiencies?

ROSENWORCEL: Thank you very much for the question.

I think this program is really important, and reinvigorating it is really important for education, infrastructure, and the economy.

I think we can do more with this program just as it is. As my colleague, Commissioner Pai, noted, we do subsidize a whole bunch of old-fashioned services right now. We should phase those out over time, and focus instead on capacity and bandwidth.

And, like you mentioned, we need to reduce bureaucracy. Bureaucracy gets in the way of small and often rural schools from participating in this program.

I'd like to see us encourage greater use of consortia to improve bulk buying power, and also, have multi-year applications to reduce the administrative burden on schools that do participate.

MATHESON: I appreciate that.

Mr. Chairman, I'll yield back.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back, and the chair now recognizes for five minutes the gentleman from Nebraska.

TERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And let me begin by thanking former Acting Chair Clyburn. And during your tenure as acting chair, you finished the low-power FM, and you guys did a wonderful job on it. You really did. And I want to thank all of you for that.

But former acting chair, just now Member Clyburn...

CLYBURN: The commissioner formerly known as...

(CROSSTALK)

(LAUGHTER)

TERRY: Yeah, that works. And you can have a sign for your name now.

But you were extremely communicative. I love the way you'd reach out to us. And frankly, you were so extraordinary, that I think every chairman, including the new one, should model themselves after that. We -- we don't -- it's very rare that we see that level of communication, so I just want to thank all of you.

This really is a great board. You guys are really serious about the real issues. And I like how you filter out the politics that surrounds all of this. Keep it up.

The next -- I know that the quantile regression analysis has already been discussed to some point, but I just want to let you know that that's been a long-time concern for me. I think some of the concerns that we had that it could actually displace or retard capital investment in rural America, when this is all about getting resources and capital into rural America because of its high cost. And so it really needs to be reviewed.

And Chairman Wheeler, I appreciate -- I've been told your comments on the record here today is that you understand this problem. I'll invite you and all the commissioners out to rural Nebraska. You land in my district and then we go there. But it really is becoming a problem. I have -- there's one provider in Diller, Nebraska that we have used as the model for responsible rural telecom because there are businesses there that now have high speed and they're using it to monetize their businesses there, where they truly are a worldwide business, not just the two blocks of Diller.

But there's a wind farm that they are having trouble -- the wind farm that wants to go there, that needs a broadband hookup and they're saying, "With our cap, we don't have the money; we aren't allowed to use that money in that way." So it's having serious effects. It's just not that one house that's 30 miles (inaudible) and, you know, line in and out. It's really hurting rural economic development. So I want (inaudible).

And then in my two minutes left, I want to ask the real question. And to Chairman Wheeler, and if either of the commissioners wish to step in, but I want to ask about a rule that concerns the video market. Many of us are worried that the price of cable subscriptions -- and I'll tell you that's an often and frequent call to my congressional office.

And the current market for video is seeing an expansion in the scope of current law wasn't necessarily intended to address; that the FCC has defined "buying group" of NVPDs for the purpose of program access rules in a way that excludes the NCTC, essentially the only buying group out there.

So, are there plans by the commission to look into this, to maybe change it? Do you think that the NCTC should be excluded from this process?

Chairman Wheeler?

WHEELER: Thank you, Mr. Terry.

I've just become aware of the issues that have been raised about this, and want to get all over it, and would ask that we be able to get back to you with what the answer is. We are now aware and will be dealing with it.

TERRY: Any of the commissioners have concerns about NCTC being excluded from this rule?

Hearing none, Mr. Pai, you actually had an expression.

(LAUGHTER)

PAI: No good expression goes unpunished.

(LAUGHTER)

No, I mean, I supported the notice that teed up a lot of the questions. And we teed up a lot of different questions (inaudible) paragraph 84 (inaudible) that order, out-lifted all the issues under consideration. And I look forward to working with Chairman Wheeler and my colleagues to ensure that the FCC takes the appropriate action to ensure that (inaudible).

TERRY: Right, and others nodded.

Mr. O'Rielly, also known as the new guy.

(CROSSTALK)

O'RIELLY: The new guy, yes. I would have to agree with Chairman Wheeler. I don't have as much information on this and I look to get up to speed on it, so I apologize that I don't.

TERRY: Yield back.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back the balance of his time.

And the chair now recognizes the gentleman from New Mexico for five minutes.

LUJAN: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

And Chairman Wheeler, welcome today; to all the commissioners, welcome.

Again, as we're announcing former positions and posts, Commissioner Clyburn, I know that you're very welcome here today. It's great to hear the recognition from my colleagues with your leadership and your work.

And I don't want to speak for former Public Utility Commissioner Ray Baum either, but I'm going to invoke his name a bit. It's good to have another fellow utility commissioner here and a leader. For those of you who aren't aware, myself and Ray served at the same time as utility commissions as Commissioner Clyburn. We had a chance to do some great things together. And it's great to have you again in that leadership capacity, Commissioner Clyburn.

Chairman Wheeler, I appreciate very much the conversation about quantile regression analysis. I think you'll see that there's many rural members of Congress or members that represent rural parts of America that are on this committee. As we look at this and encouraging investment in rural America, I hope that through all these deliberations and rulemaking, that we don't lose sight of the fact that if we can make a mobile call from an airline, that we should be able to make it anywhere in rural America.

And if technology is allowing for that to occur, I don't want to hear that we're not able to anymore. So thank you again for looking at this and making sure that rural America will not be left out, Mr. Chairman.

With that being said, I would also encourage and was encouraged by the fact that in a recent report, there was some conversation about the tribal coefficient and would encourage that that is critically important as we roll out the reevaluation of the QRA.

And lastly, I want to let you know that I'm planning on introducing a piece of legislation to include the elevation of the national tribal recognition of ONAP (ph) as a permanent office. And I would hope that we might be able to work with our colleagues to elevate that, (inaudible) reports directly to the chairman, especially with the evolution of what we're seeing with the extension of utilities across rural America, including tribal lands.

Mr. Chairman, I'm intrigued very much by the conversation around the I.P. transition. I think Chairman Rogers, chairman of the Intelligence Committee, was asking about the importance of security in networks, that we not lose sight of the fact of the importance of the protection of consumers and network security.

As we're looking forward into future technology, sometimes things that we've read about in fiction or we've seen in television. There's been a lot of concern recently about security of networks, about the infringement on individuals, peering eyes, if you will, sometimes into consumer information.

And I'm intrigued by your direction to move forward with real- world experiments that will be coming forward. I'd like your thoughts on anything that you're aware of or that the FCC may be looking at with laser-based quantum encryption, point-to-point work that's happening right now with our national labs. It's been written about.

I know it makes some people nervous, but it seems to me that as we're looking to protect consumer information and intellectual property, that the more advanced that we can make our networks with technology that's currently available, that we may take to the commercial marketplaces, is something that I'd like to encourage and see, and just like to get your thoughts on that.

WHEELER: I just learned quantum regression analysis, and now you want me to know laser-based quantum encryption?

LUJAN: Yes, sir.

(LAUGHTER)

WHEELER: I look forward to learning a lot about that. I don't mean to be light, but the -- the -- let me be specific on what I can comment on.

Our networks need to be secure, period. What I was trying to say to Mr. Rogers is that the best way for attacking that is through the multi-stakeholder process and moving with dispatch. Because the bad guys sure figure out a way to get around things and that we need to make sure that our responses are flexible.

We're working obviously with the president's executive order and the various steps that he is taking, or the executive agencies are taking in that regard. But I happen to believe that -- that two challenges of the I.P. transition is going to be the security of the networks and the privacy of the information.

And if you go back to the comment that I was making I believe to Mr. Waxman, about the trials need to be about measuring values, then we need to be addressing both of those issues inside that trial. And I look forward to learning more about how laser quantum can help the.

LUJAN: I appreciate it, Chairman.

And if I may, Mr. Chairman, you know, it wasn't too long ago that when the same idea was presented, that we may be able to move data over light and laser...

WHEELER: Right, exactly.

LUJAN: ... there were a lot of discouraging thoughts that were associated with that. But as we're moving now away from copper as a new medium, where even the ability to move data on fiber can't keep up with our processing speeds. If laser-based quantum encryption is good enough to keep national security secrets preserved, I would certainly hope that we find a way to extend these protections to consumers as well.

And again, with the real threats that are taking place with theft of intellectual property, right now we know that it works point to point, but there are ways to make this work with (inaudible) we have available.

This is a serious area that I have tried to take up with the Intelligence Committee. They were very cautious with their conversations with me until I presented them with publications that have talked about this in open source and an unclassified way.

So I'm hoping that we might be able to look into this more and have a serious attempt to incorporate this into our day-to-day lives.

Thanks again, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

WALDEN: The gentleman yields back.

And the chair now recognizes the gentleman from Colorado for five minutes.

GARDNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I want to commend all the commissioners for being here today, and congratulations on your new role and your newly retired-from role. Thank you for your service.

And Commissioner Pai, I want to thank you for your work on the quantile regression analysis, and the comments that you made at the beginning of your testimony, the question of Chairman Walden, I guess, was something that I have dealt with each and every day,

In a district bigger than the state of South Carolina, I have a number of rural telecom -- rural utilities that continue to face the uncertainty, as you have mentioned, about the QRA. And I appreciate it.

And so, Chairman Wheeler, thank you very much for your comments on that as well. I look forward to following up with you as those conversations and decisions move forward.

I wanted to ask a quick question to Commissioner Pai about the issue of connected (ph) and the E-Rate program .

Who is responsible for policing to make sure the E-Rate program is being used as it -- as appropriately, making sure there's no abuse of the program?

PAI: Congressman, thank you for the question.

In theory, the Universal Service Administrative Corp. or company (ph) overseen by us monitors it.

But in practice, given the limited resources that USAC has and given the limited resources the FCC has to oversee USAC, there's not a great deal of transparency and accountability in the system.

GARDNER: A question I had with that is two-fold. Number one, how do we ensure that there is no overlap of private sector service with E-Rate funding and programs, to make sure that we're not adding to government competition to the private sector.

But, number two, if USAC has identified a problem with a E-Rate contractor or recipient, is there a way to police or perhaps are there barment issues that you can talk about?

Because I know one of the issues in Colorado is that there has been a company that is involved and has been morphed into a new company that has had significant issues with E-Rate violations, and is now involved in an other company in Colorado that is providing services to schools.

PAI: Yes, USAC has taken actions to -- such as the type you've indicated. And, as well, the Department of Justice in appropriate cases can take action where it suspects that something fraudulent has occurred.

And I know that I'm quite sure I speak for my colleagues when I say that the FCC has no interest in doing anything but enforcing the rules against people who abuse the E-Rate system.

With respect to the first part of your question, I think it's critical as we think about reforming the E-Rate program in addition to restructuring the basic planks of it that we ensure that at the end of the day, we don't supply or use our E-Rate funds to supplant or add to the problems on competitors who've, you know, taken the risk and invested private capital into pulling (ph) networks.

GARDNER: Commissioner Rosenworcel, I know you talked this as well. I don't know if you have anything to add.

ROSENWORCEL: You know, I'd echo largely the sentiment of my colleague. We wouldn't want government funds to displace private sector funds. We want to be efficient with the limited dollars we have and make sure we reach as many schools at as high speed as possible, including in rural Colorado.

And with respect to oversight, we could always benefit from more oversight. When we find bad actors in a program we have to take efforts to get them out.

GARDNER: Great. Thank you.

And Commissioner -- or Chairman Wheeler, a question I have, and this is maybe something that you need to get back to me on, are you familiar with a report on a next-generation 911 that is being put together by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in connection with a blue ribbon panel that was convened by -- I'll get the name here -- the FCC's Communications Security, Reliability and Interoperability Council?

WHEELER: Right. That's CSRIC, yes,

GARDNER: CSRIC. Are you familiar with the report that is about to come out in January?

WHEELER: I am not familiar with the report that's about to come out.

GARDNER: There was a -- the blue ribbon panel that was put together...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: Right. I know taht...

(CROSSTALK)

GARDNER: Apparently there is a blue ribbon panel -- or the report is coming out in January. And there is some questionable findings in this report. And I would hope that perhaps the FCC, because I

believe some of the findings are not in line with FCC ideas at all. If you could take a look at that report before it's issued and public, to make sure that when we issue a report that has the stamped seal approval of the federal government that it's in line with FCC directives and beliefs...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: Consider that done.

GARDNER: Thank you very much.

And a final question in my time, regarding the I.P. transition issues. Heading in a good direction, but -- and there's significant strides being made to transition to I.P., but, you know, it's -- talking about rural America again, how do we further encourage this transition in a way that ensures consumers remain served in the long run, and particularly in rural America?

WHEELER: I'm sorry, that consumers be served in the long run?

GARDNER: In the long run, particularly in rural America.

WHEELER: Again, it is gonna be very important, for instance in these trials that we have trials in rural areas, to begin to answer those kind of questions.

I mean, you can't go to New York City or, you know, someplace like this and run a trial and say that it applies, you know, in the cities in your district.

And so, that's gonna be one of the criteria that we're looking at.

GARDNER: Thank you.

Yield back my time.

WALDEN: Thank you.

The gentleman yields back.

And the chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri for five minutes.

LONG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, Chairman Wheeler, I came to Congress with a 30-year background in the auction business, so that's how -- was my profession for 30 years before I got here, so I've got a great interest in any time that we try to conduct an auction for anything. And it's tricky to me about this reverse auction thing, because I'm not sure exactly how that's supposed to work.

But can you provide us with a timeline of actions that need to occur before the incentive auctions would begin?

WHEELER: Yes, sir. We're going to -- and we're gonna in January, which -- at next month's open meeting we're gonna have a presentation that is going to lay out both the timeline and the policy issues that need to be decided, and some recommendations on those.

Then in the spring we're going to be voting on an important order that solicits offers to do trials, sets up a measurement scheme for them, and begins to address the kinds of policy issues that will be tangential to all of that.

And then, we will go forth with trials.

LONG: Can you also tell me what the FCC is doing to ensure that the maximum amount of revenue will be generated through these auctions, which was always a concern of mine as an auctioneer?

WHEELER: The -- and -- and -- and believe me, one of ours as well, because we have the responsibility not only to fund FirstNet and the auction activities themselves, but also to contribute to pay down the federal deficit.

And I think the key to -- to how you can maximize revenue comes down to multiple things.

One is -- is, we've got to be able to attract broadcasters. We've got to have something, as I was saying previously, that -- that are rules that are understandable, are rules that we're actually being aggressive and helping people understand the economic impact of them, because, as you know, you're only gonna bid to the point that your spreadsheets say it's gonna be making sense.

So that's the first thing, that we've got to attract broadcasters.

We also have this -- well, we have this perverse challenge here that we also have to be freeing up spectrum.

LONG: Have to be what?

WHEELER: Freeing up spectrum.

LONG: Which requires people to put spectrum...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: At the end of the auction.

WHEELER: There's the key. So you have to provide the appropriate incentive to get them to free up...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: And do you foresee that happening? From what I talk to -- the people I talk to, I don't know that that's gonna happen in as large a way as what you...

WHEELER: So, the Congress told us to make it happen. And -- and we are going to do our damndest to deliver on those instructions. And I believe that we will be able to fulfill the challenge that we have been given.

And in no way, shape or form, do I underestimate the magnitude of it. I have spent more time on this issue in the last 39 days than any other issue.

And I know my colleagues all feel the same way on this. We understand that we're biting off a huge chunk here.

LONG: And there's a article where you were speaking in Ohio and, to quote out of the article, "'the protection of competition,;'Mr. Wheeler said, 'would apply to the coming auction of additional airwaves or spectrum for mobile broadband.' In April, the Justice Department told the FCC that it could help to protect competition by ensuring that the two largest companies, AT&T and Verizon, were not allowed to use their financial might to buy up all the available spectrum being auctioned, shutting out smaller carriers."

So how do you balance that? How do you decide I want to get the most money for my product over here, but I want to limit my bidders over here? How does that...

WHEELER: I also think that -- and, as you know, the more people you get to the auction, presumably the better result.

And so, we want to make sure that we are creating an auction marketplace that will attract as many people as possible. Not -- and not just the giants.

As a former entrepreneur, we want to make sure that we have smaller wireless companies. We want to make sure there are entrepreneurial opportunities in here.

And that's one of the things that's most interesting about what we've recently put out for public notice, the proposal from the Competitive Carriers Association, the Rural Carriers Association, and the NTCA, the rural wireline association, on talking about smaller economic areas, so that they could bid for a smaller piece of geography, rather than a humongous piece, because for entrepreneurs, for smaller carriers, they can target their activities, they can take something that is a -- is a consumable bite, rather than be forced to go out and -- and -- and...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: But they (inaudible) have to put together a patchwork quilt of -- to make their system work correct, what they buy through the auction, they have to...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: So they can -- they can buy their areas, they can buy other, smaller areas, rather than having to buy -- this is -- and this is not a decision, I just want to clear. This is -- we've put this out for comment. But it is a certainly very interesting idea that...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: ... a,b, and c, and they get a and b, but then they can't get c, then a and b weren't worth anything to them...

(CROSSTALK)

WHEELER: But that's kind of the history of the wireless industry. I've been -- we're about to conduct our 96th auction. And -- and I've been in them from the outset. And traditionally, that kind of situation has occurred. And then an aftermarket then develops in which various players say, "OK, how can I reorganize for the most efficiency?"

LONG: OK. I'm beyond my time by quite a little bit. So if I had any time, I'd yield it back.

WALDEN: The gentleman's time has expired.

And the chair now recognizes the gentlelady from North Carolina for five minutes.

ELLMERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you to the commissioners for being here today.

Commissioner Clyburn, I'm going to direct my questions to you. I have an issue that has been raised from my sheriffs back home in North Carolina. And it has to do with one of the points that you made in your opening testimony.

And I'll just read from your opening statement. "We adopted an order to reform inmate calling services to finally provide relief to millions of families and 2.7 million children who have been paying unreasonably high rates to stay connected with incarcerated loved ones."

My sheriffs back home, do have some concerns on this issue and -- so they would like me to pose some questions to you on this issue, in regard to security measures that -- that they will now be putting in place, certainly they want to be able to provide, you know, access and information and the ability to communicate with family members.

But they are concerned that this order or reform regulation is saying that basically their ability to -- to put forward call-blocking through the -- is that an issue? Is that looked upon as something that -- that we want to veer away from?

CLYBURN: So let me start -- again, thank you, and it's a pleasure meeting a -- a Carolinian.

ELLMERS: Absolutely. Yes

CLYBURN: We might have argued a bit about which...

ELLMERS: Yeah.

CLYBURN: Right.

ELLMERS: That's OK, though. We're -- we're brothers, cousins, sisters.

CLYBURN: Absolutely.

ELLMERS: That's right.

CLYBURN: So let me start with the latter, in terms of the call blocking concerns that some of -- of the sheriffs and persons who run jail facilities mentioned.

So as it relates to that particular item, I want to assure you that nothing within anything that we have delivered in this order prevents any type of security in security needed type of a blocking.

So if it's -- if -- if you know, a judge or a witness, or something, you know is -- is potentially at risk, then yes, these providers can block calls.

The -- the call blocking comes into play when there is not a business relationship with -- if someone is doing business with somebody else and then the supplier -- another supplier is blocking them, that is when we have some disconnects with our rules.

But when it comes to security protocols, that is in place.

So you've mentioned what is at the epicenter of our reasoning for reform. That family members that -- those who represent those who are incarcerated, not everybody incarcerated is -- is guilty.

And -- and those who are trying to help rehabilitate those inmates have complained to us for a number of years, for well over 10 years that the ability to communicate was just financially outrageous. That it was an unaffordable regime.

So what we did, after 10 long years, was act. And we looked at -- and reminded ourselves, Communications Act, in terms of universal service principles put forward, that is the providing of just and reasonable rates for all.

And so we put in a -- a mechanism that will provide that. And what we also did, not only providing a -- a means for just and reasonable rates for those families and others who use the phone service, but providing the means for just and reasonable rate of return for those carries, at the same builds in those that just and reasonable rate of returns is the -- the amount of money needed to -- to provide a state of the art security protocols.

So nothing within the framework in terms of what we, you know, put forward in terms of the order and the further order that would deal with entrust state rates, will compromise security protocols. But it will bring more certainty and more -- I -- I guess I would -- again, just affordability for those -- for those who are making calls to the incarcerated.

ELLMERS: They are also concerned about the cost involved and -- and you know, if -- if you can give some guidance in anticipation of the cost that they will have to incur as the result of this, certainly again, wanting to ensure that everyone is protected...

CLYBURN: Right.

ELLMERS: ... and the security is there. That -- and also, would you consider, at the local level, the local jails, maybe being exempt until they can, you know, come up with a plan of action?

CLYBURN: So one of the things that we have put forth in -- in this engagement is the capacity for any provider that is under distress, they can apply for a waiver process. You know, for -- for a waiver.

And so that capacity is within and means, and so they do have the ability to do so.

But one of the things that I wanted to emphasize is when we came up with this particular rate structure, we looked at a number of cost studies and cost models that included a -- a wide array of -- of facilities and came up, actually, with a cost structure that was much higher than some the petitioners wanted us to.

But we thought that we needed to take into account facilities, large and small, in order to come up with a -- a rate structure that we think it strikes the right balance.

ELLMERS: Well, thank you very much and I look forward to and certainly will be working with my law enforcement back home, working with the commission on -- on this issue, and the subcommittee.

So thank you so much. I look forward to that.

CLYBURN: Thank you, ma'am.

ELLMERS: And I yield back the remainder of my time.

WALDEN: The gentlelady yields back, and seeing no other members to ask questions, I wanna thank the commission for being with us today. And I know that Chairman Walden does the same.

And I also wanna thank the commission for changing your time today for your meeting to be able to be here, and I understand your meeting is at 2 O'clock. So we appreciate you accommodating the committee to appear before us today.

And seeing no further business to come for the committee, the committee stand adjourned.

END

LOAD-DATE: December 14, 2013

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION WEEK AND VISIT WITH CAPITAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ON HOUSE FLOOR

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 537 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor this morning to highlight Computer Science Education Week and the importance of encouraging students to learn computer science and coding.

On Monday, **Lujan** visited with students at Capital High School in Santa Fe and hosted a panel with computer science professionals to discuss careers in the field. Below are **Lujan's** remarks on the House floor.

"Mr. Speaker, to kick off this year's annual Computer Science Education Week, taking place from December 9th to December 15th, I had the pleasure of visiting with students at Capital High School in Santa Fe, New Mexico. We took part in the global Hour of Code campaign, organized by Computing in the Core and Code.org that offers introductory coding activities and tutorials.

"I also engaged with students about the importance of computer science by hosting a panel of industry professionals to highlight how diverse and exciting a career in computer science can truly be. Conversations like these that can be useful in helping young people navigate toward careers in computer science and STEM.

"In today's world a degree in computer science translates to high-paying, in-demand jobs. At a time when people are struggling to find work in our recovering economy, the computer science industry is growing and New Mexico is predicted to add 15,360 computing jobs by 2018. It has become increasingly essential for students to learn the language of code in the same way that they learn reading and writing and mathematics.

"If we are to remain economically competitive and have a highly skilled workforce, access to computer science curricula and coding instruction must be a priority. However, nationwide only one in ten schools offer computer science and there is a great lack of diversity in those that do - just 4% of students enrolled are female and 3% are students of color.

"In New Mexico only 57 students took the Computer Science AP exam in 2012. This is a result, in part, of the fact that New Mexico does not offer computer science teacher certifications for middle and high school teachers and is one of the 36 states that does not count computer science courses toward high school graduation requirements for math and science.

"Computer science provides students with the 21st century skills necessary for innovation by teaching design, logical reasoning, and problem solving. Yet too few students have access to this rigorous coursework. That is why I cosponsored HR 2536, the Computer Science Education Act that will help ensure that more students have access to computer science education by making it a core academic subject and including computer science teachers in professional development.

"I urge my colleagues to join me in support of Computer Science Education Week and the Computer Science Education Act. It is critically important that every student has the opportunity to learn computer science at an early age. When we show them that they have the power to create the next great app, not just use it, I believe we will capture their hearts and minds and foster the next generation of innovators."

LOAD-DATE: December 12, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

371 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

December 12, 2013 Thursday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON BUDGET VOTE

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 296 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting for a compromise budget plan that reduces sequester cuts over the next two years.

"While this budget plan is not perfect, and neither side got everything they would have liked, it represents a compromise that takes important steps to chip away at the devastating cuts of the sequester. It rejects the calls of the extreme Tea Party elements that have demanded even deeper cuts that would harm New Mexico. Already in our state we have seen arbitrary sequester cuts negatively impact our economy and hurt our families. During this past year Head Start centers have shut down, workers were furloughed, and cuts to the national labs rippled through the state's economy.

"By reducing part of the sequester cuts and providing certainty and stability over the next two years, this plan puts Congress on a path to fund the government without legislating from one crisis to the next.

"Passing this budget plan is a small step forward; however, I am disappointed with the House's failure to act on other critical issues facing families in New Mexico. Yesterday, I called on Speaker Boehner to keep the House in session and pass an extension of unemployment benefits before recessing for the year. More work is needed to pass a Farm Bill that supports our farmers, ranchers, and dairy producers, and that provides funding for critical nutrition programs. And House Republicans have yet to allow a vote on much-needed immigration reform to fix our broken system. With all this important work that remains, the House should stay in session until more progress is made for the people of New Mexico."

LOAD-DATE: December 17, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

Targeted News Service

December 12, 2013 Thursday 3:38 AM EST

Lujan Statement on Budget Vote

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 305 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after voting for a compromise budget plan that reduces sequester cuts over the next two years.

"While this budget plan is not perfect, and neither side got everything they would have liked, it represents a compromise that takes important steps to chip away at the devastating cuts of the sequester. It rejects the calls of the extreme Tea Party elements that have demanded even deeper cuts that would harm New Mexico. Already in our state we have seen arbitrary sequester cuts negatively impact our economy and hurt our families. During this past year Head Start centers have shut down, workers were furloughed, and cuts to the national labs rippled through the state's economy.

"By reducing part of the sequester cuts and providing certainty and stability over the next two years, this plan puts Congress on a path to fund the government without legislating from one crisis to the next.

"Passing this budget plan is a small step forward; however, I am disappointed with the House's failure to act on other critical issues facing families in New Mexico. Yesterday, I called on Speaker Boehner to keep the House in session and pass an extension of unemployment benefits before recessing for the year. More work is needed to pass a Farm Bill that supports our farmers, ranchers, and dairy producers, and that provides funding for critical nutrition programs. And House Republicans have yet to allow a vote on much-needed immigration reform to fix our broken system. With all this important work that remains, the House should stay in session until more progress is made for the people of New Mexico."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131213-4577939 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: December 13, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

December 12, 2013 Thursday 12:00 AM EST

New Mexico Dems: Congressman Ben Ray Lujan Signs Letter to John Boehner Calling for Extension of Unemployment Benefits

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 682 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District signed an open letter to Speaker John Boehner today urging him not to adjourn the House for the year without bringing up an extension of federal unemployment insurance, which is scheduled to expire on December 28. **Lujan** joined 165 of his Democratic colleagues in calling for the extension that will prevent 1.3 million Americans from losing their jobless aid before the end of the year. In addition, 1.9 million more Americans who are estimated to be eligible for federal unemployment insurance in the first half of 2014 would lose access to that coverage if Congressional action is not taken.

"Speaker Boehner and House Republican leaders should not send the House home for the year until an extension of unemployment benefits is passed and sent to the President for his signature," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Failure to act on this critical extension during this difficult economic time would leave 6,000 unemployed workers in New Mexico without benefits at the end of the year and an additional 9,700 people without benefits in the first six months of 2014. Too many families across our state are still struggling as we work to turn the economy around, and allowing unemployment benefits to end for thousands of people who are trying to get back to work will take a toll on our families as well as our economy."

Below is the text of the letter:

December 11, 2013

The Honorable John Boehner

Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives

H232, U.S. Capitol

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

We write to urge you to address the looming expiration of unemployment benefits for millions of Americans before adjourning Congress for the remainder of the year. Without swift Congressional action, 1.3 million jobless workers will have their benefits cut off on December 28th, and nearly another 1.9 million will lose their unemployment benefits over the first half of next year. This would not only be a devastating blow for millions of Americans who are already struggling, but it would also hurt our economy.

The Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) program is scheduled to immediately and completely stop at the end of 2013, during the holiday season, with the last payable week ending on December 28th. All current EUC beneficiaries will lose their benefits, and individuals exhausting their limited state unemployment benefits will no longer be eligible for EUC benefits in 2014. This cutoff will affect over 3 million Americans over the next six months, and thereby also negatively impact our economic growth. In fact, recent estimates indicate that the expiration of the EUC program would cost our economy 310,000 jobs and drain roughly four-tenths of a percentage point from first-quarter economic growth.

While unemployment benefits remain a critical lifeline for dislocated workers and their families, these benefits have recently been significantly scaled back. According to the Congressional Research Service, the total amount of weeks of unemployment benefits has dropped by more than a third across the states, and by more than 50 percent in some states, compared to two years ago. Furthermore, the recipients have seen their weekly benefit payment provided by the EUC program cut under sequestration.

Even with the progress our economy has seen since the depths of the recession, there are still 1.3 million fewer jobs today than when the recession started six years ago. Additionally, approximately 4 million Americans are considered long-term unemployed, and have been looking for work for more than six months. Now is certainly not the time to further decimate vital federal assistance to workers who have lost their job through no fault of their own and who must actively seek work in order to be eligible for unemployment benefits. We therefore strongly urge you to immediately bring up a one-year extension of the current EUC program.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage4psi-131213-30VitinMar-4577108

LOAD-DATE: December 13, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

December 11, 2013

LUJAN SIGNS LETTER TO BOEHNER CALLING FOR EXTENSION OF FEDERAL UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE;
166 House Democrats Urge the Speaker to Immediately Bring Up Extension;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 1080 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District sent a letter to Speaker John Boehner today urging him not to adjourn the House for the year without bringing up an extension of federal unemployment insurance, which is scheduled to expire on December 28. **Lujan** joined 165 of his Democratic colleagues in calling for the extension that will prevent 1.3 million Americans from losing their jobless aid before the end of the year. In addition, 1.9 million more Americans who are estimated to be eligible for federal unemployment insurance in the first half of 2014 would lose access to that coverage if Congressional action is not taken.

"Speaker Boehner and House Republican leaders should not send the House home for the year until an extension of unemployment benefits is passed and sent to the President for his signature," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Failure to act on this critical extension during this difficult economic time would leave 6,000 unemployed workers in New Mexico without benefits at the end of the year and an additional 9,700 people without benefits in the first six months of 2014. Too many families across our state are still struggling as we work to turn the economy around, and allowing unemployment benefits to end for thousands of people who are trying to get back to work will take a toll on our families as well as our economy."

Below is the text of the letter:

December 11, 2013

The Honorable John Boehner

Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives

H232, U.S. Capitol

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

We write to urge you to address the looming expiration of unemployment benefits for millions of Americans before adjourning Congress for the remainder of the year. Without swift Congressional action, 1.3 million jobless workers will have their benefits cut off on December 28th, and nearly another 1.9 million will lose their unemployment benefits over the first half of next year. This would not only be a devastating blow for millions of Americans who are already struggling, but it would also hurt our economy.

The Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) program is scheduled to immediately and completely stop at the end of 2013, during the holiday season, with the last payable week ending on December 28th. All current EUC beneficiaries will lose their benefits, and individuals exhausting their limited state unemployment benefits will no longer be eligible for EUC benefits in 2014. This cutoff will affect over 3 million Americans over the next six months, and thereby also negatively impact our economic growth. In fact, recent estimates indicate that the expiration of the EUC program would

cost our economy 310,000 jobs and drain roughly four-tenths of a percentage point from first-quarter economic growth.

While unemployment benefits remain a critical lifeline for dislocated workers and their families, these benefits have recently been significantly scaled back. According to the Congressional Research Service, the total amount of weeks of unemployment benefits has dropped by more than a third across the states, and by more than 50 percent in some states, compared to two years ago. Furthermore, the recipients have seen their weekly benefit payment provided by the EUC program cut under sequestration.

Even with the progress our economy has seen since the depths of the recession, there are still 1.3 million fewer jobs today than when the recession started six years ago. Additionally, approximately 4 million Americans are considered long-term unemployed, and have been looking for work for more than six months. Now is certainly not the time to further decimate vital federal assistance to workers who have lost their job through no fault of their own and who must actively seek work in order to be eligible for unemployment benefits. We therefore strongly urge you to immediately bring up a one-year extension of the current EUC program.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Sander Levin

Barbara Lee

Lloyd Doggett

Steny H. Hoyer

James Clyburn

Xavier Becerra

Joe Crowley

Steve Israel

Robert Andrews

Karen Bass

Joyce Beatty

Ami Bera

Sanford Bishop, Jr.

Tim Bishop

Earl Blumenauer

Suzanne Bonamici

Robert A. Brady

Bruce Braley

Corrine Brown

Julia Brownley

Cheri Bustos

G.K. Butterfield

Lois Capps

Michael Capuano

Tony Cardenas

Matt Cartwright

Joaquin Castro

Kathy Castor

Donna M. Christensen

Judy Chu

David Cicilline

Yvette Clarke

Wm. Lacy Clay

Emanuel Cleaver

Steve Cohen

John Conyers, Jr.

Gerald E. Connolly

Jim Cooper

Jim Costa

Joe Courtney

Elijah E. Cummings

Danny K. Davis

Peter DeFazio

Diana DeGette

John Delaney

Rosa L. DeLauro

Suzan DelBene

Ted Deutch

John D. Dingell

Donna F. Edwards

Keith Ellison

Eliot L. Engel

William Enyart

Anna Eshoo

Elizabeth H. Esty

Sam Farr

Chaka Fattah

Bill Foster

Lois Frankel

Marcia L. Fudge

John Garamendi

Alan Grayson

Al Green

Gene Green

Raul Grijalva

Michelle **Lujan** Grisham

Luis V. Gutierrez

Janice Hahn

Colleen Hanabusa

Alcee L. Hastings

Denny Heck

Brian Higgins

James A. Himes

Ruben Hinojosa

Rush Holt

Michael Honda

Steven Horsford

Jared Huffman

Hakeem S. Jeffries

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.

Marcy Kaptur

William Keating

Joseph P. Kennedy, III

Daniel Kildee

Derek Kilmer

Ron Kind

Ann Kirkpatrick

Ann McLane Kuster

James R. Langevin

John B. Larson

Sheila Jackson Lee

John Lewis

Daniel Lipinski

Dave Loebsack

Alan S. Lowenthal

Nita Lowey

Ben Ray Lujan

Stephen F. Lynch

Carolyn Maloney

Carolyn McCarthy

Betty McCollum

Jim McDermott

James P. McGovern

Patrick E. Murphy

Grace F. Napolitano

Gloria Negrete McLeod

Rick Nolan

Gregory Meeks

Michael H. Michaud

George Miller

Gwen Moore

James P. Moran

Jerrold Nadler

Richard E. Neal

Eleanor Holmes Norton

Beto O'Rourke

Frank Pallone, Jr.

Bill Pascrell, Jr.

Ed Pastor

Donald M. Payne, Jr.

Ed Perlmutter

Gary C. Peters

Chellie Pingree

Pedro R. Pierluisi

Mark Pocan

David Price

Mike Quigley

Nick J. Rahall

Charles Rangel

Cedric Richmond

Lucille Roybal-Allard

C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger

Bobby L. Rush

Tim Ryan

Linda T. Sanchez

Loretta Sanchez

John P. Sarbanes

Janice D. Schakowsky

Adam B. Schiff

Allyson Y. Schwartz

Brad Sherman

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott

Jose E. Serrano

Terri A. Sewell

Carol Shea-Porter

Kyrsten Sinema

Albio Sires

Louise M. Slaughter

Jackie Speier

Mark Takano

Bennie Thompson

Mike Thompson

John F. Tierney

Dina Titus

Paul Tonko

Marc Veasey

Nydia Velazquez

Chris Van Hollen

Juan Vargas

Debbie Wasserman Schultz

Maxine Waters

Melvin L. Watt

Henry A. Waxman

Peter Welch

Frederica Wilson

John A. Yarmuth

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-signs-letter-to-boehner-calling-for-extension-of-federal-unemployment-insurance/

LOAD-DATE: December 12, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMC

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

375 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

December 11, 2013

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION WEEK AND VISIT WITH CAPITAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ON HOUSE FLOOR;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 557 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor this morning to highlight Computer Science Education Week and the importance of encouraging students to learn computer science and coding.

On Monday, **Lujan** visited with students at Capital High School in Santa Fe and hosted a panel with computer science professionals to discuss careers in the field. Below are **Lujan's** remarks on the House floor.

"Mr. Speaker, to kick off this year's annual Computer Science Education Week, taking place from December 9th to December 15th, I had the pleasure of visiting with students at Capital High School in Santa Fe, New Mexico. We took part in the global Hour of Code campaign, organized by Computing in the Core and Code.org that offers introductory coding activities and tutorials.

"I also engaged with students about the importance of computer science by hosting a panel of industry professionals to highlight how diverse and exciting a career in computer science can truly be. Conversations like these that can be useful in helping young people navigate toward careers in computer science and STEM.

"In today's world a degree in computer science translates to high-paying, in-demand jobs. At a time when people are struggling to find work in our recovering economy, the computer science industry is growing and New Mexico is predicted to add 15,360 computing jobs by 2018. It has become increasingly essential for students to learn the language of code in the same way that they learn reading and writing and mathematics.

"If we are to remain economically competitive and have a highly skilled workforce, access to computer science curricula and coding instruction must be a priority. However, nationwide only one in ten schools offer computer science and there is a great lack of diversity in those that do - just 4% of students enrolled are female and 3% are students of color.

"In New Mexico only 57 students took the Computer Science AP exam in 2012. This is a result, in part, of the fact that New Mexico does not offer computer science teacher certifications for middle and high school teachers and is one of the 36 states that does not count computer science courses toward high school graduation requirements for math and science.

"Computer science provides students with the 21st century skills necessary for innovation by teaching design, logical reasoning, and problem solving. Yet too few students have access to this rigorous coursework. That is why I cosponsored HR 2536, the Computer Science Education Act that will help ensure that more students have access to computer science education by making it a core academic subject and including computer science teachers in professional development.

"I urge my colleagues to join me in support of Computer Science Education Week and the Computer Science Education Act. It is critically important that every student has the opportunity to learn computer science at an early age. When we show them that they have the power to create the next great app, not just use it, I believe we will capture their hearts and minds and foster the next generation of innovators."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-highlights-computer-science-education-week-and-visit-with-capital-high-school-students-on-house-floor/

LOAD-DATE: December 12, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMC

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

December 11, 2013 Wednesday 12:38 AM EST

Lujan Signs Letter to Boehner Calling for Extension of Federal Unemployment Insurance

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 1074 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District sent a letter to Speaker John Boehner today urging him not to adjourn the House for the year without bringing up an extension of federal unemployment insurance, which is scheduled to expire on December 28. **Lujan** joined 165 of his Democratic colleagues in calling for the extension that will prevent 1.3 million Americans from losing their jobless aid before the end of the year. In addition, 1.9 million more Americans who are estimated to be eligible for federal unemployment insurance in the first half of 2014 would lose access to that coverage if Congressional action is not taken.

"Speaker Boehner and House Republican leaders should not send the House home for the year until an extension of unemployment benefits is passed and sent to the President for his signature," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Failure to act on this critical extension during this difficult economic time would leave 6,000 unemployed workers in New Mexico without benefits at the end of the year and an additional 9,700 people without benefits in the first six months of 2014. Too many families across our state are still struggling as we work to turn the economy around, and allowing unemployment benefits to end for thousands of people who are trying to get back to work will take a toll on our families as well as our economy."

Below is the text of the letter:

December 11, 2013

The Honorable John Boehner

Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives

H232, U.S. Capitol

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

We write to urge you to address the looming expiration of unemployment benefits for millions of Americans before adjourning Congress for the remainder of the year. Without swift Congressional action, 1.3 million jobless workers will have their benefits cut off on December 28th, and nearly another 1.9 million will lose their unemployment benefits over the first half of next year. This would not only be a devastating blow for millions of Americans who are already struggling, but it would also hurt our economy.

The Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) program is scheduled to immediately and completely stop at the end of 2013, during the holiday season, with the last payable week ending on December 28th. All current EUC beneficiaries will lose their benefits, and individuals exhausting their limited state unemployment benefits will no longer be eligible for EUC benefits in 2014. This cutoff will affect over 3 million Americans over the next six months, and thereby also negatively impact our economic growth. In fact, recent estimates indicate that the expiration of the EUC program would cost our economy 310,000 jobs and drain roughly four-tenths of a percentage point from first-quarter economic growth.

While unemployment benefits remain a critical lifeline for dislocated workers and their families, these benefits have recently been significantly scaled back. According to the Congressional Research Service, the total amount of weeks of unemployment benefits has dropped by more than a third across the states, and by more than 50 percent in some states, compared to two years ago.

Furthermore, the recipients have seen their weekly benefit payment provided by the EUC program cut under sequestration.

Even with the progress our economy has seen since the depths of the recession, there are still 1.3 million fewer jobs today than when the recession started six years ago. Additionally, approximately 4 million Americans are considered long-term unemployed, and have been looking for work for more than six months. Now is certainly not the time to further decimate vital federal assistance to workers who have lost their job through no fault of their own and who must actively seek work in order to be eligible for unemployment benefits. We therefore strongly urge you to immediately bring up a one-year extension of the current EUC program.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Sander Levin

Barbara Lee

Lloyd Doggett

Steny H. Hoyer

James Clyburn

Xavier Becerra

Joe Crowley

Steve Israel

Robert Andrews

Karen Bass

Joyce Beatty

Ami Bera

Sanford Bishop, Jr.

Tim Bishop

Earl Blumenauer

Suzanne Bonamici

Robert A. Brady

Bruce Braley

Corrine Brown

Julia Brownley

Cheri Bustos

G.K. Butterfield

Lois Capps

Michael Capuano

Tony Cardenas

Matt Cartwright

Joaquin Castro

Kathy Castor

Donna M. Christensen

Judy Chu

David Cicilline

Yvette Clarke

Wm. Lacy Clay

Emanuel Cleaver

Steve Cohen

John Conyers, Jr.

Gerald E. Connolly

Jim Cooper

Jim Costa

Joe Courtney

Elijah E. Cummings

Danny K. Davis

Peter DeFazio

Diana DeGette

John Delaney

Rosa L. DeLauro

Suzan DelBene

Ted Deutch

John D. Dingell

Donna F. Edwards

Keith Ellison

Eliot L. Engel

William Enyart

Anna Eshoo

Elizabeth H. Esty

Sam Farr

Chaka Fattah

Bill Foster

Lois Frankel

Marcia L. Fudge

John Garamendi

Alan Grayson

Al Green

Gene Green

Raul Grijalva

Michelle **Lujan** Grisham

Luis V. Gutierrez

Janice Hahn

Colleen Hanabusa

Alcee L. Hastings

Denny Heck

Brian Higgins

James A. Himes

Ruben Hinojosa

Rush Holt

Michael Honda

Steven Horsford

Jared Huffman

Hakeem S. Jeffries

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.

Marcy Kaptur

William Keating

Joseph P. Kennedy, III

Daniel Kildee

Derek Kilmer

Ron Kind

Ann Kirkpatrick

Ann McLane Kuster

James R. Langevin

John B. Larson

Sheila Jackson Lee

John Lewis

Daniel Lipinski

Dave Loebsack

Alan S. Lowenthal

Nita Lowey

Ben Ray Lujan

Stephen F. Lynch

Carolyn Maloney

Carolyn McCarthy

Betty McCollum

Jim McDermott

James P. McGovern

Patrick E. Murphy

Grace F. Napolitano

Gloria Negrete McLeod

Rick Nolan

Gregory Meeks

Michael H. Michaud

George Miller

Gwen Moore

James P. Moran

Jerrold Nadler

Richard E. Neal

Eleanor Holmes Norton

Beto O'Rourke

Frank Pallone, Jr.

Bill Pascrell, Jr.

Ed Pastor

Donald M. Payne, Jr.

Ed Perlmutter

Gary C. Peters

Chellie Pingree

Pedro R. Pierluisi

Mark Pocan

David Price

Mike Quigley

Nick J. Rahall

Charles Rangel

Cedric Richmond

Lucille Roybal-Allard

C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger

Bobby L. Rush

Tim Ryan

Linda T. Sanchez

Loretta Sanchez

John P. Sarbanes

Janice D. Schakowsky

Adam B. Schiff

Allyson Y. Schwartz

Brad Sherman

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott

Jose E. Serrano

Terri A. Sewell

Carol Shea-Porter

Kyrsten Sinema

Albio Sires

Louise M. Slaughter

Jackie Speier

Mark Takano

Bennie Thompson

Mike Thompson

John F. Tierney

Dina Titus

Paul Tonko

Marc Veasey

Nydia Velazquez

Chris Van Hollen

Juan Vargas

Debbie Wasserman Schultz

Maxine Waters

Melvin L. Watt

Henry A. Waxman

Peter Welch

Frederica Wilson

John A. Yarmuth

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131212-4575635 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: December 12, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

377 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

December 11, 2013 Wednesday 12:38 AM EST

Lujan Highlights Computer Science Education Week and Visit with Capital High School Students on House Floor

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 547 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor this morning to highlight Computer Science Education Week and the importance of encouraging students to learn computer science and coding.

On Monday, **Lujan** visited with students at Capital High School in Santa Fe and hosted a panel with computer science professionals to discuss careers in the field. Below are **Lujan's** remarks on the House floor.

"Mr. Speaker, to kick off this year's annual Computer Science Education Week, taking place from December 9th to December 15th, I had the pleasure of visiting with students at Capital High School in Santa Fe, New Mexico. We took part in the global Hour of Code campaign, organized by Computing in the Core and Code.org that offers introductory coding activities and tutorials.

"I also engaged with students about the importance of computer science by hosting a panel of industry professionals to highlight how diverse and exciting a career in computer science can truly be. Conversations like these that can be useful in helping young people navigate toward careers in computer science and STEM.

"In today's world a degree in computer science translates to high-paying, in-demand jobs. At a time when people are struggling to find work in our recovering economy, the computer science industry is growing and New Mexico is predicted to add 15,360 computing jobs by 2018. It has become increasingly essential for students to learn the language of code in the same way that they learn reading and writing and mathematics.

"If we are to remain economically competitive and have a highly skilled workforce, access to computer science curricula and coding instruction must be a priority. However, nationwide only one in ten schools offer computer science and there is a great lack of diversity in those that do - just 4% of students enrolled are female and 3% are students of color.

"In New Mexico only 57 students took the Computer Science AP exam in 2012. This is a result, in part, of the fact that New Mexico does not offer computer science teacher certifications for middle and high school teachers and is one of the 36 states that does not count computer science courses toward high school graduation requirements for math and science.

"Computer science provides students with the 21st century skills necessary for innovation by teaching design, logical reasoning, and problem solving. Yet too few students have access to this rigorous coursework. That is why I cosponsored HR 2536, the Computer Science Education Act that will help ensure that more students have access to computer science education by making it a core academic subject and including computer science teachers in professional development.

"I urge my colleagues to join me in support of Computer Science Education Week and the Computer Science Education Act. It is critically important that every student has the opportunity to learn computer science at an early age. When we show them that they have the power to create the next great app, not just use it, I believe we will capture their hearts and minds and foster the next generation of innovators."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131212-4575638 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: December 12, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

December 10, 2013

LUJAN: AFFORDABLE CARE ACT TO INCREASE ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER BENEFITS; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 351 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted recent data that shows the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is expanding mental health and substance use disorder benefits for approximately 60 million Americans - including approximately 403,000 New

Mexicans. This expansion of coverage for mental health and substance use disorders is one of the largest in a generation.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, insurance companies in the individual and small group market are required for the first time to cover mental health and substance use disorder services as one of ten categories of essential health benefits. In addition, insurance companies must cover these services at parity with medical and surgical benefits, meaning things like out-of-pocket costs for behavioral health services must generally be comparable to coverage for medical and surgical care.

"Sadly in New Mexico we are too familiar with the impact that substance abuse has on our families and our communities. Combating substance abuse requires a comprehensive strategy, and ensuring that people have access to health care that provides quality services that help address substance abuse disorder is an important step to building safer and stronger communities," Congressman **Lujan** said.

The Affordable Care Act requires most health plans to cover recommended preventive services like depression screenings for adults and behavioral assessments for children at no cost to consumers. With an estimated one in five adults experiencing mental illness in any given year, the ACA will help reduce the number of individuals who go untreated due to a lack of health insurance that covers mental health and substance use disorder services. In addition, because of the law, starting in 2014 insurers will not be able to deny coverage or charge individuals more due to pre-existing conditions, including mental illness and substance use disorders.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-affordable-care-act-to-increase-access-to-mental-health-and-substance-use-disorder-benefits/

LOAD-DATE: December 11, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMC

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

379 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

December 10, 2013 Tuesday

LUJAN: AFFORDABLE CARE ACT TO INCREASE ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER BENEFITS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 333 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted recent data that shows the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is expanding mental health and substance use disorder benefits for approximately 60 million Americans - including approximately 403,000 New Mexicans. This expansion of coverage for mental health and substance use disorders is one of the largest in a generation.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, insurance companies in the individual and small group market are required for the first time to cover mental health and substance use disorder services as one of ten categories of essential health benefits. In addition, insurance companies must cover these services at parity with medical and surgical benefits, meaning things like out-of-pocket costs for behavioral health services must generally be comparable to coverage for medical and surgical care.

"Sadly in New Mexico we are too familiar with the impact that substance abuse has on our families and our communities. Combating substance abuse requires a comprehensive strategy, and ensuring that people have access to health care that provides quality services that help address substance abuse disorder is an important step to building safer and stronger communities," Congressman **Lujan** said.

The Affordable Care Act requires most health plans to cover recommended preventive services like depression screenings for adults and behavioral assessments for children at no cost to consumers. With an estimated one in five adults experiencing mental illness in any given year, the ACA will help reduce the number of individuals who go untreated due to a lack of health insurance that covers mental health and substance use disorder services. In addition, because of the law, starting in 2014 insurers will not be able to deny coverage or charge individuals more due to pre-existing conditions, including mental illness and substance use disorders.

LOAD-DATE: December 12, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

Targeted News Service

December 10, 2013 Tuesday 3:19 AM EST

Lujan: Affordable Care Act to Increase Access to Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Benefits

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 343 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District highlighted recent data that shows the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is expanding mental health and substance use disorder benefits for approximately 60 million Americans - including approximately 403,000 New Mexicans. This expansion of coverage for mental health and substance use disorders is one of the largest in a generation.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, insurance companies in the individual and small group market are required for the first time to cover mental health and substance use disorder services as one of ten categories of essential health benefits. In addition, insurance companies must cover these services at parity with medical and surgical benefits, meaning things like out-of-pocket costs for behavioral health services must generally be comparable to coverage for medical and surgical care.

"Sadly in New Mexico we are too familiar with the impact that substance abuse has on our families and our communities. Combating substance abuse requires a comprehensive strategy, and ensuring that people have access to health care that provides quality services that help address substance abuse disorder is an important step to building safer and stronger communities," Congressman **Lujan** said.

The Affordable Care Act requires most health plans to cover recommended preventive services like depression screenings for adults and behavioral assessments for children at no cost to consumers. With an estimated one in five adults experiencing mental illness in any given year, the ACA will help reduce the number of individuals who go untreated due to a lack of health insurance that covers mental health and substance use disorder services. In addition, because of the law, starting in 2014 insurers will not be able to deny coverage or charge individuals more due to pre-existing conditions, including mental illness and substance use disorders.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131211-4574581 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: December 11, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

December 9, 2013 Monday 12:33 AM EST

New Mexico Dems: New Mexico's Democratic Congressional Delegation Joins Together for Marriage Equality

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 433 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

New Mexico's Democratic Congressional delegation, Senator Tom Udall, Senator Martin Heinrich, Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan**, and Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, the co-chair of the statewide campaign, have joined together in the historic effort to secure and defend the freedom to marry for all New Mexico families, and adding their voices in support for marriage equality.

"I enthusiastically support the freedom to marry for everyone in New Mexico," said Senator Tom Udall. "Family comes first for all of us and that's why it is imperative that we support all New Mexican families and work together to win marriage equality and defend it if we must."

"I am very hopeful that the New Mexico Supreme Court will find that our constitution supports full equality for all our citizens," said Senator Martin Heinrich. "Marriage is the foundation of a strong community and I will do all I can to secure and protect this freedom for loving gay and lesbian couples and their families."

"Now that legally married same-sex couples can access the critical federal protections so necessary in times of stress and crisis, it is important to ensure that every couple can make that personal choice of marriage," said Congressman **Lujan**. "Gay and lesbian couples make the same contributions and sacrifices that we all do, including paying taxes, owning business and caring for their families. It is time everyone is treated equally under the law."

"When everybody is treated fairly in this state, every one of us benefits" said Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham. "When committed gay and lesbian couples can marry and enjoy the same benefits and responsibilities as everyone else, it strengthens families, protects children and expands freedom for us all. After the progress we've made in the past few weeks, I'm more confident than ever that full marriage equality is not a question of if, but when."

Marriage Equality Campaign Manager Robert Adams thanked the members of New Mexico's congressional delegation for leading the charge to secure marriage equality in New Mexico once and for all:

"We are extremely grateful to have Senators Udall and Heinrich, Congressman **Lujan** and Congresswoman **Lujan** Grisham onboard to support our work to win and defend marriage equality. Over 1600 same-sex couples have already married in New Mexico, and that fundamental freedom belongs to everyone in the state. New Mexico Unites for Marriage is committed to making that dream a reality."

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage4psi-131210-30VitinMar-4572791

LOAD-DATE: December 10, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Carlsbad Current-Argus (New Mexico)

December 8, 2013 Sunday

The voting record for New Mexico's congressional delegation for Dec. 1-7

BYLINE: Carlsbad Current-Argus

SECTION: NEWS

LENGTH: 198 words

The voting record for New Mexico's congressional delegation for Dec. 1-7 U.S. House

HR 3547 Space Launch Liability Indemnification Extension Act (Passed 376-5) Steve Pearce yes, **Ben Ray Lujan** yes, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HR 3588 Community Fire Safety Act of 2013 (Passed 384-0) Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes

HR 255 To amend certain definitions contained in the Provo River Project Transfer Act for purposes of clarifying certain property descriptions, and for other purposes (Passed 406-0) Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HR 2719 To require the Transportation Security Administration to implement best practices and improve transparency with regard to technology acquisition programs, and for other purposes (Passed 416-0) Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HR 1204 To amend title 49, United States Code, to direct the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security Administration) to establish an Aviation Security Advisory Committee, and for other purposes (Passed 411-3) Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HR 3309 The Innovation Act (Passed 325-91) Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham no U.S. Senate

No votes listed for this time period.

LOAD-DATE: December 9, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Carlsbad Current-Argus, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

December 5, 2013

LUJAN STATEMENT ON THE PASSING OF NELSON MANDELA; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 221 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement on the death of Nelson Mandela, former president of South Africa.

"The global community has lost a true champion for justice and human rights with the passing of Nelson Mandela. Mr. Mandela leaves behind a tremendous legacy that will continue to inspire all those who share his passion for freedom and equality.

"As the first black president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela broke down barriers through a determined spirit and helped shape the future of a nation while influencing so many who have fought for social justice. Nelson Mandela demonstrated remarkable strength through his years striving for equal rights and freedom for all people in South Africa. Even in the face of years of imprisonment, he never wavered from the fight to defeat apartheid and bring equality to his fellow countrymen and women through peaceful means.

"While we mourn the passing of Nelson Mandela with a heavy heart, it is with great admiration that we reflect on the historic accomplishments of a humble leader who fought against oppression with kindness, hope, and love and stood up for the rights of all people."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-statement-on-the-passing-of-nelson-mandela/

LOAD-DATE: December 6, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMC

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

384 of 500 DOCUMENTS

States News Service

December 5, 2013 Thursday

LUJAN STATEMENT ON THE PASSING OF NELSON MANDELA

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 212 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement on the death of Nelson Mandela, former president of South Africa.

"The global community has lost a true champion for justice and human rights with the passing of Nelson Mandela. Mr. Mandela leaves behind a tremendous legacy that will continue to inspire all those who share his passion for freedom and equality.

"As the first black president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela broke down barriers through a determined spirit and helped shape the future of a nation while influencing so many who have fought for social justice. Nelson Mandela demonstrated remarkable strength through his years striving for equal rights and freedom for all people in South Africa. Even in the face of years of imprisonment, he never wavered from the fight to defeat apartheid and bring equality to his fellow countrymen and women through peaceful means.

"While we mourn the passing of Nelson Mandela with a heavy heart, it is with great admiration that we reflect on the historic accomplishments of a humble leader who fought against oppression with kindness, hope, and love and stood up for the rights of all people."

# # #

LOAD-DATE: December 7, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

Targeted News Service

December 5, 2013 Thursday 7:27 PM EST

Lujan Statement on the Passing of Nelson Mandela

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 221 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement on the death of Nelson Mandela, former president of South Africa.

"The global community has lost a true champion for justice and human rights with the passing of Nelson Mandela. Mr. Mandela leaves behind a tremendous legacy that will continue to inspire all those who share his passion for freedom and equality.

"As the first black president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela broke down barriers through a determined spirit and helped shape the future of a nation while influencing so many who have fought for social justice. Nelson Mandela demonstrated remarkable strength through his years striving for equal rights and freedom for all people in South Africa. Even in the face of years of imprisonment, he never wavered from the fight to defeat apartheid and bring equality to his fellow countrymen and women through peaceful means.

"While we mourn the passing of Nelson Mandela with a heavy heart, it is with great admiration that we reflect on the historic accomplishments of a humble leader who fought against oppression with kindness, hope, and love and stood up for the rights of all people."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131206-4569197 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: December 5, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

386 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

December 5, 2013 Thursday

Washington: ADDITIONAL SPONSORS -- (House of Representatives - December 04, 2013)

LENGTH: 1251 words

DATELINE: Washington

The Library of Congress, The Government of USA has issued the following news release:

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 15: Mr. Visclosky.

H.R. 107: Mrs. Ellmers.

H.R. 129: Mr. Yoho.

H.R. 183: Mr. Al Green of Texas.

H.R. 184: Mrs. Beatty.

H.R. 207: Mr. Duncan of Tennessee.

H.R. 490: Mr. Neal.

H.R. 503: Mr. Pearce, Mrs. Bachmann, Mr. Rice of South Carolina, Mr. Walberg, Mr. Franks of Arizona, Mr. Wenstrup, Mr. McAllister, and Mr. Carter.

H.R. 517: Mr. Doyle.

H.R. 543: Mr. Farr.

H.R. 647: Mr. Kildee and Mr. Westmoreland.

H.R. 715: Ms. Eddie Bernice Johnson of Texas, Mr. Nadler, Ms. Norton, Mr. Price of Georgia, Mr. Sessions, Mr. Scott of Virginia, and Mr. Young of Alaska.

[Page: H7508] GPO's PDF

H.R. 725: Mr. Huffman.

H.R. 855: Mr. Gutierrez.

H.R. 863: Mr. Israel.

H.R. 914: Mr. Pearce.

H.R. 924: Mr. Lowenthal and Mr. Garcia.

H.R. 961: Mr. Larson of Connecticut.

H.R. 962: Mr. Gene Green of Texas, Mr. Ribble, and Ms. Pingree of Maine.

H.R. 984: Mr. Rooney.

H.R. 1015: Mr. Honda.

H.R. 1078: Mr. Marchant.

H.R. 1150: Ms. Tsongas.

H.R. 1209: Mr. Kind, Mr. Rokita, Mr. Amodei, Mr. Engel, Ms. Titus, Mr. Nunes, Ms. Chu, Mr. Royce, Ms. Gabbard, Mr. Pitts, Mr. Denham, Mr. Valadao, Ms. Hahn, Mr. Grimm, Mr. Wilson of South Carolina, Mr. Wolf, Ms. Duckworth, Mr. Rohrabacher, and Mr. Kline.

H.R. 1226: Mr. Lankford.

H.R. 1252: Mr. Kildee.

H.R. 1318: Mr. Thompson of Mississippi.

H.R. 1354: Mr. Ruiz, Mr. Lowenthal, and Mr. Peters of Michigan.

H.R. 1380: Mr. Honda.

H.R. 1701: Mr. Rokita.

H.R. 1726: Mr. Pitts and Ms. Lofgren.

H.R. 1750: Mr. Perlmutter and Mr. Aderholt.

H.R. 1751: Mr. Huffman.

H.R. 1771: Ms. Hanabusa.

H.R. 1814: Mr. Hurt and Mr. Richmond.

H.R. 1843: Ms. Esty.

H.R. 1845: Mr. DeFazio.

H.R. 1851: Ms. Edwards and Mr. Ruiz.

H.R. 1852: Mr. Sessions.

H.R. 1875: Mr. Capuano.

H.R. 1905: Mr. Perlmutter and Mr. Levin.

H.R. 1920: Ms. Kelly of Illinois, Mr. Brady of Pennsylvania, Mr. Palazzo, and Mr. O'Rourke.

H.R. 1975: Mr. Doggett.

H.R. 1992: Mr. Lowenthal.

H.R. 2000: Mr. Cartwright.

H.R. 2012: Mr. Murphy of Florida, Ms. Schwartz, Mr. Sherman, and Mr. Meehan.

H.R. 2023: Mr. Price of North Carolina and Mr. Connolly.

H.R. 2073: Mr. Israel and Mr. Courtney.

H.R. 2288: Ms. Duckworth and Mr. Cartwright.

H.R. 2300: Mr. Harris, Mrs. Black, Mrs. Blackburn, Mr. Marchant, Mr. Conaway, Mr. Woodall, and Mr. Calvert.

H.R. 2376: Mr. Thompson of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2429: Mr. Hall, Mr. Brooks of Alabama and Mr. Frelinghuysen.

H.R. 2430: Ms. Lee of California and Mr. Turner.

H.R. 2445: Mr. Griffith of Virginia.

H.R. 2476: Mr. Meadows.

H.R. 2484: Mr. Peters of Michigan, Mr. Rahall, and Mr. Cartwright.

H.R. 2548: Mr. Kinzinger of Illinois.

H.R. 2560: Ms. Titus.

H.R. 2575: Mr. Hastings of Washington.

H.R. 2591: Mr. Price of North Carolina and Mr. Smith of Washington.

H.R. 2619: Ms. McCollum and Mr. McGovern.

H.R. 2663: Mr. Carson of Indiana.

H.R. 2697: Mr. McGovern.

H.R. 2725: Mr. Heck of Nevada.

H.R. 2767: Mr. Duncan of South Carolina.

H.R. 2831: Ms. Chu.

H.R. 2901: Mr. Keating, Ms. Titus, Mr. Waxman, Mr. Cicilline, Mr. Bera of California, and Mr. Petri.

H.R. 2906: Mr. King of New York.

H.R. 2921: Mr. Gibson.

H.R. 2995: Mr. Kind, Ms. Schwartz, and Mr. Renacci.

H.R. 3040: Mr. Kennedy, Mr. David Scott of Georgia, and Mr. Price of North Carolina.

H.R. 3061: Mr. Price of North Carolina and Mr. Cummings.

H.R. 3111: Ms. Duckworth.

H.R. 3122: Mr. Capuano.

H.R. 3179: Mr. Castro of Texas.

H.R. 3311: Mrs. Brooks of Indiana and Mr. Long.

H.R. 3318: Mr. Loebsack and Ms. Wasserman Schultz.

H.R. 3335: Mr. Walberg.

H.R. 3367: Mr. Vargas.

H.R. 3370: Mr. Long, Mr. Schneider, Mr. Rahall, Mr. McAllister, Mr. Bera of California, Ms. Herrera Beutler, and Mr. Forbes.

H.R. 3384: Mr. Peters of Michigan.

H.R. 3401: Mr. Capuano and Mr. Thompson of Mississippi.

H.R. 3407: Mr. Clay.

H.R. 3413: Mrs. Blackburn.

H.R. 3445: Mr. George Miller of California, Ms. Schakowsky, Mr. Rush, and Ms. Shea-Porter.

H.R. 3461: Mr. Price of North Carolina, Mr. Delaney, Mr. Grijalva, Ms. Speier, and Mr. Cartwright.

H.R. 3471: Mr. Schiff, Mr. Kilmer, Ms. Shea-Porter, Mr. Peters of California, Mr. Murphy of Florida, Mr. Waxman, Ms. Wilson of Florida, and Ms. Pingree of Maine.

H.R. 3473: Mr. Kind and Mr. Peters of California.

H.R. 3474: Mr. Bentivolio.

H.R. 3479: Mrs. Bachmann.

H.R. 3482: Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Rigell, Mr. Israel, Mr. Olson, Mr. Richmond, Ms. Schwartz, and Mr. Poe of Texas.

H.R. 3485: Mr. Goodlatte and Mr. Miller of Florida.

H.R. 3486: Mr. Culberson.

H.R. 3488: Mr. Schock, Mr. Blumenauer, Mr. Thompson of California, Mr. Paulsen, Mr. Coffman, Mr. Hanna, Mr. Meeks, and Mr. Matheson.

H.R. 3489: Mr. Reed.

H.R. 3494: Ms. Pingree of Maine, Mr. Nadler, Mr. Connolly, Ms. DelBene, Ms. Brownley of California, Mr. Moran, Mr. Huffman, Mr. Vela, Mr. **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico, Mr. Tierney, Mr. Capuano, and Mr. Larsen of Washington.

H.R. 3538: Ms. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham of New Mexico, Mr. Fattah, Ms. Roybal-Allard, Mr. Cárdenas, Mr. Gallego, and Mr. O'Rourke.

H.R. 3541: Mr. Neugebauer, Mr. Marino, Mr. LaMalfa, Mr. Pittenger, and Mrs. Bachmann.

H.R. 3571: Mr. Keating, Ms. Lee of California, Mr. Conyers, Mr. McGovern, Mr. Braley of Iowa, Mr. Levin, Mr. Maffei, and Mr. McDermott.

H.R. 3574: Ms. Slaughter.

H.R. 3578: Mr. Flores, Mrs. Hartzler, and Mr. Petri.

H.R. 3581: Mr. Paulsen.

H.R. 3589: Mr. Posey, Mr. Franks of Arizona, and Mrs. Bachmann.

H.R. 3590: Mr. Young of Alaska and Mr. Benishek.

H.R. 3595: Mr. Lankford, Mr. Rice of South Carolina, Mr. Harris, and Mr. Duncan of South Carolina.

H.R. 3599: Mr. Gohmert.

H.R. 3609: Mr. Jeffries.

H.R. 3612: Ms. Bonamici.

H.R. 3625: Mr. Stockman, Mr. Aderholt, Mr. Hall, Mr. Schweikert, Mr. Bera of California, Mr. Murphy of Florida, Mr. Olson, Mr. Smith of Texas, Mr. Palazzo, Ms. Sewell of Alabama, Mr. Coffman, Mr. Crenshaw, Mr. Kilmer, and Mr. Bachus.

H.R. 3627: Mr. Murphy of Florida and Mr. Swalwell of California.

H.R. 3630: Ms. Castor of Florida.

H.R. 3633: Mr. Courtney.

H.R. 3634: Mr. Gibson, Mr. Peters of California, Ms. Sinema, Ms. Kuster, Mrs. Carolyn B. Maloney of New York, Mr. Delaney, Mr. Nadler, Mr. Engel, and Mr. Hanna.

H.R. 3639: Mr. Lamborn.

H.R. 3641: Mr. Williams.

H.R. 3643: Mr. Conyers and Mr. Langevin.

H.J. Res. 43: Mr. Kildee and Mr. Garamendi.

H.J. Res. 47: Mr. Wolf.

H.J. Res. 104: Mr. Bentivolio.

H. Con. Res. 52: Mr. Duncan of Tennessee.

H. Res. 19: Mr. Doggett.

H. Res. 47: Mr. Foster.

H. Res. 112: Ms. Castor of Florida.

H. Res. 147: Mr. Pompeo.

H. Res. 231: Mr. Yarmuth, Mr. Wolf, Mr. Fincher, and Mr. Ruppersberger.

H. Res. 254: Mr. O'Rourke and Ms. Chu.

H. Res. 284: Mr. Engel.

H. Res. 365: Mr. MAFFEI, Mr. **BEN RAY LUJÁN** of New Mexico, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.

H. Res. 401: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H. Res. 406: Mr. PRICE OF North Carolina.

H. Res. 410: Mr. KING of Iowa and Ms. HAHN.

H. Res. 422: Mr. POLIS, Mr. MORAN, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. BENTIVOLIO.

H. Res. 423: Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. MCNERNEY, and Mr. ENGEL.

H. Res. 424: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. COOPER, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. POCAN, Mr. DINGELL, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. TONKO, Mr. WELCH, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. HIGGINS, and Mr. OWENS.

H. Res. 425: Mr. RIBBLE.

For more information please visit: http://thomas.loc.gov

LOAD-DATE: December 5, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

December 5, 2013 Thursday

Washington: PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3309, INNOVATION ACT; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1105, SMALL BUSINESS CAPITAL ACCESS AND JOB PRESERVATION ACT

LENGTH: 1720 words

DATELINE: Washington

United States Congress has issued the following proceedings and debate details:

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 429) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3309) to amend title 35, United States Code, and the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act to make improvements and technical corrections, and for other purposes; and (H.R. 1105) to amend the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 to provide a registration exemption for private equity fund advisers, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered. The Clerk read the title of the resolution. The SPEAKER pro tempore.

The question is on ordering the previous question. The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were--yeas 220, nays 194, not voting 17, as follows: [Roll No. 618] YEAS--220 Aderholt Amash Amodei Bachmann Bachus Barletta Barr Barton Benishek Bentivolio Bilirakis Bishop (UT) Black Blackburn Boustany Brady (TX) Bridenstine Brooks (AL) Brooks (IN) Broun (GA) Buchanan Bucshon Burgess Calvert Camp Cantor Capito Carter Cassidy Chabot Chaffetz Coble Coffman Cole Collins (GA) Collins (NY) Conaway Cook Cotton Cramer Crawford Crenshaw Daines Davis, Rodney Denham Dent DeSantis DesJarlais Diaz-Balart Duffy Duncan (SC) Duncan (TN) Ellmers Farenthold Fincher Fitzpatrick Fleischmann Fleming Flores Forbes Fortenberry Foxx Franks (AZ) Frelinghuysen Gardner Garrett Gerlach Gibbs Gibson Gohmert Goodlatte Gosar Gowdy Granger Graves (GA) Griffin (AR) Griffith (VA) Grimm Guthrie Hall Hanna Harper Harris Hartzler Hastings (WA) Heck (NV) Hensarling Holding Hudson Huelskamp Huizenga (MI) Hultgren Hunter Hurt Issa Jenkins Johnson (OH) Johnson, Sam Jones Jordan Joyce Kelly (PA) King (IA) King (NY) Kingston Kinzinger (IL) Kline Labrador LaMalfa Lamborn Lance Lankford Latham Latta LoBiondo Long Lucas Luetkemeyer Marchant Marino Massie McAllister McCarthy (CA) McCaul McClintock McHenry McKeon McKinley Meadows Meehan Messer Mica Miller (FL) Miller (MI) Mullin Mulvaney Murphy (PA) Neugebauer Noem Nugent Nunes Nunnelee Olson Palazzo Paulsen Pearce Perry Petri Pittenger Pitts Poe (TX) Pompeo Posey Price (GA) Reichert Renacci Ribble Rice (SC) Rigell Roby Roe (TN) Rogers (AL) Rogers (KY) Rogers (MI) Rohrabacher Rokita Rooney Ros-Lehtinen Roskam Ross Rothfus Royce Runyan Ryan (WI) Salmon Sanford Scalise Schock

Schweikert Scott, Austin Sensenbrenner Sessions Shimkus Shuster Simpson Smith (MO) Smith (NE) Smith (NJ) Smith (TX) Southerland Stewart Stivers Stutzman Terry Thompson (PA) Thornberry Tiberi Tipton Turner Upton Valadao Wagner Walberg Walden Walorski Weber (TX) Webster (FL) Wenstrup Westmoreland Whitfield Williams Wilson (SC) Wittman Wolf Womack Woodall Yoder Yoho Young (AK) Young (IN) NAYS--194 Andrews Barber Barrow (GA) Bass Beatty Becerra Bera (CA) Bishop (NY) Blumenauer Bonamici Brady (PA) Braley (IA) Brown (FL) Brownley (CA) Bustos Butterfield Capps Capuano Cardenas Carney Carson (IN) Cartwright Castor (FL) Castro (TX) Chu Cicilline Clarke Clay Cleaver Clyburn Cohen Connolly Conyers Cooper Costa Courtney Crowley Cuellar Cummings Davis (CA) Davis, Danny DeFazio DeGette Delaney DeLauro DelBene Deutch Dingell Doggett Doyle Duckworth Edwards Ellison Engel Eshoo Esty Farr Fattah Foster Frankel (FL) Fudge Gabbard Gallego Garamendi Garcia Green, Al Green, Gene Grijalva Gutierrez Hahn Hanabusa Hastings (FL) Heck (WA) Higgins Himes Hinojosa Holt Honda Horsford Hoyer Huffman Israel Jackson Lee Jeffries Johnson (GA) Johnson, E. B. Kaptur Keating Kelly (IL) Kennedy Kildee Kilmer Kind Kirkpatrick Kuster Langevin Larsen (WA) Larson (CT) Lee (CA) Levin Lewis Lipinski Loebsack Lofgren Lowenthal Lowey **Lujan** Grisham (NM) **Lujan**, Ben Ray (NM) Lynch Maffei Maloney, Carolyn Maloney, Sean Matheson Matsui McCollum McDermott McGovern McIntyre McNerney Meeks Meng Michaud Miller, George Moore Moran Murphy (FL) Nadler Napolitano Neal Negrete McLeod Nolan O'Rourke Owens Pallone Pascrell Pastor (AZ) Payne Pelosi Perlmutter Peters (CA) Peters (MI) Peterson Pingree (ME) Pocan Polis Price (NC) Quigley Rahall Rangel Richmond Roybal-Allard Ruiz Ruppersberger Ryan (OH) Sanchez, Linda T. Sanchez, Loretta Sarbanes Schakowsky Schiff Schneider Schrader Schwartz Scott (VA) Scott, David Serrano Sewell (AL) Shea-Porter Sherman Sinema Slaughter Smith (WA) Speier Swalwell (CA) Takano Thompson (CA) Thompson (MS) Tierney Titus Tonko Tsongas Van Hollen Vargas Veasey Vela Velazquez Visclosky Walz Wasserman Schultz Waters Watt Waxman Welch Wilson (FL) Yarmuth NOT VOTING--17 Bishop (GA) Campbell Culberson Enyart Gingrey (GA) Graves (MO) Grayson Herrera Beutler Lummis McCarthy (NY) McMorris Rodgers Miller, Gary Radel Reed Rush Sires Stockman {time} 1428 Messrs. O'ROURKE, LEVIN, JOHNSON of Georgia, DEUTCH, and **BEN RAY LUJAN** of New Mexico changed their vote from ``yea'' to ``nay.'' Mr. POE of Texas changed his vote from ``nay'' to ``yea.'' So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution. The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it. Recorded Vote Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote. A recorded vote was ordered. The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote. The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were--ayes 229, noes 185, not voting 17, as follows: [Roll No. 619] AYES--229 Aderholt Amash Amodei Bachmann Bachus Barber Barletta Barr Barton Benishek Bentivolio Bilirakis Bishop (UT) Black Blackburn Boustany Brady (TX) Bridenstine Brooks (AL) Brooks (IN) Broun (GA) Buchanan Bucshon Burgess Calvert Camp Cantor [[Page H7470]] Capito Cardenas Carter Cassidy Chabot Chaffetz Coble Coffman Cole Collins (GA) Collins (NY) Conaway Cook Cooper Cotton Cramer Crawford Crenshaw Daines Davis, Rodney Denham Dent DeSantis DesJarlais Diaz-Balart Duckworth Duffy Duncan (SC) Duncan (TN) Ellmers Farenthold Fincher Fitzpatrick Fleischmann Fleming Flores Forbes Fortenberry Foxx Franks (AZ) Frelinghuysen Gardner Garrett Gerlach Gibbs Gibson Gohmert Goodlatte Gosar Gowdy Granger Graves (GA) Griffin (AR) Griffith (VA) Grimm Guthrie Hall Hanna Harper Harris Hartzler Hastings (WA) Heck (NV) Hensarling Himes Holding Hudson Huelskamp Huizenga (MI) Hultgren Hunter Hurt Issa Jenkins Johnson (OH) Johnson, Sam Jones Jordan Joyce Kelly (PA) King (IA) King (NY) Kingston Kinzinger (IL) Kline Labrador LaMalfa Lamborn Lance Lankford Latham Latta LoBiondo Long Lucas Luetkemeyer Marchant Marino Massie McAllister McCarthy (CA) McCaul McClintock McHenry McIntyre McKeon McKinley Meadows Meehan Messer Mica Miller (FL) Miller (MI) Mullin Mulvaney Murphy (FL) Murphy (PA) Neugebauer Noem Nugent Nunes Nunnelee Olson Palazzo Paulsen Pearce Perry Petri Pittenger Pitts Poe (TX) Pompeo Posey Price (GA) Rahall Reichert Renacci Ribble Rice (SC) Rigell Roby Roe (TN) Rogers (AL) Rogers (KY) Rogers (MI) Rohrabacher Rokita Rooney Ros-Lehtinen Roskam Ross Rothfus Royce Runyan Ryan (WI) Salmon Sanford Scalise Schock Schweikert Scott, Austin Sensenbrenner Sessions Shimkus Shuster Simpson Sinema Smith (MO) Smith (NE) Smith (NJ) Smith (TX) Southerland Stewart Stivers Stutzman Terry Thompson (PA) Thornberry Tiberi Tipton Turner Upton Valadao Wagner Walberg Walden Walorski Weber (TX) Webster (FL) Wenstrup Westmoreland Whitfield Williams Wilson (SC) Wittman Wolf Womack Woodall Yoder Yoho Young (AK) Young (IN) NOES--185 Andrews Barrow (GA) Bass Beatty Becerra Bera (CA) Bishop (NY) Blumenauer Bonamici Brady (PA) Braley (IA) Brown (FL) Brownley (CA) Bustos Butterfield Capps Capuano Carney Carson (IN) Cartwright Castor (FL) Castro (TX) Chu Cicilline Clarke Clay Cleaver Clyburn Cohen Connolly Conyers Costa Courtney Crowley Cuellar Cummings Davis (CA) Davis, Danny DeFazio DeGette Delaney DeLauro DelBene Deutch Dingell Doggett Doyle Edwards

Ellison Engel Eshoo Esty Farr Fattah Foster Frankel (FL) Fudge Gabbard Gallego Garamendi Garcia Green, Al Green, Gene Grijalva Gutierrez Hahn Hanabusa Hastings (FL) Heck (WA) Higgins Hinojosa Holt Honda Horsford Hoyer Huffman Israel Jackson Lee Jeffries Johnson (GA) Johnson, E. B. Kaptur Keating Kelly (IL) Kennedy Kildee Kilmer Kind Kirkpatrick Kuster Langevin Larsen (WA) Larson (CT) Lee (CA) Levin Lewis Lipinski Loebsack Lofgren Lowenthal Lowey **Lujan** Grisham (NM) **Lujan**, Ben Ray (NM) Lynch Maffei Maloney, Carolyn Maloney, Sean Matheson Matsui McCollum McDermott McGovern McNerney Meeks Meng Michaud Miller, George Moore Moran Nadler Napolitano Neal Negrete McLeod Nolan O'Rourke Owens Pallone Pascrell Pastor (AZ) Payne Pelosi Perlmutter Peters (CA) Peters (MI) Peterson Pingree (ME) Pocan Polis Price (NC) Quigley Rangel Richmond Roybal-Allard Ruiz Ruppersberger Ryan (OH) Sanchez, Linda T. Sanchez, Loretta Sarbanes Schakowsky Schiff Schneider Schrader Schwartz Scott (VA) Scott, David Serrano Sewell (AL) Shea-Porter Sherman Slaughter Smith (WA) Speier Swalwell (CA) Takano Thompson (CA) Thompson (MS) Tierney Titus Tonko Tsongas Van Hollen Vargas Veasey Vela Velazquez Visclosky Walz Wasserman Schultz Waters Watt Waxman Welch Wilson (FL) Yarmuth NOT VOTING--17 Bishop (GA) Campbell Culberson Enyart Gingrey (GA) Graves (MO) Grayson Herrera Beutler Lummis McCarthy (NY) McMorris Rodgers Miller, Gary Radel Reed Rush Sires Stockman Announcement by the Speaker Pro Tempore The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining. {time} 1434 So the resolution was agreed to. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded. A motion to reconsider was laid on the table. personal Explanation Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 618 on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 429, providing consideration of the bills H.R. 1105--the Small Business Capital Access and Job Preservation Act--and H.R. 3309--the Innovation Act--I am not recorded due to a family medical emergency. Had I been present. I would have voted ``yea.'' Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 619 on adoption of H. Res. 429, providing consideration of the bills H.R. 1105--the Small Business Capital Access and Job Preservation Act--and H.R. 3309--the Innovation Act--I am not recorded due to a family medical emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted ``yea.''

For more information please visit: http://beta.congress.gov

LOAD-DATE: December 5, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

388 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

December 3, 2013

Lujan Grisham, CHC Statements of Support On National Day To Act, Fast And Pray;
Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 847 words

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, U.S. Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01) and Members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus issued statements of support on the National Day to Act, Fast and Pray.

Since November 12, a core group of leaders has been fasting for immigration reform on the National Mall. The group includes SEIU's Eliseo Medina, NAKASEC's Dae Joong Yoon, DREAMer and Mi Familia Vota's Christian Avila, and Sojourner's Lisa Sharon Harper. Across the country, over 5,000 people are joining in the fast and calling on House Republican Leadership to act on comprehensive immigration reform.

"The holiday season is traditionally a time to be grateful for our blessings in life while also renewing our commitment to helping others. For those of us fortunate enough to spend the holidays with our loved ones, these courageous fasters serve as a constant reminder that far too many immigrant families have empty places at their tables because of our broken immigration system. I recently participated in a 48-hour solidarity fast in Albuquerque and was truly inspired by the strength and conviction of the fasters - both in New Mexico and across the country - who are sacrificing their own well-being to send a clear message to Congress: It's time to side with a majority of the American people in addition to countless business, faith and community leaders and finally pass immigration reform with an earned path to citizenship." -- CHC Whip Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01).

"Eliseo Medina, Dae Joong Yoon, Christian Avila and Lisa Sharon Harper have demonstrated enormous strength, endurance and perseverance for the past 21 days. The personal sacrifice this group is making has encouraged thousands of others to participate in a national call for action. Today, on this 22nd day of fasting and National Day to Act, Fast and Pray, I call on House Republican Leadership to listen to the American people and allow a vote on comprehensive immigration reform." -- CHC Chairman Ruben Hinojosa (TX-15).

"For more than three weeks, a brave group dedicated to changing our broken immigration system has fasted to draw attention to and express the need for comprehensive reform. Their personal sacrifice on behalf of the DREAMers who want to contribute to the only home they have ever known, the hard-working immigrants who live in the shadows, and the families who have been separated has helped call attention to the need for action. I commend their enduring spirit and courage to stand up for what is right for our country and for the millions of people who want to add to the greatness of America." -- CHC First Vice Chair **Ben Ray Lujan**(NM-3).

"The courage and dedication shown by the fasters is inspiring. They are more than activists, these are real people who have to live with the consequences if Congress fails to pass comprehensive immigration reform. They haven't given up and neither should Congress. It's time for Republicans to summon some of the courage showed by the fasters to pass comprehensive immigration reform now." -- CHC Second Vice Chair Linda Sanchez (CA-38).

"My friend Eliseo Medina and the other fasters put their health on the line because a moral and just cause requires sacrifice when comfortable politicians seem content with inaction. The country cannot afford to let the immigration crisis fester, especially when the solution is so close at hand. The message to Congress is clear: doing nothing on immigration is not an option." -- CHC Immigration Task Force Chair Luis Gutierrez (IL -04).

"It is unfortunate these brave souls are suffering in the name of immigration reform. I commend their courageous efforts and call on Speaker Boehner to bring HR 15 to the floor for a vote this year, ending this great debate." -- Congressman Joe Garcia (FL-26).

"I ask Speaker Boehner to do what is in the best for our country and economy, and heed what millions of Americans across the nation want: To fix this broken immigration system." -- Congresswoman Gloria Negrete McLeod (CA-35).

"It has been almost one month since Fast 4 Families began their effort to bring comprehensive immigration reform to vote in the House. Passing a commonsense, comprehensive immigration reform bill is not only the right thing to do, but will lead to an economic boon in my home district and across the country. All those participating in this fast are in my thoughts and prayers, and have my

continued and unrelenting support. Its time House leadership put aside the political posturing and do what's right for America - bring this comprehensive immigration reform bill to the floor for a vote." -- Congressman Raul Ruiz (CA-36).

"I am proud to support the Fasters, who through their own personal sacrifice, are highlighting the need for comprehensive immigration reform. We cannot have an immigration system that creates second-class citizens and stunts the progress of our immigrant community." -- Congressman Juan Vargas (CA-51).

Read this original document at: http://lujangrisham.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/**lujan**-grisham-chc-statements-of-support-on-national-day-to-act-fast-and

LOAD-DATE: December 4, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMC

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

389 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Carlsbad Current-Argus (New Mexico)

December 1, 2013 Sunday

Voting record for New Mexico's U.S. congressional delegation for Nov. 17-30

BYLINE: Carlsbad Current-Argus

SECTION: NEWS

LENGTH: 225 words

Voting record for New Mexico's U.S. congressional delegation for Nov. 17-30 U.S. House

HR 2061 Digital Accountability and Transparency Act (Passed 388-1) Steve Pearce yes, **Ben Ray Lujan** yes, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HR 1965 To streamline and ensure onshore energy permitting, provide for onshore leasing certainty, and give certainty to oil shale development for American energy security, economic development, and job creation, and for other purposes. (Passed 228-192) Pearce yes, **Lujan** no, **Lujan** Grisham no.

HR 1900 Natural Gas Permitting Reform Act (Passed 252-165) Pearce yes, **Lujan** no, **Lujan** Grisham no. U.S. Senate

PN 527 Upon Reconsideration Motion to Invoke Cloture on the Nomination of Patricia Ann Millett. (Passed 55-43) Martin Heinrich yes, Tom Udall yes.

S 1197 An original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2014 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes -- motion to invoke cloture. (Failed 51-44 -- three-fifths majority needed) Heinrich yes, Udall yes.

S Con Res 28 A concurrent resolution providing for a conditional adjournment or recess of the Senate and an adjournment of the House of Representatives. (Passed 51-42) Heinrich yes, Udall yes.

LOAD-DATE: December 2, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Carlsbad Current-Argus, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

390 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Targeted News Service

November 27, 2013 Wednesday 7:19 PM EST

Rep. Grisham Introduces Bill to Amend T'uf Shur Bien Preservation Trust Area Act

BYLINE: by MERLY LAPIG, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 175 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Nov. 27 -- Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, N.M., has introduced legislation (H.R. 3605) to "make a technical amendment to the T'uf Shur Bien Preservation Trust Area Act."

The bill was introduced on Nov. 21 and has two co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., and Stevan Pearce, R-N.M.

The legislation was referred to the House Natural Resources Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/LegislativeData.php?&n=BillText. For more information about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information about Targeted News Service products and services, please contact: Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://targetednews.com.

22LapigM 131127-db-1145034

LOAD-DATE: November 27, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

391 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

November 22, 2013 Friday

Luján Highlights Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month on House Floor

LENGTH: 267 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the House of Representative **Ben Ray Luján**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor today in recognition of Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month and the importance of funding medical research that is essential to fighting the disease. Below are his remarks as delivered.

"Mr. Speaker, November is Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month, when we bring awareness to a disease that takes the lives of too many men and women. Pancreatic cancer is the tenth most commonly diagnosed cancer in men and the ninth in women, but it's the fourth leading cause of cancer death. Sadly, it is estimated this year that 73 percent of patients with this disease will die within the first year of diagnosis.

"While these statistics are daunting, I believe that Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month is a time for hope. It is a time when we stand up and call attention to this disease, when we call for more research to better find methods of early detection. It is a time to share the stories of those we have lost in the hope that they will help spur action and move us closer to more effective treatments.

"Mr. Speaker, pancreatic cancer patients and their families are among the countless Americans demanding that we fix sequestration that has reduced funding for the National Institutes of Health and the National Cancer Institute and held back progress toward live-saving medical research.

"It is critical that we work together to fight this terrible disease."

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov

LOAD-DATE: November 23, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

392 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

November 22, 2013 Friday

Udall, Heinrich, Luján Underscore Economic Value of Conservation In Continued Effort To Designate Columbine-Hondo As Wilderness

LENGTH: 360 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the House of Representative **Ben Ray Luján**, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Today, during a Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources hearing, U.S. Senators Tom Udall (D-N.M.) and Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.), who serves on the committee, continued their effort to designate the 45,000-acre Columbine-Hondo area in Taos County as wilderness. Udall and Heinrich introduced the proposal, S. 776, the Columbine-Hondo Wilderness Act, earlier this year. A companion bill, H.R. 1683, was introduced in the House by Representative **Ben Ray Luján** (D-N.M.-03).

The legislation would expand the Wheeler Peak Wilderness by approximately 650 acres. The proposal would also modify a boundary that creates a loop trail accessible by mountain bikes along the Lost Lake trail from Taos Ski Valley to the East Fork trail to Red River.

"This bill is the result of years of work by many people on how best to protect the Columbine Hondo's economic, recreational and scenic values," Udall said. "Taos County residents, ranchers, governments and businesses resoundingly agree that this area deserves permanent wilderness status. By designating the Columbine Hondo as wilderness, we will open up new tourism and recreation opportunities and protect vital tributaries to the Río Grande, while providing for continued traditional land uses, such as hunting and grazing."

"The Columbine-Hondo is one of the most treasured places in New Mexico," Heinrich said. "Columbine-Hondo is a central attraction for visitors to Taos County, where outdoor recreation and tourism drive the local economy. People come to these mountains to hike, camp, hunt, fish, and spend time with their families, and invariably they leave Taos County with their wallets a little lighter. Permanent protection through this legislation will ensure that future generations have the same opportunities in the Columbine-Hondo that we have today. This legislation is a true community effort, and I want to thank all the members of the Taos community who have worked so hard for decades to make this wilderness area a reality."

For further information please visit: http://**lujan**.house.gov

LOAD-DATE: November 23, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

393 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

November 21, 2013

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS PANCREATIC CANCER AWARENESS MONTH ON HOUSE FLOOR;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 264 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor today in recognition of Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month and the importance of funding medical research that is essential to fighting the disease. Below are his remarks as delivered.

"Mr. Speaker, November is Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month, when we bring awareness to a disease that takes the lives of too many men and women. Pancreatic cancer is the tenth most commonly diagnosed cancer in men and the ninth in women, but it's the fourth leading cause of cancer death. Sadly, it is estimated this year that 73 percent of patients with this disease will die within the first year of diagnosis.

"While these statistics are daunting, I believe that Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month is a time for hope. It is a time when we stand up and call attention to this disease, when we call for more research to better find methods of early detection. It is a time to share the stories of those we have lost in the hope that they will help spur action and move us closer to more effective treatments.

"Mr. Speaker, pancreatic cancer patients and their families are among the countless Americans demanding that we fix sequestration that has reduced funding for the National Institutes of Health and the National Cancer Institute and held back progress toward live-saving medical research.

"It is critical that we work together to fight this terrible disease."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-highlights-pancreatic-cancer-awareness-month-on-house-floor/

LOAD-DATE: November 22, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMB

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

November 21, 2013 Thursday

LUJAN HIGHLIGHTS PANCREATIC CANCER AWARENESS MONTH ON HOUSE FLOOR

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 252 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor today in recognition of Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month and the importance of funding medical research that is essential to fighting the disease. Below are his remarks as delivered.

"Mr. Speaker, November is Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month, when we bring awareness to a disease that takes the lives of too many men and women. Pancreatic cancer is the tenth most commonly diagnosed cancer in men and the ninth in women, but it's the fourth leading cause of cancer death. Sadly, it is estimated this year that 73 percent of patients with this disease will die within the first year of diagnosis.

"While these statistics are daunting, I believe that Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month is a time for hope. It is a time when we stand up and call attention to this disease, when we call for more research to better find methods of early detection. It is a time to share the stories of those we have lost in the hope that they will help spur action and move us closer to more effective treatments.

"Mr. Speaker, pancreatic cancer patients and their families are among the countless Americans demanding that we fix sequestration that has reduced funding for the National Institutes of Health and the National Cancer Institute and held back progress toward live-saving medical research.

"It is critical that we work together to fight this terrible disease."

LOAD-DATE: November 27, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

Targeted News Service

November 21, 2013 Thursday 12:45 AM EST

Lujan Highlights Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month on House Floor

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 262 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke on the House floor today in recognition of Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month and the importance of funding medical research that is essential to fighting the disease. Below are his remarks as delivered.

"Mr. Speaker, November is Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month, when we bring awareness to a disease that takes the lives of too many men and women. Pancreatic cancer is the tenth most commonly diagnosed cancer in men and the ninth in women, but it's the fourth leading cause of cancer death. Sadly, it is estimated this year that 73 percent of patients with this disease will die within the first year of diagnosis.

"While these statistics are daunting, I believe that Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month is a time for hope. It is a time when we stand up and call attention to this disease, when we call for more research to better find methods of early detection. It is a time to share the stories of those we have lost in the hope that they will help spur action and move us closer to more effective treatments.

"Mr. Speaker, pancreatic cancer patients and their families are among the countless Americans demanding that we fix sequestration that has reduced funding for the National Institutes of Health and the National Cancer Institute and held back progress toward live-saving medical research.

"It is critical that we work together to fight this terrible disease."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131122-4557776 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: November 22, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

November 20, 2013

LUJAN HONORS NATIVE AMERICAN CODE TALKERS; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 332 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after Native American Code Talkers were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for their service in World War I and II. **Lujan** joined members of the Pueblo of Acoma - including tribal leaders, veterans, and family members of Code Talkers - at the National Museum of the American Indian during the presentation of silver medals to representatives of the Code Talkers.

"Today, Congress honored Native American Code Talkers by presenting them with the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest recognition that Congress bestows for distinguished achievements and contributions. The Native American Code Talkers who contributed to victories in World War I and World War II are deserving of such a high honor. They played a vital role in the effort to defeat the enemy by transmitting messages in their native languages.

"Thirty-three tribes from around the country were recognized with this honor and over 200 silver medals were presented to families of code talkers.

"The secure codes that Native American Code Talkers used remained unbroken in both World Wars, enabling essential communications between Allied forces that helped save the lives of countless soldiers and played a key role in victory.

"New Mexico is home to the Pueblo of Acoma and the Pueblo of Laguna, two tribes whose service we are proud to recognize and whose efforts deserve our gratitude. In my district in New Mexico, I am honored to represent part of the Navajo Nation and the brave individuals who served with distinction as Code Talkers during World War II.

"The efforts of these heroes and all of the Native American Code Talkers who answered the call to serve this country when they were needed most will forever be remembered. We thank them for their brave service and we honor their sacrifice."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-honors-native-american-code-talkers/

LOAD-DATE: November 21, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMB

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

November 20, 2013

Udall, Heinrich, Lujan Underscore Economic Value of Conservation In Continued Effort To Designate Columbine-Hondo As Wilderness;
Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 634 words

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, during a Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources hearing, U.S. Senators Tom Udall (D-N.M.) and Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.), who serves on the committee, continued their effort to designate the 45,000-acre Columbine-Hondo area in Taos County as wilderness. Udall and Heinrich introduced the proposal, S. 776, the Columbine-Hondo Wilderness Act, earlier this year. A companion bill, H.R. 1683, was introduced in the House by Representative **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-N.M.-03).

The legislation would expand the Wheeler Peak Wilderness by approximately 650 acres. The proposal would also modify a boundary that creates a loop trail accessible by mountain bikes along the Lost Lake trail from Taos Ski Valley to the East Fork trail to Red River.

"This bill is the result of years of work by many people on how best to protect the Columbine Hondo's economic, recreational and scenic values," Udall said. "Taos County residents, ranchers, governments and businesses resoundingly agree that this area deserves permanent wilderness status. By designating the Columbine Hondo as wilderness, we will open up new tourism and recreation opportunities and protect vital tributaries to the Rio Grande, while providing for continued traditional land uses, such as hunting and grazing."

"The Columbine-Hondo is one of the most treasured places in New Mexico," Heinrich said. "Columbine-Hondo is a central attraction for visitors to Taos County, where outdoor recreation and tourism drive the local economy. People come to these mountains to hike, camp, hunt, fish, and spend time with their families, and invariably they leave Taos County with their wallets a little lighter. Permanent protection through this legislation will ensure that future generations have the same opportunities in the Columbine-Hondo that we have today. This legislation is a true community effort, and I want to thank all the members of the Taos community who have worked so hard for decades to make this wilderness area a reality."

"The Columbine-Hondo Wilderness Act is the culmination of years of hard work and compromise between various stakeholders in Northern New Mexico, including the conservation community, the recreation community, local ranchers, local governments, small businesses and the Pueblo of Taos," **Lujan** said. "This piece of legislation will help bring certainty to land managers as well as new

economic opportunities for those who utilize the Carson National Forest for their livelihoods and recreation."

Located in the Carson National Forest, the Columbine-Hondo has been managed as a "Wilderness Study Area" since 1980. A map of the proposal can be found here http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/download/columbine-hondo-wheeler-peak-wilderness-legislative-map.

The Columbine-Hondo includes lush forests and alpine meadows populated by a variety of Rocky Mountain wildlife, including elk, mule deer, mountain lions, black bears, and bighorn sheep. The area's watershed serves as the headwaters for the Rio Hondo and Red River, which flow into the Rio Grande and to downstream agricultural communities.

The legislation is supported by the Taos County Commission, Taos Pueblo, the towns of Taos and Red River, villages of Questa and Taos Ski Valley, Taos County Chamber of Commerce, sportsmen, ranchers, conservation organizations, farmers and irrigation districts (acequias), the Taos Cycling Coalition, International Mountain Bicycling Association, land grant heirs, and hundreds of small businesses.

A copy of the bill can be found here http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/download/columbine-hondo-wilderness-act.

Read this original document at: http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/press-releases/udall-heinrich-**lujan**-underscore-economic-value-of-conservation-in-continued-effort-to-designate-columbine-hondo-as-wilderness

LOAD-DATE: November 21, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSSMB

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

November 20, 2013 Wednesday

LUJAN HONORS NATIVE AMERICAN CODE TALKERS

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 323 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after Native American Code Talkers were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for their service in World War I and II. **Lujan** joined members of the Pueblo of Acoma - including tribal leaders, veterans, and family members of Code Talkers - at the National Museum of the American Indian during the presentation of silver medals to representatives of the Code Talkers.

"Today, Congress honored Native American Code Talkers by presenting them with the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest recognition that Congress bestows for distinguished achievements and contributions. The Native American Code Talkers who contributed to victories in World War I and World War II are deserving of such a high honor. They played a vital role in the effort to defeat the enemy by transmitting messages in their native languages.

"Thirty-three tribes from around the country were recognized with this honor and over 200 silver medals were presented to families of code talkers.

"The secure codes that Native American Code Talkers used remained unbroken in both World Wars, enabling essential communications between Allied forces that helped save the lives of countless soldiers and played a key role in victory.

"New Mexico is home to the Pueblo of Acoma and the Pueblo of Laguna, two tribes whose service we are proud to recognize and whose efforts deserve our gratitude. In my district in New Mexico, I am honored to represent part of the Navajo Nation and the brave individuals who served with distinction as Code Talkers during World War II.

"The efforts of these heroes and all of the Native American Code Talkers who answered the call to serve this country when they were needed most will forever be remembered. We thank them for their brave service and we honor their sacrifice."

LOAD-DATE: November 27, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

Targeted News Service

November 20, 2013 Wednesday 8:41 PM EST

Lujan Honors Native American Code Talkers

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 333 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after Native American Code Talkers were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for their service in World War I and II. **Lujan** joined members of the Pueblo of Acoma - including tribal leaders, veterans, and family members of Code Talkers - at the National Museum of the American Indian during the presentation of silver medals to representatives of the Code Talkers.

"Today, Congress honored Native American Code Talkers by presenting them with the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest recognition that Congress bestows for distinguished achievements and contributions. The Native American Code Talkers who contributed to victories in World War I and World War II are deserving of such a high honor. They played a vital role in the effort to defeat the enemy by transmitting messages in their native languages.

"Thirty-three tribes from around the country were recognized with this honor and over 200 silver medals were presented to families of code talkers.

"The secure codes that Native American Code Talkers used remained unbroken in both World Wars, enabling essential communications between Allied forces that helped save the lives of countless soldiers and played a key role in victory.

"New Mexico is home to the Pueblo of Acoma and the Pueblo of Laguna, two tribes whose service we are proud to recognize and whose efforts deserve our gratitude. In my district in New Mexico, I am honored to represent part of the Navajo Nation and the brave individuals who served with distinction as Code Talkers during World War II.

"The efforts of these heroes and all of the Native American Code Talkers who answered the call to serve this country when they were needed most will forever be remembered. We thank them for their brave service and we honor their sacrifice."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131121-4555488 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: November 20, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

400 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

November 16, 2013 Saturday

Washington: KEEP YOUR HEALTH PLAN ACT OF 2013

LENGTH: 42394 words

DATELINE: Washington

United States Congress has issued the following proceedings and debate details:

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 413 and ask for its immediate consideration. The Clerk read the resolution, as follows: H. Res. 413 Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 3350) to authorize health insurance issuers to continue to offer for sale current individual health insurance coverage in satisfaction of the minimum essential health insurance coverage requirement, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived.

The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce; and (2) one motion to recommit. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour. Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. McGovern), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only. General Leave Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas? There was no objection. Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 413 provides for consideration of H.R. 3350, the Keep Your Plan Act of 2013. The rule provides for 1 hour of debate controlled by the Committee on Energy and Commerce, equally divided between the majority and the minority. Because the bill addresses a targeted emergency situation caused by the lack of foresight in the Affordable Care Act, namely, the cancellation of millions of existing health insurance plans despite repeated promises to the contrary, because of that, the rule makes no amendments in order. However, the minority is afforded the customary opportunity to offer one motion to recommit, should they so choose. This is a fair rule to allow us to give some relief to Americans who actually want to keep their health insurance plan but are being told that because of the Affordable Care Act, they may not. We are now 6 weeks into the disastrous launch of the President's signature health care law, and more and more problems are uncovered with each succeeding day. It seems that the President has quickly forgotten all of the promises made over the past 4 years to the American people about this law. In 2009, in a speech before the American Medical Association, President Obama stated: We will keep this promise to the American people: if you like your doctor, you will be able to keep your doctor, period. If you like your health care plan, you'll be able to keep your health care plan, period. No one will take it away, no matter what. At the end of September, the President said: The first thing you need to know is this: if you already have health care, you don't have to do anything. Americans from across the country, from across the ideological spectrum agree that President Obama has broken his fundamental promise. And now his attempts to reconcile this broken promise only serve to bring further confusion and chaos. Today, H.R. 3350 offers a real solution. The bill would allow plans available on the individual market today to be offered in calendar year 2014. It would provide millions of Americans the opportunity to keep their health care plan in 2014. The bill would also ensure that Americans keeping their plans would not face a penalty under ObamaCare's individual mandate. Mr. Speaker, I have heard from constituents about the problems that they have faced because of the President's law. A Texan from Flower Mound, Texas, recently wrote me about how her insurance has doubled in recent years because of the Affordable Care Act. In short, she wrote me that ``I miss 2009 when our family health care was affordable.'' Millions of Americans, just like this Texan, are losing their health care coverage. They are facing massive increases in their premiums and losing access to their doctor under the Affordable Care Act. The Associated Press has reported that over 3.5 million people on the individual insurance market have had their insurance canceled. Let me restate that: the Associated Press has reported that over 3.5 million people on the individual insurance market have had their health care plans canceled. We learned just this week the number of people who successfully signed up on the President's Web site for the Affordable Care Act, under 27,000--3.5 million lose their insurance; 27,000 sign up. It doesn't sound like a fair trade-off. This is not the first time that the President has realized that his signature law is significantly flawed. Since the law was passed, the President has signed seven bills into law that have repealed portions of the Affordable Care Act. Those were laws

passed by the House, passed by the Senate, and sent down to the White House for signature, the way it is supposed to happen in a constitutional Republic. But in addition to these statutory changes that were passed by the Congress and sent down to the President [[Page H7116]] for his signature, the President has taken it upon himself to issue a multitude of administrative fixes to the law. And now this same President wants to, once again, fix his own law? Can we really trust the administration that wrote this disastrous missive in the first place and so mishandled the implementation? Do we trust them to now fix it? Do we trust them not to change their minds in 2 or 3 weeks' time when perhaps winds are blowing from a different direction? The White House is saying that it will use its administrative authority to allow health plans that it deemed illegal to now still be able to be sold, but this bill that the House is considering today provides a fix that is both constitutional and follows the legal process. H.R. 3350 offers a legislative solution to help Americans get a lifeboat, a life raft up from under the crushing weight of this law. The bill would grandfather in all existing health care plans so that no American will lose their coverage as a result of the Affordable Care Act. President Obama is shifting the blame. He is saying it is up to States and the State insurance commissioners to fix the massive problem that his signature law has created for millions of Americans who are losing their health insurance. His attempt at another ``fix'' is quickly coming to a halt. Just hours after the President's announcement, the Washington State insurance commissioner announced that he will not allow insurance companies to continue offering the canceled plans: We will not be allowing insurance companies to extend their policies. I believe this is in the best interest of the health insurance market in Washington. It is clear that H.R. 3350 offers the only feasible lifeline to millions of Americans who are crying out for our help. They want to keep their health care plan. It is our job, it is the job of the Congress, to protect the American people from the excesses of this administration. And I urge my colleagues to pass this rule so Americans will have the opportunity to keep their health care plan. Let's be very clear here: this bill today cannot fix the Affordable Care Act. What has been visited upon the American people in the Affordable Care Act will not be resolved by this action today. It is merely to stop the bleeding. It is an effort to triage, to stabilize the patient. Maybe then we can get the same patient to the operating room to actually fix the problem that bedevils it. The bill we are voting on today serves to stop that hemorrhaging, and the hemorrhaging that is occurring is a consequence of the ill- conceived government takeover of the American health care industry. Any good triage doctor knows before they can fully treat or cure the patient they have to deal with the immediate problems. In this case, they have to stop the hemorrhage of people losing their private health insurance because of the Affordable Care Act. That is what the House of Representatives will do today. That is what House Republicans will be voting in favor of. I hope that our colleagues across the aisle will see the wisdom in this and join us. I encourage everyone in this House to vote ``yes'' on the rule and ``yes'' on the underlying bill. Let's stand with millions of Americans who are visited daily by cancelation notices in their mailboxes. Despite the promises made to them, they are losing their insurance because of this disastrous law. With that, I reserve the balance of my time. Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. Burgess) for yielding me the time; and I yield myself such time as I may consume. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong, strong opposition to this closed rule and to the underlying bill. This is effort number 46, by my count, to gut the Affordable Care Act. Before I discuss the problems with the underlying bill, let me address, just so the record is clear, the latest example of lousy process foisted upon this House by the Republican leadership. The bill before us today would make sweeping and significant changes to the Affordable Care Act and, thus, to the Nation's health care system. It would profoundly affect the lives of millions of Americans, upend the individual market, and add confusion and uncertainty into an already complicated situation. So how many hearings did the Republicans hold on this bill? Zero. Let me repeat that: zero. How many expert witnesses did they call? Zip. How many markups did they have in the committees of jurisdiction? Nada. Yet again, Republican promises of regular order and a thoughtful legislative process have been thrown out the window. And with all due respect to my friend from Texas, to stand here and say with a straight face that this is some kind of an emergency, we can't have any amendments made in order, we just don't have the time, defies comprehension. We have a rule that is closed that allows for 1 hour of debate--not even split amongst the committees of jurisdiction. This bill, by right, is not only an Energy and Commerce bill, it is a Ways and Means bill, but the Ways and Means Committee doesn't get any time to debate this bill. Mr. Speaker, 1 hour. You mean we couldn't have 2 hours of debate and a few amendments? Or 3 hours of debate and a few more amendments? Or 5 hours of debate or a whole day of debate, given the fact that you didn't hold any hearings on this bill? Give me a break. This is not the way to run the House of Representatives. This is not the way you promised you would run the House of Representatives. And, by contrast, on the Affordable Care Act, we had hundreds of hours of debate and markups in which Republican

amendments were actually accepted. Now you may not like the Affordable Care Act, but it went through a process. This went through no process. This was just brought up to the Rules Committee, and we are told to bring it right to the floor. This is not a serious attempt to fix the Affordable Care Act. This is a political statement, and I understand the temptation behind it. Believe me, no one is more frustrated by the problems with the rollout of the Affordable Care Act than those of us who voted for it, believe in it, and want it to work. But instead of working with us to try to actually fix the problems and make the law work, the Republicans have brought forth this Upton bill. Now, Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear about this bill. It is an attempt to drag us back to the bad old days of the American health care system. It would allow insurance companies to go back to offering cut-rate, shoddy policies that lack the consumer protections required by the Affordable Care Act. So if you want to go back to a system where insurance companies could turn people away because they are sick, by all means vote for this bill. If you want to go back to a time when women were charged higher rates than men because being a female counted as a preexisting condition, then vote for the Upton bill. If you believe that insurers should be allowed to eliminate somebody's coverage if they get sick or are older or if they have a child or for no good reason whatsoever, then the Upton bill is for you. In short, a vote for the Upton bill is a vote in favor of everything the American people say that they hate about the health care system in this country. {time} 0930 Yesterday, in the Rules Committee, my friend, Dr. Burgess, made it very clear that the Upton bill is not an attempt to fix the Affordable Care Act. They are only interested in full repeal. They are perfectly satisfied with 40 million Americans having no health insurance at all. Speaker Boehner made a similar statement yesterday. As I said, the rollout of the health care plan has not been perfect, and I know that my own home State of Massachusetts, the rollout of our State health care law was not perfect either. But Democrats in Massachusetts did not go out of their way over and over and over again to sabotage it just because a Republican Governor named Mitt Romney signed it into law. We worked to make it better. And by 2009, I am proud to say, my congressional district had the highest rate of insurance coverage in the entire country. That is a good thing. If my Republican friends think that we are going to go back to a system where we in Massachusetts did the right thing but ended up paying for the [[Page H7117]] uncompensated care of people in Texas, North Carolina, Utah, or anywhere else, they are wrong. At some point, we have to get serious about the goal of providing good quality, affordable health insurance to every American. The Upton bill gets us no closer to that goal. It is yet another political waste of time. Mr. Speaker, let me just close by making this observation. What this debate is about--and it has turned into an ideological debate--is whether or not you believe that every single American in this country is entitled to good quality health insurance or not. My friends on the other side of the aisle obviously believe that it is okay that 40 million Americans don't have health insurance, because for the last few years they haven't offered anything other than repeal--repeal, repeal, repeal--and offering nothing as a substitute. They think it is okay to let the insurance companies decide whether you get health care or not based on a preexisting condition or whether you are a female or whether or not you are too old or too sick or whatever. They have been perfectly satisfied with the broken system that was in place. So that is the choice here. And I would urge my colleagues to understand that there is something wrong with the fact that, in the greatest country in the world and the richest country in the history of the world, so many of our fellow citizens don't have health care, don't have access to health insurance. And we can fix that. By fixing that, we not only improve the quality of life for our neighbors, our friends, and our fellow citizens, but we also help control health care costs. Because one of the biggest drivers of increased health care costs is the uncompensated care pool. So let's get serious. Let's stop this political posturing. I know you don't like the President. You have gone out of your way to say some things that are so outrageous, it is hard for me to believe that Members of Congress would say such things. But get over it and do what is right for the American people. Vote ``no'' on this closed rule. Vote ``no'' on the underlying bill. I reserve the balance of my time. Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute. First off, I do need to point out that yesterday, the President of the United States thought that this situation represented an emergency that required his immediate attention, and he rushed a press conference at high noon yesterday to announce his resolution for the problem. As far as the issue of hearings, I will submit a list of eight hearings that were held in the Energy and Commerce Committee over calendar year 2013 on the issue of grandfathering health care plans. But the most important thing I wish to point out, for those of you who were here in 2009, we will remember, H.R. 3200 was the Democratic health care reform bill. That bill is now lost forever in the vapor, in the ether. No one knows what became of it. H.R. 3590 passed the House of Representatives in July of 2009. It passed as a housing bill. It went over to the Senate to await further action. The further action was an amendment by Harry Reid late in December of 2009 ``to strike all after the enacting clause and

insert.'' All the housing language was taken out, all of the health care language was inserted. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired. Mr. BURGESS. I yield myself an additional 30 seconds. As a consequence, this bill came over to the House and we just simply had to pass it. We had to pass it before we found out what was in it. We didn't have a hearing on H.R. 3590. We didn't have a markup in any committee that I sat on in 2010 on H.R. 3590. This was a bill that was visited upon the American people without the due caution and exercise of the United States House of Representatives. CBO Analysis: CBO analysis is not currently available. Committee Action: The Energy and Commerce Committee has held the following ACA-related hearings: Full Committee: August 1, 2013: PPACA Pulse Check October 24, 2013: PPACA Implementation Failures: Didn't Know or Didn't Disclose? October 30, 2013: PPACA Implementation Failures: Answers from HHS Subcommittee on Health: February 14, 2013: SGR: Data, Measures and Models; Building a Future Medicare Physician Payment System February 27, 2013: Fostering Innovation to Fight Waste, Fraud and Abuse in Health Care March 13, 2013: Obamacare's Impact on Jobs March 15, 2013: Unaffordable: Impact of Obamacare on Americans' Health Insurance Premiums March 18, 2013: Saving Seniors and Our Most Vulnerable Citizens from an Entitlement Crisis March 20, 2013: Health Information Technologies: How Innovation Benefits Patients April 3, 2013: Protecting America's Sick and Chronically Ill April 18, 2013: A Financial Review of the Department of Health and Human Services and Its FY 2014 Budget September 10, 2013: PPACA Pulse Check: Part 2 Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations: March 21, 2013: Health Information Technologies: Administration Perspectives on Innovation and Regulation April 24, 2013: The Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight and the Implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act July 18, 2013: Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act: Implementation in the Wake of Administrative Delay September 19, 2013: Two Weeks Until Enrollment: Questions for CCIIO Subcommittee on Communications and Technology: March 19, 2013: Health Information Technologies: Harnessing Wireless Innovation Administration Position: A Statement of Administration Policy is currently not available. Rule Request: Chairman Upton (R-MI) sent a letter to Chairman Sessions requesting ``that the Committee on Rules hold a hearing and grant a closed rule to govern consideration of H.R. 3350 by the House.'' I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. Kline), the chairman of the Education and Labor Committee. Mr. KLINE. I thank the gentleman for yielding time and for his incredible leadership on this issue. Dr. Burgess has been championing real solutions for over 10 years. Mr. Speaker, 140,000; that is the number of people from my home State of Minnesota who have been notified their health coverage will be canceled as a result of the President's health care law. John, a constituent from Burnsville, recently learned his own health plan is no longer available. John liked the plan he had and now has to pay 20 percent more to secure coverage. For many people, a cancelation notice means more than the loss of an insurance policy. It means losing access to the trusted doctors, pediatricians, and nurses who care for their families. We all know how critical these relationships are, especially in difficult moments when a loved one is injured or ill; but for countless families, those relationships will soon be lost, all because Washington bureaucrats think they know best. The President promised time and again if people liked their health care plan, they could keep it; but the American people are discovering the President failed to keep his word, leaving them with only political gimmicks and a broken Web site. The President may have apologized--and we appreciate that--but the country deserves a President who not only admits when he is wrong, but does what is necessary to make it right. That is why I support this legislation. The Keep Your Health Plan Act is about fairness. It is only fair to let people keep the health plan they like. No one should be forced to purchase a more expensive policy because the President says so. It is only fair to help families who are hurting across the country. The President's plan for more administrative tricks is a disservice to each and every one of our constituents, and it is only fair to hold the President accountable for the promises he makes to the American people. If the President is sincere about undoing some of the damage this law has created, if he wants to provide real solutions for those losing their coverage, and if he wants to keep this promise to our Nation's families, then I urge the President to support the Keep Your Health Plan Act. Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, let me again remind my colleagues that not a single hearing was held on this bill. Not a single markup was held on this bill, nothing, and it is coming to the floor under a closed rule. My Republican friends believe that nobody in this House, Democrats or [[Page H7118]] Republicans, have any right to offer an opinion or an alternative. We are given 1 hour of debate on this. It is not evenly split among the committees of jurisdiction. One committee of jurisdiction. This is a joke. This is not what you promised. This is not the open process. This is not the transparent process on major pieces of legislation that we were promised. This is a joke. I will insert into the Record a Statement of Administration Policy that says that the President, if presented with H.R. 3350, would veto it. This is a colossal waste of time.

Statement of Administration Policy H.R. 3350--Keep Your Health Plan Act of 2013 (Rep. Upton, R-MI, and 161 cosponsors, Nov. 14, 2013) The Administration strongly opposes House passage of H.R. 3350 because it threatens the health care security of hard working, middle class families. The Nation is experiencing the slowest growth in health spending in the last 50 years. Since 2008, growth in private health insurance spending stayed between three and four percent--significantly lower than earlier this decade when growth reached almost 12 percent. With health care costs rising at such low rates, this bill would be a major step back. H.R. 3350 rolls back the progress made by allowing insurers to continue to sell new plans that deploy practices such as not offering coverage for people with pre-existing conditions, charging women more than men, and continuing yearly caps on the amount of care that enrollees receive. The Administration supports policies that allow people to keep the health plans that they have. But, policies that reverse the progress made to extend quality, affordable coverage to millions of uninsured, hardworking, middle class families are not the solution. Rather than refighting old political battles to sabotage the health care law, the Congress should work with the Administration to improve the law and move forward. If the President were presented with H.R. 3350, he would veto it. Mr. McGOVERN. I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. Jackson Lee). Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the distinguished gentleman. Today, Mr. Speaker, I rise to save lives and to ensure that the Affordable Care Act does what it was intended to do and what it is already doing: lifting the lifetime caps, providing preventative care, taking away the discrimination against women and other ethnic minorities by eliminating health disparities. This is a bill that has seen eons of hearings not only in the underlying committee, but also in the Judiciary Committee and other committees and ad hoc hearings and briefings over and over again. I remember sitting and hearing the painful stories of families whose children had died because they could not get access to health care. But the Upton bill comes today disguised as a sheep in wolf's clothing. It discriminates against people with preexisting conditions; it restores annual caps on the amount of care you can receive; and it forces women to pay more than men for the same coverage. This bill is not a fix. It is a dissolver of a good bill. By the way, Mr. Speaker, let me inform my colleagues that there was nothing in the Affordable Care Act that dictated to insurance companies that they had to send cancelation letters. Why don't we hold a hearing and call the CEOs of the insurance companies and ask them why they didn't send the normal letter indicating that you have the opportunity to have a modified policy that will comply with the Affordable Care Act and that your policies are not canceled because those individuals did not pay their premium? Ask that question. I will tell you that there are health professionals and organizations that believe this particular bill will not work, such as the American Cancer Society and the American Diabetes Society. I agree with my colleague that there should have been an open rule. And the reason that there should have been an open rule is because I had an amendment that indicated that the conditions specified in the subsection for health insurance insurer, they must notify enrollees eligible for such continued coverage. I am glad that the President yesterday put that language in and also said that you can opt in to your old policy. We have answered the call and concern of the American people, but we have not taken away from them the right to have consumer protections and insurance coverage that will make their lives better. I would also suggest that my amendment indicated health insurance companies are making decisions based on their bottom line, their self- interests, and have decided to terminate insurance plans that are not profitable in the new, highly competitive marketplace for health insurance or want to end insurance for those who are ill and thereby increase their profit margin by keeping only the healthy and marginally healthy while discarding the ill, and the amendment should have been included, because we need to speak to our friends in the health insurance industry that we are here working together and that those letters were not necessary. Mr. Speaker, I want to save lives. I want consumer protections. I want women not to be discriminated against. Tomorrow, in Houston, we are opening the doors for enrollment in a health fair that we hope thousands will come to. My friends, the Upton bill does not answer the question. Let us save lives today. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired. Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 30 seconds. Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentleman for his courtesy. This is what we lived in preceding the Affordable Care Act: 18 percent of the underinsured postponed getting care or treatment, and some of those people died; 15 percent of the uninsured had problems paying their medical bills, hounded, hounded, hounded because they didn't have the resources and even went bankrupt; 10 percent of the uninsured needed prescription drugs but they could not afford them; 8 percent were hounded by collection agencies because they had to pay for their mortgage or their food; 6 percent did not seek treatment at all. Do you know what that equals to? One hundred percent of those individuals suffering bad health care. Let us vote down the Upton bill, vote against the underlying rule, and let's promote the Affordable Care Act and fix it like the President has done. Mr. Speaker, I

rise in strong opposition to the rule and the underlying bill, H.R. 3350, the so-called ``Keep Your Health Plan Act of 2013.'' I oppose the rule and the underlying bill for two reasons. First, the bill will not save lives. Second, the legislation is unnecessary in light of the action taken yesterday by President Obama, which should satisfy the proponents of this legislation while at the same time minimizing the risk to the health and safety of underinsured Americans, who are persons who have insurance but spend more than 10% of their income on out-of-pocket medical expenses. Were it to become law, H.R. 3350 would jeopardize the life and health of those underinsured who purchase these plans it protects, even though health insurance plans are available that would in nearly every case provide more health coverage for less. Mr. Speaker, researchers have found the following disturbing facts regarding the underinsured: Eighteen percent of the underinsured postpone getting care or treatment; Fifteen percent of the underinsured had problems paying medical bills; Ten percent of the underinsured needed prescription drugs but could not afford them; Eight percent were hounded by collection agencies for nonpayment of medical bills; and Six percent did not seek treatment even though they needed it. Mr. Speaker, this is the cost of underinsurance in America--and this is what we can expect more of should H.R. 3350 become law. The express purpose of this bill is to allow underinsured persons to retain an inadequate ``health insurance'' plan on the ground that supposedly it is the plan the person ``wants to keep.'' Unfortunately, there is nothing in this bill that would provide consumer education on the inadequacies of the plan and that something much better is available. For example, there is no requirement in this bill for the insurer to notify the insured that health insurance provided through the exchange that provides more and better coverage for less money. This means that under H.R. 3350 people will still have problems paying their medical bills, they will have high bills, and they will not be able to afford prescription medication or be hounded by medical bill collectors. The second reason for opposing this rule and bill is that it is unnecessary in view of the actions taken yesterday by President Obama. As the President announced, insurers will be [[Page H7119]] permitted to offer consumers the option to renew their 2013 health plans in 2014, without change, allowing them to keep their plans. This should satisfy the proponents of the bill. But the President went further than that because he recognizes that inadequate insurance is really no insurance at all. That is why the President conditioned the ability of insurers to offer plan renewals upon the following: 1. That insurers notify enrollees that they can purchase coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace where they can potentially qualify for premium tax credits; and 2. Those insurers must inform consumers of the protections they are giving up to keep the plan they have. Taken together, President Obama's actions are a tempered and measured response to the alleged problem that this bill seeks to remedy. I fully applaud what the President has done and I offered an amendment that would achieve precisely the same results but the Rules Committee did not make my amendment in order. The text of Jackson Lee Amendment #1 provides: (C) Conditions for Continued Offering of Coverage.--The conditions specified in this subsection for a health insurance issuer offering continued coverage under subsection (a) are as follows: (1) The issuer must notify enrollees eligible for such continued coverage that they can purchase health insurance coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace where they can potentially qualify for premium tax credits. (2) The issuer must tell consumers what protections they are giving up to accept the continued coverage they have. (3) The issuer must provide notice by mail of the offering of such continued coverage to each affected enrollee; and post these notices on the issuer's website. The Jackson Lee Amendment, like the action announced by the President, is practical, efficient, and addresses the concerns of those who received cancellation letters from their insurance companies. It should be noted again that Jackson Lee Amendment #1, and the President's actions, are each superior to H.R. 3350, which contains no provision or requirement that consumers who received these notices be advised by their insurers that they may receive lower insurance rates with better coverage by shopping online or calling the toll free number. Now there may be some who think the availability of the types of health care insurance that H.R. 3350 would protect is sufficient for Americans. I do not. Neither does President Obama. The majority of the American people do not. We believe, and the Affordable Care Act ensures, that healthcare should be available, accessible and adequate. Mr. Speaker, adequate health plans have in common the inclusion of certain minimal benefits and services. The second amendment I offered to the legislation before us documented the differences between adequate and inadequate health insurance plans. Unfortunately, the Rules Committee elected not to make my amendment in order. The text of Jackson Lee Amendment #2 is as follows: SEC. 2. FINDINGS. Congress finds the following: 1. Health Insurance companies are making decisions based on their bottom line self interest and have decided to terminate insurance plans that are not profitable in the new highly competitive market place for health insurance, or want to end insurance for those who are ill and thereby increase their profit margin by keeping only the

healthy or marginally healthy, while discarding the ill. 2. Insurance companies make huge profits when they take premiums and pay little to no benefits. 3. The plans offered by some insurance companies called ``health insurance'', in fact offered little if any health care protection should people with these policies become seriously ill or involved in an accident that required hospitalization. 4. Catastrophic health plans sold to Americans as insurance were not first dollar or even the first thousand dollar policies; some required the first $5,000 to $10,000 of health care costs to be paid by the holder of the insurance plan whose income was not sufficient to incur an expense of this magnitude. 5. These plans did not provide many of the minimal benefits of the Affordable Care Act, such as ambulatory patient services, that provide treatment using advanced medical devices or technology like an MRI X- ray. 6. Emergency services were not covered even though emergency room visits could cost tens of thousands of dollars depending on the nature of the emergency. Hospitalization coverage was not included in most of these insurance policies. 7. Maternity and newborn care was not covered nor were pediatric services so that a healthy birth did not mean that the newborn child would have a healthy childhood. Mental health, substance abuse disorder services, and behavioral health treatment were not covered by most of these insurance plans. 8. Prescription drug benefits and necessary laboratory tests also were excluded under these insurance plans. Also excluded under these plans were preventive and wellness services and chronic disease management. 9. Oral and vision care were not part of these plans, which meant that one tooth infection or change in eyesight could set someone back thousands of dollars if they wanted to get treatment. 10. Prescription drug benefits and necessary laboratory tests also were excluded under these insurance plans. Also excluded under these plans were preventive and wellness services and chronic disease management. 12. Oral and vision care were not part of these plans, which meant that one tooth infection or change in eyesight could set someone back thousands of dollars if they wanted to get treatment. Mr. Speaker, my constituents in the 18th Congressional District of Texas favor the Affordable Care Act because they understand the insecurity and feeling of helplessness of being uninsured or underinsured. My home state of Texas has the highest percentage of uninsured (27.6%) in the Nation, 4% more than Louisiana, the next state on the list. The state of Massachusetts, in contrast, boasts the lowest uninsured rate in the country (4%). This is because Massachusetts several years ago adopted the health insurance system upon which the Affordable Health Care Act is based. The Affordable Care Act when fully implemented will yield the same benefits for my home state of Texas. In fact, it has already begun to do so. Take the case of Lucy, who was insured--I should say underinsured--but had a $7,500 a year deductible. Thanks to the Health Insurance Exchange she is now much better off. Here is what Lucy has to say about the Affordable Care Act compared to the plan she had before: I signed up at Healthcare.gov and I'm going to save $2,300 a year on my premium alone--and more, because my deductible will drop from $7,500 a year to $3,000 a year. It's still Blue Cross insurance, and I don't have to change doctors, either. I had a choice of over 30 plans and several different companies. Mr. Speaker, health care coverage must be not only available and affordable but also adequate in order for consumers to have the health security and financial protection they need and deserve. The Affordable Care Act satisfies these criteria; the bill before us does not. That is why we should reject this rule and the underlying bill. H.R. 3350 is nothing more than the House Republicans' newest variation on their very old theme, which is to repeal, impede or undermine the Affordable Care Act. This bill is the 46th attempt by the Republicans to deprive the American people of the security and peace of mind that comes with health care that is affordable, accessible and adequate. Of course we should not be surprised. After all, it was the House Republicans who shut down the federal government for 16 days and cost the economy $24 billion while refusing to consider any legislation that would create jobs or address the real needs of the American people. Mr. Speaker, the bill before us is strongly opposed by a coalition of some of the Nation's leading health and consumer organizations, including the following: Paralyzed Veterans of America American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network American Diabetes Association American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) American Heart Association/American Stroke Association American Music Therapy Association The Arc of the United States The Autistic Self Advocacy Network Community Catalyst Families USA Health and Wholeness Ministries, Disciples Center for Public Witness Health Care for America Now National Alliance on Mental Illness National Association of County Behavioral Health & Developmental Disability Directors National Council of Jewish Women National Partnership for Women & Families These groups oppose the bill for substantially the same reasons I have discussed. While sympathizing with consumers who are receiving notices from their insurance companies that their policies are not being renewed for next year because they do not comply with the ACA's consumer protections, the Coalition rightly observes that: [T]he solution is not to allow for the continued sale of

inadequate policies[.] Rather, we must educate consumers about their new health insurance options and ensure that notices being sent by insurers clearly inform them of the shortfalls with their current coverage and explain all of their options for finding better coverage. I agree. Therefore, I urge all Members to join me in voting against this rule and the underlying bill. [[Page H7120]] November 13, 2013. Hon. John Boehner, Speaker of the House, House of Representatives, Washington, DC. Hon. Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC. Dear Speaker Boehner and Minority Leader Pelosi: Health care coverage must be not only available and affordable but also adequate in order for consumers to have the health and financial protection they need from health insurance. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) was designed to ensure that, beginning in 2014, Americans would have access to health insurance that meets all three of these important objectives. Our organizations support these goals, and we are therefore opposed to H.R. 3350, legislation that would allow health insurers to continue to sell individual health insurance policies that are inadequate. The number of people who are underinsured--meaning that their insurance does not provide adequate financial protection when they are sick--has been growing over the last decade. According to one study, the number of underinsured adults has increased 80 percent since 2003. More than 60 percent of all bankruptcies in 2007 were a result of illness and medical bills, and nearly 80 percent of those who filed for medical bankruptcy were insured. Many consumers with inadequate coverage do not realize how poor it is until they are diagnosed with a serious illness and the bills start rolling in. Only then do they find out that their coverage may have very low annual coverage limits or exclude coverage for important and costly services, such as those provided during a hospital stay. The ACA includes a number of important protections in response to the large number of uninsured and to help guarantee that consumers have access to comprehensive coverage. The ACA minimizes bankruptcy risk and ensures that the full range of care consumers need in the event of a serious or catastrophic illness will be covered. We cannot afford to go another year without these protections. Among these protections that apply to non-grandfathered plans sold in the individual and small group markets are: A ban on annual limits on coverage. More than 105 million Americans no longer have lifetime dollar limits on their coverage because of the ACA, but health plans would still be able to sell plans with annual limits under this legislation. A requirement that plans cover 10 categories of essential health benefits, including doctor visits, hospital care, preventive care, maternity care, mental health care, prescription drugs, and rehabilitation services. Many of these critical benefits are not readily available in the individual market. For example, only 12 percent of health plans sold on the individual market cover maternity coverage, and only 6 percent in the states that do not have a mandate, leaving women without necessary coverage when they become pregnant. A cap on consumers' annual out-of-pocket spending for their health care to help the nearly 10 million Americans with health insurance who are unable to afford their medical bills. In addition, many consumers who are uninsured or do not have access to an affordable, adequate health plan from their employer are also eligible for a premium tax credit to help them buy such coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplaces. Our understanding of this legislation is that it would also allow insurers to continue to market and sell these plans to new consumers through 2014, without complying with the rules that take effect for other plans on January 1. In other words, insurers marketing these plans outside of the Health Insurance Marketplaces could continue to refuse to cover people with pre-existing medical conditions or charge them higher premiums because of their age or health status. As a result, younger and healthier people would be more likely to remain on or newly enroll in these plans, and plans sold through the Health Insurance Marketplaces would end up covering mostly older and sicker people. This would drive up health insurance premiums in the Marketplaces. We very much sympathize with consumers who are receiving notices from their insurance companies that their policies are not being renewed for next year because they do not comply with the ACA's consumer protections. In at least some instances, these notices have been very alarming and misleading for consumers because they fail to let them know that they may have better, more affordable insurance options available to them. At least one insurer was fined by a Department of Insurance for a letter that regulators called ``misleading.'' However, the solution is not to allow for the continued sale of inadequate policies, particularly now that more comprehensive coverage is available along with financial assistance to help make better coverage affordable. Rather, we must educate consumers about their new health insurance options and ensure that notices being sent by insurers clearly inform them of the shortfalls with their current coverage and explain all of their options for finding better coverage. We look forward to working with you to help your constituents get information about their new options for fairer, more comprehensive, and more affordable health care coverage and to make adequate coverage more affordable to everyone. Sincerely, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, American Diabetes Association, American Federation of State, County and

Municipal Employees (AFSCME), American Heart Association/ American Stroke Association, American Music Therapy Association, The Arc of the United States, The Autistic Self Advocacy Network, Community Catalyst, Families USA, Health and Wholeness Ministries--Disciples Center for Public Witness, Health Care for America Now, National Alliance on Mental Illness, National Association of County Behavioral Health & Developmental Disability Directors, National Council of Jewish Women, National Partnership for Women & Families, Paralyzed Veterans of America. Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute. Mr. Speaker, that evening in March of 2010 when the Senate bill was finally going to be considered by the House, there was a meeting of the Rules Committee that night. Democrats were in charge. I presented myself to that meeting with 18 amendments to H.R. 3590 that had been passed by the Senate. Every one of those was summarily rejected. The problem the Democrats had that day was, should we change a single word in H.R. 3590 as passed by the Senate, the bill would have to go back to the Senate and concur with the House amendment to H.R. 3590. The Majority Leader in the Senate, having lost his 60th vote in a special election in Massachusetts that year, felt that he could not pass anything. He could not achieve cloture with only 59 Democrats to vote in favor of that motion for cloture. That is the reason why not one word was changed between Christmas Eve of 2009 and the time this bill was actually passed. But after H.R. 3590 came back from the Senate, came to the Rules Committee, did it come to the House under an open rule? No, it did not. It was a closed rule. We were kept out of the process. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired. Mr. BURGESS. I yield myself an additional 30 seconds. It is hard to feel too sad for the gentleman from Massachusetts when a bill of this magnitude came with so little debate, so little input from the minority. We have got a 1-page bill before the House today. This was a 2,700-page bill that affected every man, woman, and child in this country, not just today, not just tomorrow, but for the next three decades they will be living under this. And it came under a closed rule. I reserve the balance of my time. Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. What the gentleman conveniently leaves out are the hundreds of hours of hearings and markups that occurred in the committees of jurisdiction on the Affordable Care Act. The committees of jurisdiction were just cut out of this. It is becoming a pattern in this House. This is not the only bill where the committees of jurisdiction have been cut out of the process, where Members' voices have been silenced, where they are enforcing rules with an iron fist in this Chamber. So this, unfortunately, is not unique. It is a pattern. But to suggest that we don't have the time to offer amendments is just ridiculous. We have plenty of time. We could debate this all day if we wanted to, and Members could have an opportunity, both Democrats and Republicans, to amend this, given the fact that they were denied that right in the committees of jurisdiction. Mr. Speaker, I will enter into the Record an article that appeared in the National Review Online, entitled, ``Boehner: Upton Bill a Step on Path to ObamaCare Repeal,'' because what is going on here is very simple. {time} 0945 If you believe that 40 million Americans should be without health insurance, then vote for this bill. That is what they want to do. They want to repeal the Affordable Care Act to go back to a point at which it was perfectly acceptable and okay to have 40 million Americans without health insurance. Now, many of us found that statistic unconscionable in this country, the richest country in the history of the world, and we thought it was bad policy to allow for so many uninsured Americans because that also resulted in higher health care costs, but that is what the goal here is. The goal here is to undo all of the protections that allow you to keep [[Page H7121]] your kids on your insurance policies until they are 26, that prohibit insurance companies from discriminating against women because they define being a female as a preexisting condition, and all of these artificial rules and regulations that insurance companies threw upon people, these insurance policies that people bought thinking they had insurance only to find out when they got sick they had nothing. If you want to go back to that, then side with my Republican friends; but what we want to do here is work as we did in Massachusetts, by the way, with Governor Romney, in order to make this work. I will tell you, for the life of me, I don't understand why this is such a radical idea to guarantee everybody in this country good, quality health insurance. [From the National Review, Nov. 13, 2013] Boehner: Upton Bill a Step on Path to Obamacare Repeal (By Jonathan Strong) Before the government shutdown in July, as the defund push from Senators Ted Cruz and Mike Lee was just starting to gain steam, Speaker John Boehner laid-out his preferred Obamacare strategy to House Republicans in a closed-door conference meeting, telling them the GOP could repeal the law with ``targeted strikes that will ultimately dissolve the Obamacare coalition.'' This morning, in another conference meeting, Boehner reminded his colleagues about that strategy and explained how bringing the ``keep your plan'' bill introduced by Representative Fred Upton to the House floor Friday fits into it. ``Remember the strategy for stopping Obamacare we laid out to you back in July. It had two components: Aggressive, coordinated oversight, and targeted legislative strikes aimed at

shattering the legislative coalition the president has used to force his law on the nation,'' Boehner said, according to a person in the room. ``That plan is being executed as we speak. But none of it will be effective if we aren't communicating. If we aren't telling the stories our constituents are sharing, then we're letting them down. It means we aren't doing our best to stop this law,'' he added. With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. Pallone), the ranking member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, who suffered a long and arduous Rules Committee last night. Mr. PALLONE. I want to thank my colleague from Massachusetts, not only for having to deal with the ordeal in Rules last night but every day, but also for what he said about the lack of regular order when this Upton bill--this bill by the chairman, Mr. Upton--came to the Rules Committee. Mr. Speaker, I am a member of the Health Subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee. I said in Rules last night--and I will say it again today--that we have had many hearings in the Health Subcommittee and that we have had hearings in the full Energy and Commerce Committee. Over the last 2 or 3 weeks, there was ample opportunity to have this bill proceed with regular order with a subcommittee hearing markup and with a full committee hearing markup. None of that was done. This bill just comes here to the floor directly from Rules, and it is a flawed bill. I want to stress that. I really believe, Mr. Speaker, that this legislation is just another attempt by the GOP to undermine the Affordable Care Act. In fact, I will call this the 46th attempt at repeal. My GOP colleagues have zero interest in helping people gain and keep their health insurance. They have zero interest in fixing any problems that may be occurring with the rollout of the law. They simply want to demonize the President and his policies, as you have heard over and over again, and they will go to any length to do so. At the top of the list are their efforts to sabotage ObamaCare and to force its failure. Yesterday, the President took some action to help Americans who want to renew their insurance policies if their insurance companies are willing to offer that option. Ultimately, though, I believe that these people will look at the quality plans available in the new Affordable Care Act insurance marketplace and like what they see because, in most cases, they will find that they are able to purchase better coverage at lower prices than their original policies so that, when they get sick or when they need care, their policies will actually provide it because most of these older policies simply do not provide adequate insurance. As I said before, the Upton bill before us is not about giving people access to health care. It is about sabotaging ObamaCare. One of my colleagues on the Republican side said they want to have people keep their insurance. The President's initiative yesterday allows them to keep their insurance if they want to, but what the Upton bill does is allow anybody now--anybody, even if they didn't have the old insurance policies--to buy these new skeletal policies that don't provide adequate insurance. So, if you take away the rhetoric of the Republicans, the Upton bill's practical effect would be to continue to allow insurers to exclude people from coverage based on preexisting conditions and to allow insurers to charge women twice as much as men for the same coverage. It would allow insurers to jack up premiums on a family if its child gets sick. It would allow insurers to set harsh annual caps on coverage. All of the discriminatory practices that the ACA and ObamaCare were designed to eliminate come back under the Upton bill. This bill would not require health insurers to allow individuals to keep their current health care plans because insurers can still do whatever they want. You can't force the insurers to offer the plans. It basically allows them to sell low-quality 2013 plans all through 2014. Nothing else. Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes. We have talked about the votes in this House to delay or to modify portions of the Affordable Care Act. Indeed, the House has passed seven of those, and they have been signed by the President. What really doesn't ever get much attention are the multiple times that the administration--the President, himself--has changed parts of the Affordable Care Act. If you want to talk about something that was done without any hearings, if you want to talk about something that was done in a non-transparent fashion, if you want to talk about something that was done without the ability to amend or debate on the floor of the House, then let's go through a few of these. Number one: A congressional opt-out. The administration gave Members of Congress and their staffs the option of exempting themselves from the ObamaCare exchanges that were created by the Affordable Care Act, which is contrary to the language of the law. Exchange enrollment: The administration extended by 6 weeks--from February 14 to March 31, 2014--the period in which people can enroll for coverage in order to avoid the individual mandate tax penalty. The employer delay: By an administrative action, which is also contrary to statutory language in the Affordable Care Act, the reporting requirements for employers were delayed by 1 year. Self-attestation: Because of the difficulty of verifying income after the employer reporting requirement was delayed, the administration decided it would allow the self-attestation of income by applicants for health insurance exchanges. Small businesses on hold: The administration said that the Federal exchanges for small businesses would not be ready by the 2014 statutory deadline. Instead, officials delayed

until 2015 the implementation of the Federal shop exchanges. Closing the high-risk pools: This one was, I thought, particularly egregious. Mr. Speaker, I, frankly, do not understand why this was not covered by the Nation's press. The administration decided to halt the enrollment in Federal high-risk pools, blocking coverage for an estimated 40,000 new applicants, and it decided, rather than using the money from a fund under Health and Human Services Secretary Sebelius' control to extend coverage for Americans with preexisting conditions, that it would, instead, use this money to pay for advertising for the Affordable Care Act. Remember, the Affordable Care Act was sold to the American people because--remember the quotes?--there were 8 to 12 million people with preexisting conditions. Yet the President's own preexisting pool, which was started in this law when it was signed in March of 2010, was closed on February 1 of 2013, barely 2\1/2\ years into its lifespan. Why have we not heard more about that? This was an administrative action to restrict people from access to the risk pools that they were told they were going to get as a consequence of [[Page H7122]] the President's health care law. Many of these people probably voted for the President in November of 2012 because, after all, he was going to provide them their risk pool insurance for another year--until it didn't happen. Is it any wonder why there is no faith in what the administration says it will do by administrative edict? Why there is no faith in what has come out of the White House? Why congressional action is not just constitutionally required but is required for the people of this country to continue to have faith in their government? I reserve the balance of my time. Mr. McGOVERN. I yield myself such time as I may consume. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman talks about faith. I think the American people have lost faith in the Republican leadership of this House. My friends are so obsessed with this health care bill that they actually shut the government down. Ted Cruz was the Speaker of the House here for a month. I mean, they shut the government down because they do not believe that 40 million uninsured Americans ought to have health insurance. Ezra Klein, in his Washington Post piece on November 14, writes about the Upton bill. He says: It doesn't solve the cancelations problem, but it does manage to put Republicans on the side of insurers, who want to continue discriminating against preexisting conditions. That is what this is all about: giving the insurance companies more of what they want. If you want to know why, follow the money. It is no secret where the insurance companies' allegiances are. Quite frankly, my friends have had 3 years in control to give us their alternative. They have said ``no'' to everything. No, no, no. They try to undercut and repeal everything. What have they offered in 3 years? What is their prescription for the uninsured in America? Take two tax breaks and call me in the morning. That is the best they could come up with. This is a good bill, and we need to work to implement it so that we can make sure that every single American has access to good, quality health insurance. With that, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. Maloney). Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his leadership in providing health care for over 40 million Americans who did not have it. Mr. Speaker, this is the 46th time that our Republican colleagues have tried to repeal or to undermine the Affordable Care Act. I rise in opposition to this closed rule, and I urge a ``no'' vote on the Upton bill. We are here today supposedly to help those people who unexpectedly had their insurance policies canceled. This is a real issue as the President, himself, clearly acknowledged last night. That is why he is taking steps to help these people in the private health care market keep their plans. However, the bill before us now not only fails to solve the problem, it makes things worse by fundamentally undermining the Affordable Care Act in a way that is calculated to doom it to eventual failure. You would be changing the rules in the middle of a game and virtually guaranteeing that premiums would eventually skyrocket for people who did the right thing--who went to the exchange and got a plan. This would price the program out of existence. Doing that would take us all back to a time when over 40 million Americans did not have access to affordable health insurance, including 2.6 million New Yorkers. We must not turn our backs on those people now. We absolutely have problems we need to fix, and we have issues we need to solve, but we are on the verge of finally covering millions of Americans who lack the fundamental security of affordable health coverage for their families. We are finally close to achieving a goal for millions that has been pursued for nearly a century under Republican and Democratic administrations alike. This is a problem we must solve without turning our backs on those families forced into bankruptcy simply because someone in the household got sick. This is a problem we must solve for the sake of all of those women who were denied insurance or who had to pay up to 40 percent more for insurance simply because they were women. This is a problem we must solve for the sake of all of those people with preexisting conditions and for all of those young adults who can stay on their parents' plans until they turn 27. We did not embark on this effort because we thought it would be easy. We embarked on this effort to provide health care to millions because we thought it was a moral imperative, an economic necessity, and a fundamental human right. Yes, it is hard to get it

right, but ultimately this is an effort that history will judge not by the number of computer errors but by the number of lives saved. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ``no'' on this bill and ``yes'' for health care for millions of Americans. Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute for the purposes of response. Talk about changing the rules in the middle of the game. What in the world was that Presidential press conference 24 hours ago all about? It was about changing the rules by executive fiat. Again, I just went through a list of many of the 27 times that the President has changed the rules in the middle of the game. What about the times the administration has been engaged in ``hide the ball'' from the American people, from the Nation's Governors, from the Nation's insured? What about the fact that the rule for the essential health benefit was held up until 2 days after Election Day last year? Then the Governors had to make a decision as to whether or not to participate in the exchanges in their States a week later. Is it any wonder they could not make a decision of that amount of import in a week's time? Sure, they were given another month's extension, but eventually, 26 Governors said, I can't do it based on the information provided. Another six Governors said, Okay, but the Federal Government is going to have to set up the exchanges. That is why you have 32 States for which the Federal Government is having to set up the Federal fallback exchange. I reserve the balance of my time. Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, at this point, it is my privilege to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. Andrews). {time} 1000 (Mr. ANDREWS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.) Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for the time. In March of 2010, the President signed the Affordable Care Act. In that law, there was a revision that said on January 1 of 2014 if insurance plans did not have important consumer protections, like getting rid of lifetime policy limits and annual limits, that they couldn't be sold anymore. For over 3\1/2\ years, the insurance industry had noticed that the day was coming when they could not sell these plans anymore. They chose to wait until the last couple of weeks to send out notices to millions of Americans saying they couldn't renew their plans next year. This is unfair to those Americans, and it is a problem that ought to be fixed. The President has stepped forward with a plan to address this to help those Americans. I support what he is doing. The House Democrats will have an opportunity to put on the floor some votes that will further improve that situation as this debate goes on. This problem of people having their policies canceled is unwarranted and unwelcome, and we should work together to fix it. The underlying bill here does not fix the problem; it creates a problem. It is very important to understand what the underlying bill does. It says that insurance plans that discriminate against you because you are a woman or because you had skin cancer, or insurance plans that say that in the middle of your chemotherapy you can run out of coverage, or insurance plans that say that after you paid your premiums for months or even years the insurance company can cancel you because you got sick, those plans can continue to be sold to everyone--to everyone. The problem that we are trying to address is people that have such plans and want to keep them be given the opportunity to keep them. That is what [[Page H7123]] the President's decision does, which is why we support it. The underlying bill says that these plans can be opened up to anybody who wants to buy this. That sounds kind of fair at first glance. If someone wants to buy that kind of plan, shouldn't they be able to? Well, ladies and gentlemen of the House, here is the question: If someone buys a plan that pulls the plug on their chemotherapy in the middle and they keep getting care, who pays for it? The taxpayers do and the other premium payers do. That is who pays for it. This plan that is before the House today, this Republican bill, is a guarantee of rate shock for the American people because here is what will happen. If anyone who wants to can buy one of these cars without an airbag or cars without seatbelts--and that is what these plans are--then you will find that the new marketplaces don't have enough people in them. When they don't have enough people in them, the rates will rise. When the rates spike for people in the marketplaces, they will spike for people who get employer-sponsored health care because the possibility of the marketplaces is already reducing the premium increases that employers are seeing. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired. Mr. McGOVERN. I yield an additional minute to the gentleman. Mr. ANDREWS. I thank the gentleman. So the employer rates, which have risen at the slowest rates in the last 5 or 6 years, would once again be subject to the kind of spikes that happen here. Look, I think there is bipartisan agreement in this Chamber this morning that if someone has gotten a cancelation notice, we want to help that person keep their plan if they choose to keep it. We agree with that, the President agrees with that. That is what he set out to do. What we do not want, and what this bill does, is to guarantee rate shock, guarantee a premium spike for Americans, whether they are in these plans that we are talking about today, whether they are in the new marketplaces, or whether they receive insurance through their employer. We need additional protections where insurance commissioners around this country can step forward and investigate arbitrary and unfair practices, where they can protect consumers, and

House Democrats are going to put forward such an opportunity to vote on that at the conclusion of this debate. Let's not in the guise of solving one problem magnify another one. We should oppose this rule and oppose the underlying bill. Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 13 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Colorado has 4\1/2\ minutes remaining. Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes for purposes of a response. The rate shock issue is one about which every Member of this House should be concerned. Let me read to you from a letter I received from a constituent who lives in The Colony, Texas, a city within my congressional district. They are complaining about the cost and lack of transparency on the healthcare.gov Web site: The prices the ObamaCare Web site say we can expect based on our ages are $372 to $600. But when I go to actually purchase, those prices automatically become $870. We don't qualify for subsidies so that was not part of any of the calculations. The constituent goes on to say: It is bad enough the President has lied to us on multiple points--$2,500 a year savings, keep your plan, keep your doctor--but also the Web site is designed to mislead us about the price as well. What is the reason that the ObamaCare site and health carrier sites don't agree? I just saw a North Carolina couple on the news who had the same experience and the insurance carrier told them that the prices on the carrier sites are correct and those prices on healthcare.gov are incorrect. There is rate shock going on in the country right now. That is what part of this debate is about today. But let me just caution my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that the true rate shock experience is likely to hit in September of 2014, about 6 weeks before election day on November 14. What is the reason for that rate shock? Well, we all know that the healthcare.gov Web site was, so far, the abysmal failure. The administration is counting on a certain demographic to flood that Web site and sign up for their wonderful new Elysian Fields of ObamaCare. It is hard, so they are not going to do it. But people who are older, perhaps have multiple chronic conditions, who are actually fearful about losing their health care coverage, they are going to keep at it. Bless their hearts. They will keep going. They will keep coming back day after day after day until they can finally get through and sign up for the insurance policy. Yeah, it is more expensive than I want, it doesn't cover as much as I want, but, by golly, I will have something at the start of the year. The problem is the demographic that the administration counted on to sign up is not going to sign up. Beginning about April of next year, the insurance companies are going to begin to price risk. That is what they do. That is what they do well. So they are going to post risk and they will post their prices somewhere along the lines of July 1 to September 30. Those prices for the renewal of health insurance are going to be staggeringly high; they will be astonishingly high. The rate shock that is fixing to happen, you ain't seen nothing yet. It is coming in the fall, and it will be unbelievable compared to anything you have seen to date. I reserve the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President. This restriction includes quoting from extraneous materials. Without objection, the gentleman from Colorado now controls the time and is recognized. There was no objection. Mr. POLIS. The Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. Pelosi), the Democratic leader. Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I thank him for his leadership and that of the full Rules Committee on having to field some really strange notions masquerading as proposals to improve the lives of the American people. We see a lot of that these days. This one on the floor today really takes the cake because it is essentially to pull the plug on the Affordable Care Act. While it says that they want to delay the cancelations that the insurance companies have written to policyholders, the bill does not mandate. This is a conversation that is not an action, but it does violence to the bill in other ways. The idea that it was helping consumers was sort of the Trojan horse whose underbelly is poisonous in terms of the health and well-being of the American people. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor to speak on the rule because I think it is really important for Members to vote against the rule as a point of fairness. If we reject this rule and allow the Rules Committee to come back to the floor with an opportunity for there to be a Democratic alternative, that would be fair. What we would do in the vote on the previous question, which I urge people to vote ``no'' on, would be able to vote ``yes,'' or consider voting ``yes,'' on a bill that does exactly what consumers need in terms of this cancelation area. First of all, it would say that there would be a real delay--a real delay--for 1 year for the implementation in terms of the individual policyholders. That is just this piece of the bill that is the question--individual policyholders. Ninety-five percent of the American people, as has been said, who have policies that they like can keep them. It is this 5 percent--and that is a lot of people, I don't want to minimize that--but, nonetheless, it is a discrete market. Let's address that discrete market and in our previous question we bring up a bill that addresses that discrete market not only by enabling them to hold their policies for a year, but by requiring that the insurance companies must tell people not that you are canceled and we want to sign you up again at

a higher cost; instead, insurance companies would be obliged to tell people what their options are, what their options are under the Affordable Care Act in terms of having no lifetime limits on their policies, no annual limits [[Page H7124]] on their policies, no preexisting condition, increasing the cost of their policy, or preventing them from holding their policy should they become sick, A; B, it would also make sure that the insurance companies tell people what their options are in the exchanges, that they may qualify for a subsidy. In that marketplace the insurance companies are competing-- this is a free market, this exchange--they are competing for their policy; and, therefore, that has already lowered cost to consumers. So they may have a better policy with better benefits at a lower cost and, if they qualify, get a subsidy to do it. In addition to that, it is really important in every respect in everything we do, not only just for this individual marketplace, for people to understand the benefits of the Affordable Care Act that are available to them. I mentioned no preexisting condition, no annual limits, no lifetime limits, but also that already for over the past year young people can be on their parents' insurance. Over 3 million people have benefited in that regard. Tens of millions of seniors have benefited from the free prevention check-up--mammograms, whatever kinds of things--prevention and wellness exams free, no co-pay, no deductible. Already seniors are experiencing lower costs for their prescription drugs because of the Affordable Care Act. Already small children cannot be discriminated against, nor their families, in seeking insurance because they have a preexisting condition. Imagine a child born with a defect for life. They have a preexisting condition which will cost them dearly in terms of premiums, if they can even get insurance, and then it would be with limits. Not so. That has all changed. That is why on this Upton bill which, as I said, not only does bad things to the Affordable Care Act in terms of disrupting the risk pools, it tries to masquerade as something that does something positive, which it does not. That is why the Upton bill is opposed by a broad coalition of groups: the American Heart Association, the American Diabetes Association, the American Cancer Society Action Network, National Partnership for Women and Families, Paralyzed Veterans of America. Anyone with a preexisting medical condition--100 million people, families with people with preexisting medical conditions, all of them benefit. The stories are so glorious and so beautiful about what a difference the Affordable Care Act has made to families, especially those with small children or those with preexisting conditions, and to seniors. And, again, being a woman is no longer a preexisting medical condition. So this is politics; it is not about policy. It isn't any attempt to improve the Affordable Care Act. One way to improve it, though, is what we have in our previous question: give the State insurance commissioners the authority, all of them--some of them have it--but ensure that all of them have the authority to investigate and act upon rate increases, as well as the nature of these letters that were sent out without the integrity that they should have had. Again, we require that also in these letters the insurance companies make sure that people know what their opportunities are. {time} 1015 So what we are proposing today really does make a difference. In fact, we wanted to get this requirement of the insurance commissioners in the underlying bill, and then we said, okay, we will do that as an improvement. Today is the day that we can do that by voting ``no'' on the rule, enabling us to bring a bill to the floor that would do that. I urge our colleagues to support the Affordable Care Act, support what it does for American families, stand with those who fought for Social Security, for Medicare, and affordable care for all Americans because these are three pillars of equal weight in terms of the economic and health security of the American people. They honor the vows of our Founders for life, a healthier life; liberty, the liberty to pursue your happiness so that you are not job locked, constrained by a policy, but free to follow your passion to be self-employed, to start a business, to change jobs, to be entrepreneurial--life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Vote ``no'' on the rule. Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes. Mr. Speaker, I want to remind Members of the House of Representatives about the President's press conference yesterday. I would like to read from the transcript of his remarks. The President yesterday, he first talked about the problems with the healthcare.gov Web site, ``big problems, and maybe we can talk about those a little bit,'' but then he went on to say: The other problem that has received a lot of attention concerns Americans who've received letters from their insurers that they may be losing the plans they bought in the old individual market, often because they no longer meet the law's requirements. It seems pretty straightforward to me what the President was saying yesterday. He goes on to say: Now, as I indicated earlier, I completely get how upsetting this can be for a lot of Americans, particularly after assurances they heard from me that, if they had a plan that they liked, they could keep it. And to those Americans, I hear you loud and clear. I said that I would do everything we can to fix this problem, and today I am offering an idea that will help do it. Already people who have plans that predate the Affordable Care Act can keep those plans if they haven't changed. That was already in the law. That's what's called a grandfather that was included in the law. Today, we're going to extend

that principle both to the people whose plans have changed since the law took effect and to people who bought plans since the law took effect. You know, it is interesting, the 10th Amendment to the Constitution should actually protect the States to issue their own directives through their State insurance commissioners. They didn't need the President of the United States to do that. That is a power that has been enshrined to them in the Constitution. The problem is that power was taken away under the Affordable Care Act. Now they have attempted to bring it back. But the fact of the matter is, in many States, patients and constituents won't have that protection, but the Upton bill today will actually provide that protection. Make no mistake, the Upton bill is not a fix-it bill to the Affordable Care Act; it is a lifeline that we are extending to our constituents who have lost the coverage that they were told that they could keep. I reserve the balance of my time. Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Fattah). Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I only have a minute, so let me be concise. On Monday, I was in San Diego with 30,000 brain researchers excited about the age of discovery and attacking diseases like Alzheimer's and bipolar and schizophrenia. Yesterday, via satellite, I spoke to a public health conference in Brussels for the European Union. Their theme was that the wealth of their member countries was the health of their population. And then I come to the floor today where we see people who want to retreat from the idea which is to make sure that every single person in our country, for the first time in this Nation's history, has access to affordable health care coverage. There will be no retreat, no equivocation. I know there is this desire among Members on the other team always to somehow go backwards, to some other age in our country as if our future is in the past. Our future and the shaping impulse of our country is in the future, and it is in the health of the citizens of our country. Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. Blackburn), the vice chair of the full committee. Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to stand in support of the rule that will allow us to bring the Keep Your Health Plan Act to the floor. It is important that we take this action today on H.R. 3350 because we have heard from the American people, from coast to coast, that they do not want the President's health care law. They do not like the President's health care law. They feel as if, and have realized that what is happening with this law is that, number one, it is restricting their choice and options when it comes to health insurance, and, number two, the cost is skyrocketing. [[Page H7125]] Now, we know that that is very important to our families who have chosen health plans that meet their needs--health savings accounts that allowed them to take individual responsibility for their health care, allowed them the opportunities for choosing doctors and physicians and keeping those doctors and physicians--and what the American people are telling us and our constituents are telling us is that they do, indeed, feel betrayed by the empty promises that the President and this administration have made. They are also quite concerned about the botched Web site rollout; as I said, the insurance premiums; and, oh, those cancelation notices that are hitting the mailboxes of millions of Americans. They say, This is not what we bargained for. It is not what we were promised. It is not what we voted or spoke in favor of. And so they are asking us to take an action, and H.R. 3350 does take that action. Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to go back to 2010 when we had a conference and the President was before us, and I asked him a question about the ability to keep plans and for individuals to stay insured. I spoke because of the experience we had had in my State of Tennessee with the test case for HillaryCare, which was called TennCare. We saw the effects of that. We knew it was the test case for a public option in health care; we knew it was too expensive to afford; and, overall, we knew it did not work. In his response, the President mentioned a little bit about some stray cats and dogs and that he thought they had that cleaned up. But I have to tell you that our constituents and their policies are not stray cats and dogs, and they deserve to have the opportunity to keep their health care and not to be treated in a disrespectful manner or to be discarded to the sidelines. So the President needs to realize he cannot go around waving a magic wand and fixing this by executive fiat. This is a law. We are a Nation of laws, and we abide by the rule of law. ObamaCare, the President's health care law, is the law of the land. In order to provide relief to the American people who have clearly spoken to say they do not want this law, it requires an action of Congress. Today's action will provide relief for some individuals--not as many as we would like, but it is one step in providing some relief. The American people have grown weary of this administration spending money that it does not have on programs the American people do not want. The President's health care law is a great example of a program that the American people do not want, so they have come to us as the people's representative and reminded us that we are a government of, by, and for the people that should be working for the people. And as one of my constituents told me Monday, we, the people, are going to start being the people and holding this administration and this Congress accountable. Today is one of those steps that we are taking on behalf of our constituents and the people of this great Nation. I thank the gentleman from Texas for

the exceptional work that he has done in working with Chairman Upton from Michigan in bringing this to the floor. Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. Becerra), the chair of the Democratic Caucus. Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. In the past month, 500,000 Americans have secured affordable health insurance. They are people that include folks in my State of California like Erin Kotecki Vest, who said the old plan she had had all sorts of deductibles and out-of-pocket costs. At the end of the day, what does she say after going on Covered California's marketplace exchange? She will be saving $18,900 per year by having shopped on the exchange under the Affordable Care Act. Paulo Dawud said he passed on an employer-based insurance policy that would have cost him $504 a month. He got on Covered California's Web site. He picked Kaiser. He now qualifies for a plan that charges $176 a month. Allen Pacela says his wife would not have insurance coverage at all as of January 1. They shopped on the Web site. They are now saving $8,000 a year for, as he says, ``a very much better plan.'' And Andrew Stryker from Los Angeles, California, 34 years old, lives in the city of Los Angeles, had to wait 3 hours to enroll--$6,000 savings. Let's improve this plan. Let's not destroy it. It is time to move forward and give Americans what they need--health security. Mr. POLIS. If I may inquire, does the gentleman have any remaining speakers? Mr. BURGESS. Well, I am always here, so I remain as a speaker. Mr. POLIS. Is the gentleman prepared to close? Mr. BURGESS. Absolutely. Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time. If we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule that will allow the House to vote on a substitute that allows Americans to keep their insurance if they like it. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the Record, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado? There was no objection. Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of ways that we can improve upon the Affordable Care Act. One of the ones that I would like to highlight that we could be bringing here to the floor today that the Senate already passed is comprehensive immigration reform. H.R. 15 here in the House, a bipartisan bill that I am confident would pass if brought to the floor, would finally make a dent in the fact that there are more than 10 million people here in this country illegally, the vast majority of whom don't have any access to health insurance. So American citizens are essentially being forced to pay for the health care costs of people who are here illegal every day until we pass comprehensive immigration reform. We are wondering why rates are going up. It is no surprise, Mr. Speaker. When somebody doesn't have insurance, their costs are shifted on to other people who do. Now, yes, there are Americans who don't have insurance, and the Affordable Care Act helps increase the access that many Americans have to insurance, but it doesn't do a thing about the fact that there are more than 10 million people here illegally in this country in violation of our laws who do not have health care insurance. If we can pass H.R. 15, Mr. Speaker, people who are here illegally will have to get insurance on their own instead of forcing Americans to pay for their insurance. I urge my colleagues to vote ``no'' on this rule, defeat the previous question. I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time. I can't help but think back to that September evening in 2009 when the President stood before a joint session of Congress after the August recess and made a statement to the Nation that, yes, he was trying to change health care but not to worry, that no one who was in the country without the benefit of a Social Security number would be included in that cost because many people are concerned that the cost for the Affordable Care Act, already high, would expand unreasonably if that were to change; and the President made a promise to the American people that night. {time} 1030 Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot of stuff today. I really wish there had been that much interest in improving the Affordable Care Act before it passed the first time. We all know the reasons why those improvements were not offered and why we just simply had to have a take it or leave it proposition that was ultimately signed into law. Mr. Speaker, today's rule provides for the consideration of a critical bill to protect the millions of Americans who are facing the loss of health insurance that they were promised that they could keep. I certainly thank my friend from Michigan (Mr. Upton), the chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, for producing this thoughtful piece of legislation. [[Page H7126]] Mr. Speaker, I ask for its approval by the body. The material previously referred to by Mr. Polis is as follows: Strike all and insert the following: Resolved, That immediately upon adoption of this resolution, it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 3350) to authorize health insurance issuers to continue to offer for sale current individual health insurance coverage in satisfaction of the minimum essential health insurance coverage requirement, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. An amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text printed in section 2 of this resolution shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous

question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any amendment thereto without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the [Committee on Energy and Commerce]; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Section 2. The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute referenced in the first section is as follows: H.R. _ Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE. This Act may be cited as the ``Consumer Health Plan Protection Act of 2013''. SEC. 2. MAINTAINING EXISTING COVERAGE. (a) In General.--Notwithstanding any provision of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (including any amendment made by such Act or by the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010), in the case of health insurance coverage offered by a health insurance issuer in the individual market that is in effect for an individual as of October 1, 2013, the issuer may continue such coverage for such individual for a plan year beginning in 2014 in such market outside of an Exchange established under section 1311 or 1321 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 18031, 18041). (b) Treatment as Grandfathered Health Plan in Satisfaction of Minimum Essential Coverage.--Health insurance coverage described in subsection (a) shall be treated as a grandfathered health plan for purposes of the amendment made by section 1501(b) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. (c) Notice.--As a condition for a health insurance issuer to continue health insurance coverage under subsection (a), the issuer shall provide for notice to each individual to be offered such continued coverage (and for other individuals covered under health insurance coverage offered by such issuer for whom such continued coverage is not offered) prompt notice of the following: (1) The health insurance coverage options available to the individual through the Marketplace under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and how to exercise such options. (2) The premium and cost-sharing assistance available for coverage obtained through such Marketplace. (3) The consumer protections provided under such Act that are not provided under the continuing health insurance coverage. (d) Construction Regarding Notices of Cancellation or Conversion.-- (1) In general.--Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the Secretary of Health and Human Services from requiring State insurance commissioners-- (A) to investigate and take appropriate administrative or other actions (such as the imposition of a fine) on cases of inadequate notices of cancellations or conversions of health insurance coverage in the individual market that take effect on or after January 1, 2014; and (B) to submit to the Secretary reports on the investigations and actions so taken. (2) Inadequate notice.--In this subsection, a notice of the cancellation or conversion of individual health insurance coverage shall be treated as inadequate if the notice-- (A) fails to contain information contained in subsection (c); (B) fails to be transparent by inappropriately steering individuals to more expensive plans provided by the cancelling issuer; or (C) fails to otherwise comply with requirements of law. (e) Construction Regarding Protection Against Discriminatory Rates.--Nothing in this section shall be construed as preventing the Secretary or the relevant State insurance commissioner or State regulator from taking corrective actions to ensure that any excessive, unjustified, or unfairly discriminatory rates for the continued coverage offered under subsection (a) are corrected prior to renewal. (f) Construction Regarding Premium Protection.--Nothing in this section shall be construed as preventing the Secretary from using all available tools to ensure that Marketplace premiums are not adversely affected by the operation of this section. SEC. 3. REQUIRING STATE INSURANCE COMMISSIONERS TO INVESTIGATE INSTANCES OF INADEQUATE NOTICES OF CANCELLATION OR CONVERSION OF INDIVIDUAL HEALTH INSURANCE POLICIES. (a) In General.--Each State insurance commissioner shall investigate and take appropriate administrative or other actions (such as the imposition of a fine) on cases of inadequate notices of cancellations or conversions of health insurance coverage in the individual market that take effect on or after January 1, 2014. (b) Inadequate Notice.--In this section, a notice of the cancellation or conversion of individual health insurance coverage shall be treated as inadequate if the notice-- (1) fails to contain information-- (A) on obtaining health insurance coverage through an Exchange under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; (B) on the possible availability of assistance under such Act towards payment of the premiums and cost-sharing for such coverage; and (C) on the improved benefits for coverage through an Exchange, compared to health insurance coverage not offered through an Exchange; (2) fails to be transparent by inappropriately steering individuals to more expensive plans provided by the cancelling issuer; or (3) fails to otherwise comply with requirements of law. (c) Reports.-- (1) State commissioners to hhs.--Not later than March 31, 2014, each State insurance commissioner shall submit to the Secretary of Health and Human Services a report on the investigations and actions described in subsection (a). (2) HHS report to congress.--Not later than April 30, 2014, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on such investigations and actions. (d) Definitions of State, Health Insurance Coverage, and Individual Market.--In this section,

the terms ``State'', ``health insurance coverage'', and ``individual market'' have the meanings given such terms for purposes of title I of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. SEC. 4. PROTECTION OF CONSUMERS FROM EXCESSIVE, UNJUSTIFIED, OR UNFAIRLY DISCRIMINATORY RATES. (a) Protection From Excessive, Unjustified, or Unfairly Discriminatory Rates.--The first section 2794 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300gg-94), as added by section 1003 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111-148), is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection: ``(e) Protection From Excessive, Unjustified, or Unfairly Discriminatory Rates.-- ``(1) Authority of states.--Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit a State from imposing requirements (including requirements relating to rate review standards and procedures and information reporting) on health insurance issuers with respect to rates that are in addition to the requirements of this section and are more protective of consumers than such requirements. ``(2) Consultation in rate review process.--In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall consult with the National Association of Insurance Commissioners and consumer groups. ``(3) Determination of who conducts reviews for each state.--The Secretary shall determine, after the date of enactment of this section and periodically thereafter, the following: ``(A) In which markets in each State the State insurance commissioner or relevant State regulator shall undertake the corrective actions under paragraph (4), as a condition of the State receiving the grant in subsection (c), based on the Secretary's determination that the State regulator is adequately undertaking and utilizing such actions in that market. ``(B) In which markets in each State the Secretary shall undertake the corrective actions under paragraph (4), in cooperation with the relevant State insurance commissioner or State regulator, based on the Secretary's determination that the State is not adequately undertaking and utilizing such actions in that market. ``(4) Corrective action for excessive, unjustified, or unfairly discriminatory rates.--In accordance with the process established under this section, the Secretary or the relevant State insurance commissioner or State regulator shall take corrective actions to ensure that any excessive, unjustified, or unfairly discriminatory rates are corrected prior to implementation, or as soon as possible thereafter, through mechanisms such as-- ``(A) denying rates; ``(B) modifying rates; or ``(C) requiring rebates to consumers. ``(5) Noncompliance.--Failure to comply with any corrective action taken by the Secretary under this subsection may result in the application of civil monetary penalties and, if the Secretary determines appropriate, make the plan involved ineligible for classification as a Qualified Health Plan.''. (b) Clarification of Regulatory Authority.--Such section is further amended-- (1) in subsection (a)-- (A) in the heading, by striking ``Premium'' and inserting ``Rate''; (B) in paragraph (1), by striking ``unreasonable increases in premiums'' and inserting ``potentially excessive, unjustified, or unfairly discriminatory rates, including premiums,''; and (C) in paragraph (2)-- (i) by striking ``an unreasonable premium increase'' and inserting ``a potentially excessive, unjustified, or unfairly discriminatory rate''; (ii) by striking ``the increase'' and inserting ``the rate''; and [[Page H7127]] (iii) by striking ``such increases'' and inserting ``such rates''; (2) in subsection (b)-- (A) by striking ``premium increases'' each place it appears and inserting ``rates''; and (B) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking ``premium'' and inserting ``rate''; and (3) in subsection (c)(1)-- (A) in the heading, by striking ``Premium'' and inserting ``Rate''; (B) by inserting ``that satisfy the condition under subsection (e)(3)(A)'' after ``award grants to States''; and (C) in subparagraph (A), by striking ``premium increases'' and inserting ``rates''. (c) Conforming Amendment.--Title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300gg et seq.) is amended-- (1) in section 2723 (42 U.S.C. 300gg-22), as redesignated by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act-- (A) in subsection (a)-- (i) in paragraph (1), by inserting ``and section 2794'' after ``this part''; and (ii) in paragraph (2), by inserting ``or section 2794'' after ``this part''; and (B) in subsection (b)-- (i) in paragraph (1), by inserting ``and section 2794'' after ``this part''; and (ii) in paragraph (2)-- (I) in subparagraph (A), by inserting ``or section 2794 that is'' after ``this part''; and (II) in subparagraph (C)(ii), by inserting ``or section 2794'' after ``this part''; and (2) in section 2761 (42 U.S.C. 300gg-61)-- (A) in subsection (a)-- (i) in paragraph (1), by inserting ``and section 2794'' after ``this part''; and (ii) in paragraph (2)-- (I) by inserting ``or section 2794'' after ``set forth in this part''; and (II) by inserting ``and section 2794'' after ``the requirements of this part''; and (B) in subsection (b)-- (i) by inserting ``and section 2794'' after ``this part''; and (ii) by inserting ``and section 2794'' after ``part A''. (d) Applicability to Grandfathered Plans.--Section 1251(a)(4)(A) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111-148), as added by section 2301 of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-152), is amended by adding at the end the following: ``(v) Section 2794 (relating to reasonableness of rates with respect to health insurance coverage).''. (e) Authorization of Appropriations.--There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section, such sums as may be necessary. (f) Effective Date.--The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date

of enactment of this Act and shall be implemented with respect to health plans beginning not later than January 1, 2014. Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time and move the previous question on the resolution. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question. The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it. Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The yeas and nays were ordered. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption of the resolution. The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were--yeas 225, nays 193, not voting 12, as follows: [Roll No. 583] YEAS--225 Aderholt Amash Amodei Bachmann Bachus Barletta Barr Barton Benishek Bentivolio Bilirakis Bishop (UT) Black Blackburn Boustany Brady (TX) Bridenstine Brooks (AL) Brooks (IN) Broun (GA) Buchanan Bucshon Burgess Calvert Camp Cantor Capito Carter Cassidy Chabot Chaffetz Coble Coffman Cole Collins (GA) Collins (NY) Conaway Cook Cotton Cramer Crawford Crenshaw Culberson Daines Davis, Rodney Denham Dent DeSantis DesJarlais Diaz-Balart Duffy Duncan (SC) Duncan (TN) Ellmers Farenthold Fincher Fitzpatrick Fleischmann Fleming Flores Forbes Fortenberry Foxx Franks (AZ) Frelinghuysen Gardner Garrett Gerlach Gibbs Gibson Gingrey (GA) Gohmert Goodlatte Gowdy Granger Graves (GA) Graves (MO) Griffin (AR) Griffith (VA) Grimm Guthrie Hall Hanna Harper Harris Hartzler Hastings (WA) Heck (NV) Hensarling Holding Hudson Huelskamp Huizenga (MI) Hultgren Hunter Hurt Issa Jenkins Johnson (OH) Johnson, Sam Jordan Joyce Kelly (PA) King (IA) King (NY) Kingston Kinzinger (IL) Kline Labrador LaMalfa Lamborn Lance Lankford Latham Latta LoBiondo Long Lucas Luetkemeyer Lummis Marchant Massie Matheson McCarthy (CA) McCaul McClintock McHenry McIntyre McKeon McKinley McMorris Rodgers Meadows Meehan Messer Mica Miller (FL) Miller (MI) Miller, Gary Mullin Mulvaney Murphy (PA) Neugebauer Noem Nugent Nunes Nunnelee Olson Palazzo Paulsen Pearce Perry Petri Pittenger Pitts Pompeo Posey Price (GA) Radel Reed Reichert Renacci Ribble Rice (SC) Rigell Roby Roe (TN) Rogers (AL) Rogers (KY) Rogers (MI) Rohrabacher Rokita Rooney Ros-Lehtinen Roskam Ross Rothfus Royce Runyan Ryan (WI) Salmon Sanford Scalise Schock Schweikert Scott, Austin Sensenbrenner Sessions Shimkus Shuster Simpson Smith (MO) Smith (NE) Smith (NJ) Smith (TX) Southerland Stewart Stivers Stockman Stutzman Terry Thompson (PA) Thornberry Tiberi Tipton Turner Upton Valadao Wagner Walberg Walden Walorski Weber (TX) Webster (FL) Wenstrup Westmoreland Whitfield Williams Wilson (SC) Wittman Wolf Womack Woodall Yoder Yoho Young (IN) NAYS--193 Andrews Barber Barrow (GA) Bass Beatty Becerra Bera (CA) Bishop (GA) Bishop (NY) Blumenauer Bonamici Brady (PA) Braley (IA) Brown (FL) Brownley (CA) Bustos Butterfield Capps Capuano Cardenas Carney Carson (IN) Cartwright Castor (FL) Castro (TX) Chu Cicilline Clarke Clay Cleaver Clyburn Connolly Conyers Cooper Costa Courtney Crowley Cuellar Cummings Davis (CA) Davis, Danny DeFazio DeGette Delaney DeLauro DelBene Deutch Dingell Doggett Doyle Duckworth Edwards Ellison Engel Enyart Eshoo Esty Farr Fattah Foster Frankel (FL) Fudge Gabbard Gallego Garamendi Garcia Grayson Green, Al Green, Gene Grijalva Gutierrez Hahn Hanabusa Hastings (FL) Heck (WA) Higgins Himes Hinojosa Holt Honda Horsford Hoyer Huffman Israel Jackson Lee Jeffries Johnson (GA) Johnson, E. B. Kaptur Keating Kelly (IL) Kennedy Kildee Kilmer Kind Kirkpatrick Kuster Langevin Larsen (WA) Larson (CT) Lee (CA) Levin Lewis Lipinski Loebsack Lofgren Lowenthal Lowey **Lujan** Grisham (NM) **Lujan,** Ben Ray (NM) Lynch Maffei Maloney, Carolyn Maloney, Sean Matsui McCollum McDermott McGovern McNerney Meeks Meng Michaud Moore Moran Murphy (FL) Nadler Napolitano Neal Negrete McLeod Nolan O'Rourke Owens Pallone Pascrell Pastor (AZ) Payne Pelosi Perlmutter Peters (CA) Peters (MI) Peterson Pingree (ME) Pocan Polis Price (NC) Quigley Rahall Rangel Richmond Roybal-Allard Ruiz Ruppersberger Ryan (OH) Sanchez, Linda T. Sanchez, Loretta Sarbanes Schakowsky Schiff Schneider Schrader Schwartz Scott (VA) Scott, David Serrano Sewell (AL) Shea-Porter Sherman Sinema Sires Slaughter Smith (WA) Speier Swalwell (CA) Takano Thompson (CA) Thompson (MS) Tierney Titus Tonko Van Hollen Vargas Veasey Vela Velazquez Visclosky Walz Wasserman Schultz Waters Watt Waxman Welch Wilson (FL) Yarmuth NOT VOTING--12 Campbell Cohen Gosar Herrera Beutler Jones Marino McCarthy (NY) Miller, George Poe (TX) Rush Tsongas Young (AK) {time} 1057 Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Messrs. **BEN RAY LUJAN** of New Mexico and BARBER changed their vote from ``yea'' to ``nay.'' Mr. MATHESON changed his vote from ``nay'' to ``yea.'' So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded. Stated against: Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained at a hearing of the Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law, on which I serve as Ranking Member. I was therefore unable to be present for rollcall vote No. 583, the Previous Question on the Rule to consider H.R. 3350. Had I been present, I would have voted ``no.'' The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution. The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it. Recorded Vote Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote. A recorded vote was ordered. The SPEAKER pro tempore.

This is a 5-minute vote. [[Page H7128]] The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were--ayes 228, noes 189, not voting 13, as follows: [Roll No. 584] AYES--228 Aderholt Amash Amodei Bachmann Bachus Barletta Barr Barton Benishek Bentivolio Bilirakis Bishop (UT) Black Blackburn Brady (TX) Braley (IA) Bridenstine Brooks (AL) Brooks (IN) Broun (GA) Buchanan Bucshon Burgess Calvert Camp Cantor Capito Carter Cassidy Chabot Chaffetz Coble Coffman Cole Collins (GA) Collins (NY) Conaway Cook Costa Cotton Cramer Crawford Crenshaw Culberson Daines Davis, Rodney Denham Dent DeSantis DesJarlais Diaz-Balart Duffy Duncan (SC) Duncan (TN) Ellmers Farenthold Fincher Fitzpatrick Fleischmann Fleming Flores Forbes Fortenberry Foxx Franks (AZ) Frelinghuysen Gardner Garrett Gerlach Gibbs Gibson Gingrey (GA) Gohmert Goodlatte Gowdy Granger Graves (GA) Graves (MO) Griffin (AR) Griffith (VA) Grimm Guthrie Hall Hanna Harper Harris Hartzler Hastings (WA) Heck (NV) Hensarling Holding Hudson Huelskamp Huizenga (MI) Hultgren Hunter Hurt Issa Jenkins Johnson (OH) Johnson, Sam Jordan Joyce Kelly (PA) King (IA) King (NY) Kingston Kinzinger (IL) Kline Labrador LaMalfa Lamborn Lance Lankford Latham Latta LoBiondo Long Lucas Luetkemeyer Lummis Marchant Marino Massie Matheson McCarthy (CA) McCaul McClintock McHenry McIntyre McKeon McKinley McMorris Rodgers Meadows Meehan Messer Mica Miller (FL) Miller (MI) Miller, Gary Mullin Mulvaney Murphy (PA) Neugebauer Noem Nugent Nunes Nunnelee Olson Owens Palazzo Paulsen Pearce Perry Peterson Petri Pittenger Pitts Pompeo Posey Price (GA) Radel Reed Reichert Renacci Ribble Rice (SC) Rigell Roby Roe (TN) Rogers (AL) Rogers (KY) Rogers (MI) Rohrabacher Rokita Rooney Ros-Lehtinen Roskam Ross Rothfus Royce Runyan Ryan (WI) Salmon Sanford Scalise Schock Schweikert Scott, Austin Sessions Shimkus Shuster Simpson Smith (MO) Smith (NE) Smith (NJ) Smith (TX) Southerland Stewart Stivers Stockman Stutzman Terry Thompson (PA) Thornberry Tiberi Tipton Turner Upton Valadao Wagner Walberg Walden Walorski Weber (TX) Webster (FL) Wenstrup Westmoreland Whitfield Williams Wilson (SC) Wittman Wolf Womack Woodall Yoder Yoho Young (IN) NOES--189 Andrews Barrow (GA) Bass Beatty Becerra Bera (CA) Bishop (GA) Bishop (NY) Blumenauer Bonamici Brady (PA) Brown (FL) Brownley (CA) Bustos Butterfield Capps Capuano Cardenas Carney Carson (IN) Cartwright Castor (FL) Castro (TX) Chu Cicilline Clarke Clay Cleaver Clyburn Cohen Connolly Conyers Cooper Courtney Crowley Cuellar Cummings Davis (CA) Davis, Danny DeFazio DeGette Delaney DeLauro DelBene Deutch Dingell Doggett Doyle Duckworth Edwards Ellison Engel Enyart Eshoo Esty Farr Fattah Foster Frankel (FL) Fudge Gabbard Gallego Garamendi Garcia Grayson Green, Al Green, Gene Grijalva Gutierrez Hahn Hanabusa Hastings (FL) Heck (WA) Higgins Himes Hinojosa Holt Honda Horsford Hoyer Huffman Israel Jackson Lee Jeffries Johnson (GA) Johnson, E. B. Kaptur Keating Kelly (IL) Kennedy Kildee Kilmer Kind Kirkpatrick Kuster Langevin Larsen (WA) Larson (CT) Lee (CA) Levin Lewis Lipinski Loebsack Lofgren Lowenthal Lowey **Lujan** Grisham (NM) **Lujan,** Ben Ray (NM) Lynch Maffei Maloney, Carolyn Maloney, Sean Matsui McCollum McDermott McGovern McNerney Meeks Meng Michaud Moore Moran Murphy (FL) Nadler Napolitano Neal Negrete McLeod Nolan O'Rourke Pallone Pascrell Pastor (AZ) Payne Pelosi Perlmutter Peters (CA) Peters (MI) Pingree (ME) Pocan Polis Price (NC) Quigley Rahall Rangel Richmond Roybal-Allard Ruiz Ruppersberger Ryan (OH) Sanchez, Linda T. Sanchez, Loretta Sarbanes Schakowsky Schiff Schneider Schrader Schwartz Scott (VA) Scott, David Serrano Sewell (AL) Shea-Porter Sherman Sinema Sires Slaughter Smith (WA) Speier Swalwell (CA) Takano Thompson (CA) Thompson (MS) Tierney Titus Tonko Van Hollen Vargas Veasey Vela Velazquez Visclosky Walz Wasserman Schultz Waters Watt Waxman Welch Wilson (FL) Yarmuth NOT VOTING--13 Barber Boustany Campbell Gosar Herrera Beutler Jones McCarthy (NY) Miller, George Poe (TX) Rush Sensenbrenner Tsongas Young (AK) {time} 1105 So the resolution was agreed to. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded. A motion to reconsider was laid on the table. Stated for: Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 584 I was unavoidably detained and missed this vote. Had I been present, I would have voted ``yes.'' Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the provisions of House Resolution 413, I call up the bill (H.R. 3350) to authorize health insurance issuers to continue to offer for sale current individual health insurance coverage in satisfaction of the minimum essential health insurance coverage requirement, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration. The Clerk read the title of the bill. The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Yoder). Pursuant to House Resolution 413, the bill is considered read. The text of the bill is as follows: H.R. 3350 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE. This Act may be cited as the ``Keep Your Health Plan Act of 2013''. SEC. 2. IF YOU LIKE YOUR HEALTH CARE PLAN, YOU CAN KEEP IT. (a) In General.--Notwithstanding any provision of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (including any amendment made by such Act or by the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010), a health insurance issuer that has in effect health insurance coverage in the individual market as of January 1, 2013, may continue after such date to offer such coverage for sale during 2014 in such market outside of an Exchange established

under section 1311 or 1321 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 18031, 18041). (b) Treatment as Grandfathered Health Plan in Satisfaction of Minimum Essential Coverage.--Health insurance coverage described in subsection (a) shall be treated as a grandfathered health plan for purposes of the amendment made by section 1501(b) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Upton) and the gentleman from California (Mr. Waxman) each will control 30 minutes. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan. General Leave Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3350. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan? There was no objection. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1\1/2\ minutes. Mr. Speaker, across generations, Presidencies are often associated with one famous utterance: ``Ask not what your country can do for you,'' ``The only thing we have to fear,'' ``Tear down this wall.'' And our current President will be no different: ``If you like your health care plan, you can keep it, period.'' For the last 3 years, the President repeated this promise in selling his signature law, and he did so with the knowledge that it would not be met. Millions of Americans, including nearly 250,000 in Michigan, took the President at his word and now, unexpectedly, are receiving cancelation notices. They are confused, worried, and upset. Today we stand with those families with the Keep Your Health Plan Act. This bill is to help provide peace of mind to folks like the farmer in Bangor, Michigan, who just found out after purchasing his family's insurance for the last 30 years that he will be able to keep that plan no more. And the sticker shock will be unbearable, as the premiums double and their deductible jumps nearly $3,000. Sadly, they are not alone. For millions of Americans, it is cancelations today, sticker shock tomorrow. For the last 6 weeks, the White House stood idly by, ignoring the pleas of millions. But as the administration's allies in Congress panicked, the White House went from attacking our thoughtful bill to making an end run [[Page H7129]] around Congress with a universal ``fix.'' Our straightforward one-page bill says if you like your current coverage, you should be able to keep it. The President should heed his own advice and work with us, the Congress, as the Founders intended, not around the legislative process. Everyone today should embrace the Keep Your Health Plan Act, and our efforts to protect Americans from the damage of this law should not stop there. Let's keep the promise. I reserve the balance of my time. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes. This bill is not a bill to let people keep their health insurance plans. The President took care of that issue yesterday. This bill is another vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act. It would take away the core protections of that law. This bill creates an entire shadow market of substandard health care plans. It will destabilize the health insurance exchanges, raise premiums, and continue to allow insurers to discriminate on the basis of preexisting conditions. The bill takes away the core consumer protections that are part of the law. Under the Republican bill, it ensures to cherry-pick the best risks and destabilize the insurance market for everyone else. That is what we would have if they repealed the law. People would still be out of a chance to get health insurance. Now, I understand the concern of many Members, that individuals should be able to keep their health insurance if they like it; but there is a profound difference between providing relief for individuals whose policies have been canceled, which is what the President did yesterday, and re-creating the discriminatory, inefficient insurance market that we had before health reform, which is what this bill will do. We need to have some perspective on this issue. For those currently in the individual insurance market, nearly 5 million people, they will be eligible for a tax credit worth an average of $5,000. Over a million more people will be eligible for Medicaid, which means additional savings. Because of better coverage that protects them from crippling medical costs, millions more will lower their out-of-pocket costs; and the 25 million Americans without insurance will finally get a good deal on quality coverage. No one can be denied coverage because of preexisting conditions. No one will see higher rates because they get sick. No one will see their rates go up. No one will run up against annual coverage limits or realize too late that their plan didn't cover the key benefits that they need. {time} 1115 This week, we learned that 1.5 million people have already applied for coverage--a faster signup rate than experienced in Massachusetts-- even with all the technical problems we have had. In my State of California, nearly 400,000 people have begun applications in the first month. There will be a total of 6 months to sign up. This program is going to work. These are significant signs of progress. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired. Mr. WAXMAN. I yield myself an additional 10 seconds. They show us we are on our way to dramatically expanding health insurance coverage in this Nation. This bill will take us backwards. I urge a ``no'' vote, and I reserve the balance of my time. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from the good State of Oregon (Mr. Walden). Mr. WALDEN. I thank the chairman for yielding and for bringing this bill to the floor. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the voice of at least 150,000 Oregonians who have already received their cancelation

notices. They have been told that the policy they liked, that they wanted to keep, they cannot have any longer. I was out in my district for 8 straight days last week--36 meetings, 12 counties, 2,476 miles on the road, from morning to late at night. And I am going to tell you there are people like Chuck and Jan in Medford who had gone into retirement, had health insurance, and got a notice that their plan has been canceled. From Mitchell to Bend to Enterprise to Medford--all over--not only are their plans being canceled, the replacements are coming back with deductibles that are $12,000 to $15,000, when they were paying a couple thousand dollars. The premiums are going up--in some cases, double or more. Some of them may get a subsidy, a lot of them won't, and now they don't have the plan they were promised that they could keep. And another thing that is insidious that is going on below the surface, in meeting after meeting, hours are being cut back. People are losing their jobs. They are getting less take-home pay because of ObamaCare. This is a problem all across America. The promise that you could keep your plan was never to be kept, and they knew it. And they continued to say it, and it wasn't true. People are losing their plans, they are losing their coverage, and they are losing access to the specialists that may save their lives. They won't be able to keep their doctors. Oh, they may, but if the doctor is out of network, there is no cap on what they will pay in terms of a deductible. So financially, you take away their access to health care. The prices have gone up; the access has gone down. And by the way, in many cases, they have lost their jobs or their hours have been cut back. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. Rangel), who played such an important role in drafting the Affordable Care Act. Mr. RANGEL. Let me thank Congressman Waxman for giving me this opportunity. The majority has said that Presidents are remembered by certain things, and this outstanding President will be remembered because he said, if you have a plan--and he didn't say ``no matter how bad it is''--you can keep it. I think he will be remembered historically as being the first President in the United States of America that has told people that, for the first time, every American will have access to affordable health care. On the other side, history is going to record them, too. They never said that they had any concern at all and never had a plan for the 30 million people that every day are waiting for this plan to go into effect, and that they would publicly acknowledge that they don't want to improve upon mistakes that may have been made but they want to derail, to destroy, and to eliminate and to repeal universal health care for Americans. I say this. The President apologized yesterday, and I apologize for the United States Congress to those people without insurance today. If you believe that the administration has done something wrong, for God's sake, let's work together to correct it. But to just ignore the fact that 70 percent of Americans already have good insurance and it is going to be improved, to ignore the fact that 30 million people and their legacy is in jeopardy because they can't afford to have serious illnesses, and to believe that those that belong to the 5 percent that really get caught in what we are supposed to be fixing today, I tell you that there is no evidence at all that the Republican Party wanted to fix anything for the uninsured of America. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia, Dr. Gingrey, a member of the Health Subcommittee. Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from New York just said it: universal health care, single-payer system, a government takeover of one-sixth of our economy. That is what they wanted from the very beginning. I rise today in support of H.R. 3350, the Keep Your Health Plan Act now. The Obama administration's health exchange enrollment announcement on Wednesday is one of the myriad reasons we must pass this bill. Frankly, these long-awaited numbers did not come as a surprise to us. A mere 100,000 registered for health care on the new marketplaces when they anticipated 500,000. According to a Health and Human Services report, the number does not distinguish even between those that actually paid a premium and those that just selected a plan by clicking a button on the Web site. Mr. Speaker, the number of Americans who have had their health plans [[Page H7130]] canceled is in the millions--exponentially higher than those who receive coverage under ObamaCare. This disastrous law was destined to fail from the start. We on this side of the aisle, the Republicans--and indeed, the American people-- have known for 3 years that this plan is unworkable for small businesses; it is unfair for physicians and their patients; and it is unaffordable for we the taxpayer, we the people. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3350. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. Pallone), the top Democrat on the Health Subcommittee of Energy and Commerce. Mr. PALLONE. Thank you, Mr. Waxman. Unfortunately, today's bill is a ruse. It claims to make things better, but all it does is to make things terribly worse. Republicans will hide behind a sound bite and nice-sounding title. But what this bill really does is to go back to the old, broken health insurance system. This is just another attempt for the GOP to repeal the provisions of the Affordable Care Act. They have made it their mission to push the ACA to failure, and the only consequence is just that: seriously damaging the insurance provisions of the Affordable Care Act and the millions of Americans who are expected to

benefit from the improved coverage and premium and cost-sharing subsidies available through the new health insurance marketplace. The GOP claims the bill allows people to keep their health plans, but actually it allows old policies with fewer benefits and sometimes higher prices to be sold to new enrollees. One of the major goals of the ACA was to improve the quality of health insurance policies sold on the private market. Beginning in 2014, health insurance plans can no longer deny coverage for adults with preexisting conditions or charge those individuals more for coverage. And there are a lot of other discriminatory practices that are eliminated by the ACA. We need to be open to constructive changes to make this law work to the best of its ability, but that is not what the GOP is doing today. No one believes the Republicans care about ensuring that people have health insurance. If they did, then Republicans would not, for purely political reasons, refuse to expand Medicaid with those Republican Governors in the States where now 5 million hardworking Americans across 26 States will not have Medicaid expansion because of Republican politics. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the President took action to help Americans who want to renew their old insurance policies. Ultimately, though, I hope that those Americans who want to renew those old policies will look at the quality plans available in the new Affordable Care Act insurance marketplace and like what they see. In most cases, they will find they are able to purchase better coverage at a lower price than their original policies, so, when they get sick or need care, they will actually have it--not with these old policies that, for the most part, are not going to provide them with good health insurance. I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill. This is just another repeal effort on the part of the Republicans. They are not serious about trying to provide insurance, and this will accomplish nothing for the American people. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. Barton), the chairman emeritus of the Energy and Commerce Committee. (Mr. BARTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.) Mr. BARTON. I appreciate the chairman yielding. Mr. Speaker, we are here today to begin the long process of amending--hopefully improving, and if that is not possible, at some point in time, repealing--the Affordable Care Act. The President, as everybody knows by now, repeatedly said that if you like your health insurance, you can keep it. Well, it has been proven that even when he said it, that was not true. Yesterday, the President admitted as much when he said for the next year he would try to honor that promise, if only in the breach. The Upton bill actually correctly honors that promise in the correct way by legislatively saying that insurance can continue to provide these private policies--and I would assume some employer-sponsored policies--regardless of whether they meet the new minimum standards under the Affordable Care Act. The bill does not require insurance companies to do so, but it does allow them to do so. As sponsors of the bill, it is our hope that many companies will do so. It is a reasonable expectation that millions of Americans, given that choice, will actually keep the plans that they have and that they like. At some point in time, though, Mr. Speaker--this bill is not the end of the process; it is the beginning--we need to come back and fix the rest of the law or perhaps even change it or repeal it. I have a bill that I hope will be brought to the floor at some point in the near future that will make ObamaCare voluntary. Let the American people choose what parts of the new law they like, and if they decide they don't like some parts or all of the law, they wouldn't be compelled--mandated--to continue to use some of these new policies. So, Mr. Speaker, I want to commend Chairman Upton and Subcommittee Chairman Pitts for bringing this bill so expeditiously to the floor. I would hope that we can have a unanimous vote in support of it. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman will not get a unanimous vote. At this time, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Levin), the ranking member of the Ways and Means Committee. (Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.) Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans are on a mission of destruction. Nothing will satisfy them except that very mission. The Upton bill is another weapon in that mission. What the Republicans fear most of all is that health care reform will eventually work. The Upton bill is a bill to make sure that it does not work. The President has taken a step to help people keep their policies. The Upton bill opens the door to anyone at all to make sure that health care reform is not workable and that the private market cannot work. So back to the time of 50 million uninsured. So back to the time of cancelation for preexisting conditions. So back to the time of no cap. The alternative is bankruptcy. Eight years ago, the Medicare drug program that Republicans had passed got off to a rocky start. Did we Democrats pounce on it for political gain? No. We put the country first and helped make the program a success. The Republicans are marching in the opposite direction--the path of destroying instead of making something work. Let's work together to make it work rather than destroying what Americans want: a healthy health care program for all Americans. {time} 1130 Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Cantor), the majority leader of the House. Mr. CANTOR. I thank the chairman, the gentleman from Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Keep Your

Health Plan Act. Many Americans today are worried. They are worried about their jobs, worried about saving for their children's college educations or worried about saving for their retirements, and now, Mr. Speaker, millions of Americans are worried about coming home and opening their mailboxes to find out that their health care coverage has been taken from them because of the President's health care law. The President repeatedly said that if you liked your health care plan, you could keep it. We knew this was a promise he could not keep, and now it is a promise he has broken. As a result, millions of Americans across the country are receiving cancelation letters just like this one. Mr. Speaker, this letter was sent to me by a constituent of mine. His name is Bruno Gora. He is from Richmond, Virginia. Bruno is self- employed, and he purchases his health care plan through Anthem BlueCross/Blue Shield. A few weeks ago, he was shocked to receive this letter because this letter clearly reads: ``To meet the [[Page H7131]] requirements of the new law, your current plan can no longer be offered.'' Purchasing a new plan could potentially cost Mr. Gora thousands of dollars. Why should he or anyone else be forced off their plan if they want to keep it? Working families across America were counting on the President to keep his promise. Now they are counting on us to ease some of the pain that his health care law has brought on them. Yesterday, President Obama announced that he was going to be making some unilateral changes, but the changes he proposed and the ones we are proposing in the House have some very clear differences. The President's plan restricts coverage previously available to only those who already had it while forcing others to purchase a plan from healthcare.gov or to buy more expensive coverage that may not fit their needs. The White House doesn't even know how they are going to implement the plan they announced yesterday. This proposal that we are talking about here, Chairman Upton's plan, aims to help Americans keep their health insurance and give their neighbors a chance to buy the same plans rather than forcing them onto a faulty Web site to buy new coverage they may not like or cannot afford. Under this legislation, there is no confusion. The Keep Your Health Plan Act removes the impediment in the law that restricts insurance plans from being offered. The only way to completely stop any more cancelation letters like the one Mr. Gora received is through a full repeal of ObamaCare. Today, however, we have an opportunity to stand united and pass a bipartisan measure that aims to slow the growing number of Americans harmed by this law. I would like to thank Chairman Upton for his hard work and dedication to the issue, and I urge all of my colleagues in the House to support this bill. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I wish to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Dingell), the dean of the House, the chairman emeritus of the Energy and Commerce Committee and the longest- standing Member in support of universal health care coverage. (Mr. DINGELL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.) Mr. DINGELL. I thank my friend for yielding me this time, and I express great affection and respect for my dear friend, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Upton), who serves the House and his constituents well. However, Mr. Speaker, this is a regrettable piece of legislation. It is nothing more or less than the kind of insurance policies, which are being authorized by it, that were sold by snake oil salesmen around this country, policies which gave no relief, no help, and no benefit to the American people. The sad situation is that this not only allows some people to keep their policies, but it allows a lot of snake oil salesmen to run around the country, selling bad policies which undo almost all of the protections which we have put into the Affordable Care Act, things like protections against preexisting conditions or the fact that a woman who might be buying a policy can be charged more under this legislation on a new policy issued by some sneaky insurance company. The harsh fact of the matter is that this is not a help to citizens. The President said yesterday that he was going to take steps to correct the problems. If we really want to have this done properly, then that is the way to do it. Let us work together to have these matters corrected properly. Let us see to it that the American people get the protections they need against abusive practices and not that we return to them. H.R. 3350 allows the new sales of bad policies--which contain programs and practices that are barred by ACA--to new and gullible purchasers, the ones whom we say we seek to protect. As I observed yesterday, the insurance companies feel that this is going to cause huge confusion in the market, and they do not seek this legislation. The average citizen has been sold a bill of lading which is just plainly false. He is not going to be benefited by H.R. 3350. He is simply going to be afforded the opportunity to buy bad policies, whereas what we want to do is see to it that if he has his policy he can keep it. The hard fact of the matter is that he can keep it, and he doesn't need the legislation before us. The legislation before us simply assures that folks can run around selling bad policies under fictional and false misrepresentations to do hurt to the American people, who, frankly, need protection against the abuses that the Affordable Care Act would put in place. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. Scalise), a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee. Mr. SCALISE. I thank the gentleman from Michigan for bringing this bill to

the floor, which I support. Mr. Speaker, we all heard that promise that if you like what you have, you can keep it. It is probably the most often repeated promise that Barack Obama has made in his 5 years as President. Yet the President is finally acknowledging that that promise will not be kept to millions of Americans who are losing the good plans they like. They can't feign that they didn't know this was going to happen, by the way, Mr. Speaker, because, back in 2010, the administration had a report that said over 60 percent of private plans would be canceled under the President's health care law. I have seen it myself in my district. I have got Chris from Covington and Aaron from Slidell who have gotten letters saying they are going to lose the good plans they have because of the President's health care law. The President's answer was, Oh, it was a lousy plan. Mr. Speaker, it was not a lousy plan for Chris or for Aaron or for the millions of Americans who are losing their plans. They liked their plans. Some Washington politician shouldn't be able to say, I don't think it is good enough, so I am going to take it from you even though it is right for your family. Let's put patients and doctors back in charge of these decisions. Let's empower hardworking families to be the ones in control of their health care decisions, not some Washington politician. I urge the passage of this bill. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlelady from Illinois (Ms. Schakowsky). Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, the number one cause of personal bankruptcies in this country is the cost of health care. Most of those people are so-called ``insured.'' These are the policies that are being offered that people find out, when they get sick, that they really aren't insured. A major goal of ObamaCare is to protect every consumer from the worst abuses of the private health insurance industry. Starting next year, no consumer can be denied coverage or charged more due to a preexisting condition. This means that 129 million Americans will no longer have to live in fear that they could, one day, be unable to obtain affordable coverage needed to maintain their health or even to save their lives. The Upton bill would turn back the clock. The Upton bill would allow insurers to cherry-pick among all health care consumers--the young, the healthy--by offering non-ObamaCare-compliant policies, leaving only the old and sick to purchase coverage in the marketplace. This is something they have wanted to do and have been doing for decades. This is going to drive up premiums and allow just the type of discrimination that ObamaCare absolutely ends. Speaker Boehner said yesterday, We have currently the best health care delivery system in the world. Are you kidding me--with tens of millions of people uninsured and tens of millions more with bad policies that don't cover this? Rather than taking steps to weaken ObamaCare, my Republican colleagues should be taking this opportunity to build on ObamaCare; as the President said, to fix it. Last week, I spoke with the director of the Illinois Department of Insurance about some of the unreasonable rate increases my constituents have faced in the past and their concerns about the new rates being quoted in letters they received from their insurers this fall. He told me that he doesn't have the authority he wants in order to protect consumers from excessive premiums. This authority includes the [[Page H7132]] ability to deny or to modify any unreasonable premium. Illinois isn't alone. Today, Republicans denied us the opportunity to address this by refusing to consider legislation that would move us forward and provide rate modification authority in every State. Instead, they are choosing to move a bill that would drive up premium rates and undermine ObamaCare's new benefits and protections. I want to caution people. Rather than re-up with some of the policies they have, check it out. What is really covered? Is there hospitalization? Is the emergency room covered? How many times can you go see your doctor? Go to the marketplace. It will be fixed. Pick a plan that is going to provide you with the real coverage and the essential benefits that you need that are provided under ObamaCare. We want to protect you from junk plans that are out there, but we want to let you re-up in plans that actually offer you the kind of coverage you want, that is essential, which is what the President did yesterday. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, at this point, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. McCarthy), the Republican whip. Mr. McCARTHY of California. I thank the chairman for his work in keeping his pledge of bringing this bill to the floor. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3350, the Keep Your Health Plan Act. From the start, ObamaCare has been a disaster. First, the individual mandate was a bad idea before and is even more dangerous now because it is forcing people to choose health care they do not want, cannot afford, and isn't right for themselves and their families. Second, the President's credibility continues to crumble as independent news sources have confirmed that he intentionally broke his promise to every American about whether they can keep his insurance under this law. We will continue to see the shock waves of ObamaCare. Today, it is the fact that Americans cannot keep their coverage. Tomorrow, it will be the staggering and unexpected cost. Next month, it will be about losing access to their doctors, and the list continues. No administrative fix will undo the harm this law has caused. Republicans believe that we must try and help Americans who have been harmed by ObamaCare. That is why, today, we will pass a bill to allow Americans to continue to enroll in plans currently offered without facing the

individual mandate penalty. What the American people and our constituents need is certainty. The only approach that begins to provide them certainty is the bill before us today. Our bill allows Americans a choice. It lets individuals keep their health care plans while giving others who currently are uninsured an escape hatch from ObamaCare. Our bill will allow individuals, whether one is a mother of a sick child, a small business owner, or a young, invincible adult, to keep their current plans. The National Federation of Independent Business and senior groups, such as 60 Plus, are urging Congress to fulfill its duty and pass this bill. I urge my Democratic friends to join with us. Many of them voted for this bill. They stated they had an intent that Americans could keep their plans. Today is their opportunity to keep that pledge. {time} 1145 Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from the State of Washington, Dr. McDermott, who is the ranking member of the Health Subcommittee of Ways and Means. (Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.) Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, my mother used to say ``patience is a virtue.'' I haven't seen so much panic on this floor since 9/11. Now, the fact is that a couple of Members who used to be here--Jay Inslee, who is now Governor of the State of Washington, and Mike Kreidler, who is the insurance commissioner of the State of Washington--have already said they will not implement this because it is not good for the people of the State of Washington. They have looked at it. We have worked hard to implement the Affordable Care Act. Now we have a bill out here with no hearings whatsoever run out here, and we are told there will be no confusion. There will be nothing but confusion. You have 50 insurance commissioners around this country who are going to be suddenly given a bill after we write some rules and regulations here that require the insurance companies to sell policies to people. I can't believe what I am hearing. I thought that the Republicans believed in the free enterprise system. This is socialism. This is government saying to insurance companies: you must sell a policy to somebody next year that you sold to them this year. When did we shift on the Republican side to the Congress telling an insurance company who they have to sell a policy to or what is in the policy? The fact is that they are going to have to put the policy out there. They have been working on implementing this law for 3 years. Now 6 weeks before it actually begins to take effect, we run in here and say, wait a minute, wait a minute, you got to start selling policies like the ones that you sold last year. Do you think they didn't think through what they are doing? I mean, I don't understand. The free enterprise system is lions and they are eating antelopes. I urge you to vote ``no'' against this because you are going to create endless confusion in this country and the insurance market. Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner, November 14, 2013. Kreidler Statement on President Obama's Announcement Today Olympia, WA.--``We have worked for three years to implement the Affordable Care Act in a way that works best for Washingtonians. One goal of our efforts has been to build a stable, fair and competitive individual health insurance market. I know that many people who buy their own health insurance have struggled to keep their coverage. That is why we have worked so hard to make these significant changes. We have brought meaningful benefits to this market that the rest of us with employer-sponsored health plans have enjoyed for years; benefits like prescription drug coverage, maternity care, and reasonable limits on out-of-pocket costs. Our state-based Exchange--Wahealthplanfinder.org--is up and running and successfully enrolling thousands of consumers. I understand that many people are upset by the notices they have recently received from their health plans and they may not need the new benefits today. But I have serious concerns about how President Obama's proposal would be implemented and more significantly, its potential impact on the overall stability of our health insurance market. I do not believe his proposal is a good deal for the state of Washington. In the interest of keeping the consumer protections we have enacted and ensuring that we keep health insurance costs down for all consumers, we are staying the course. We will not be allowing insurance companies to extend their policies. I believe this is in the best interest of the health insurance market in Washington. We estimate that 290,000 people will need to buy new coverage and that at least half of them will qualify for a premium subsidy. I encourage anyone who is shopping for new health plans--whether you've been uninsured or have received a cancellation notice from your insurer--to look at all of your options. Don't just take what your insurance company says. You may find better, more affordable coverage with a different insurer. There are 46 individual health plans for sale in the Exchange and 51 plans available outside the Exchange. If you need help reviewing your options, contact a navigator or an agent or broker. ____ November 14, 2013. Gov. Inslee Statement on Obama Administration's Affordable Care Act Announcement Gov. Jay Inslee issued this statement in response to Thursday's announcement by President Obama that insurers could continue to offer individual insurance plans that don't comply with the ACA: ``We appreciate President Obama's efforts, through the administrative fix announced today, to address the concerns of those who have gotten `cancellation' letters from their insurance companies. ``Each state will be examining this option to

see whether it works for them, and we know different states will come to different conclusions. ``Here in Washington, we are fortunate to have a robust insurance exchange, with 46 plans from eight different carriers. We're also fortunate that our exchange, the Washington Healthplanfinder, is up and running and enrolling tens of thousands of people in meaningful and affordable health coverage. ``Because of that, the majority of Washingtonians who get these letters are able to find [[Page H7133]] better plans and get tax subsidies to help pay for them. They are getting better coverage at a better price. ``Largely because of the success we've had implementing the Affordable Care Act so far, Insurance Commissioner Mike Kreidler has concluded that the option of extending old health plans is not a good solution for the state of Washington. ``We understand that these cancellation letters can be upsetting, and we want to make sure everyone knows how to find the best deal for themselves and their families. We encourage everyone to explore their options on the Washington Healthplanfinder--www.wahealthplanfinder.org--and seek out the help of an in-person assistor or broker to find a plan that fits their needs and their budgets. ``We also want to make sure that the people of our state have meaningful health insurance that will cover them when they get sick or end up in the hospital or find they need ongoing prescription drugs, and we know the plans we have in Washington will do that.'' Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds. The gentleman needs to read our bill. It doesn't say that the insurance companies must sell those policies. That may be in the Senate bill, the Landrieu bill. It is not in this bill. I yield 1 minute to the vice chair of the Energy and Commerce Committee, the gentlelady from Tennessee (Mrs. Blackburn). Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for the superb job that he has done on bringing H.R. 3350 to the floor; and I thank him for listening to millions of Americans who have been so forthright in saying we do not want the President's health care law; it is destroying our access to the health care that we like; it is taking away our health care plans. Never has there been a Federal mandate that has just swept so many people aside and said you must buy this product. Some of you have asked, why are we doing this? Let me tell you why. We are doing it for my constituents like Carolyn and Lucy and Cindy and Wilma, all small business owners, all female heads of households, who have written us and have said we are being forced out--forced out--of the plan that we like, we are being forced away from the doctor that we like, we are being forced to buy a product we do not like. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from Connecticut, Rosa DeLauro. Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, since this Republican majority took office, we have taken vote after vote after vote intended to disrupt, delay, defund, or outright repeal the Affordable Care Act. Last month, this House majority shut down the Federal Government. They threatened a catastrophic debt default in order to gut this law. Now, when the Affordable Care Act is going into effect, are we supposed to believe that this Republican majority is putting forth a good-faith effort to improve the bill? It doesn't wash, and it defies imagination. This bill is designed to weaken the health care law to roll back the clock on the reforms we worked so hard to pass. It takes us back to the unacceptable state of our health care system before we passed the Affordable Care Act. Remember, the health care system was failing people. Every year health care costs skyrocketed, small businesses priced out of the market, employers asking for higher contributions in co-pays and dropping coverage, people with preexisting conditions being socked or left on their own. Every year more people had no insurance whatsoever. This bill allows insurers to continue to provide substandard health insurance plans to families, even to new customers. Americans on these plans will be denied access to preventive services with no out-of- pocket costs. It takes us back to a time when people were not guaranteed coverage for maternity, pediatric care, hospitalizations, where families faced annual caps, lifetime caps. It takes us back to a health insurance market that rejects people with preexisting conditions. Once again, this Republican majority is trying to put insurers back in the driver's seat, let them control the health of American families. This majority was never interested in reforming our broken health care system. They have never been interested in the Affordable Care Act, and now they are not interested as well. This is a cynical, transparently political bill. Oppose it. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Dr. Tim Murphy, the chairman of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee on Energy and Commerce. Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the majority is very concerned about health insurance plans and very concerned about those people who have lost their plans. When this bill was originally marked up a couple of years ago in the Energy and Commerce Committee, repeatedly we heard from Members on the other side of the aisle saying that if people liked their plan they could keep it. Indefinitely they were grandfathered in. This needed a fix several months ago. The President of the United States has said he wants Republicans and Democrats to work together for a solution. We are offering to work together, and yet the President has said he would veto this. But the President offered only a partial fix. It will lead to more confusion. The question is: Will it lead to class action suits against insurance companies who

fail to comply with the law? Many States are saying this partial fix is not sufficient. We need a legislative fix. We need a way that people can still have their option for buying their plan. What we have to see here is that it is a bigger problem for American families who have found that their insurance is lost and they want to be able to keep it. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining on both sides. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California has 10\1/2\ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Michigan has 16\3/4\ minutes remaining. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. Hoyer). Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this bill which will undermine the providing of health care at affordable prices for millions and millions and millions of Americans. We said to those Americans that prior to the adoption of this act if they had a policy, they could keep it. That was accurate. It didn't say that the insurance companies would have to continue to offer it, which, as I understand it, that side of the aisle wouldn't be for in any event. The fact of the matter is that statement was correct. Subsequent to that, there were policies offered and insurance companies knew and policyholders should have known because it was in the law that they would be subject to minimum requirements. Why? Because as The Heritage Foundation said when it originally came up with this idea, everybody ought to take personal responsibility. I have heard a lot of talk on your side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, about personal responsibility. I believe in that. The Upton bill, as everybody knows, will skew the risk pool and encourage adverse selection. Anybody who knows anything about insurance knows that if you have adverse selection, the prices for those who need insurance will go up very substantially while, yes, the prices for those who don't need insurance will go down very sharply. Quite frankly, if all of us knew we would never be in an automobile accident, we wouldn't have to have automobile insurance, except, of course, the law in almost every State requires us to have it so that others will be protected as well. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional minute to the gentleman. Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman. Ladies and gentlemen, this bill is offered by people who, according to their own rhetoric, want to repeal the Affordable Care Act. That is a fair position; but now they are trying to do so with a Trojan horse they call ``the Upton bill'' that, in effect, will fix what people are concerned about. The fact of the matter is it will not fix that problem, but what it will do is undermine the ability of millions and millions and millions of people to have health security. I would urge my colleagues to defeat this Trojan horse. I would urge my colleagues to say to the American people, look, we are prepared to work together. The President has offered a compromise which will have the effect of [[Page H7134]] not opening up the policies to everybody, but to those people that had a policy. That is a reasonable step to take. That is a step that, perhaps, we can take together and get accomplished. Let's reject this bill and let's stand with the millions of people who want affordable, quality health care for themselves and their families. Mr. Speaker, the Affordable Care Act is good for our country, and it is already benefiting millions of people. Today, those who are uninsured can sign up for affordable plans through the state and federal marketplaces--and over 1.5 million Americans have already applied for coverage. In spite of that, Republicans remain fixated on repealing this law--rather than working with us to improve it. Today, we are witnessing their latest assault on health care reform, with their 46th vote to undermine the Affordable Care Act. Once again, instead of providing a solution, their bill will only create more problems. This stands in sharp contrast with the approach of President Obama and Democrats, which is to work together to make improvements where needed. In that vein, President Obama announced yesterday that insurers can continue to sell 2013 plans through next year to those Americans who are already enrolled in an individual market policy. And the administration will require insurance companies to be more transparent by sharing information with consumers about other coverage options through the marketplaces--many that provide better benefits at a lower cost. The President's plan will also mitigate the risk of premium increases that could result from the grandfathering of these insurance policies. That is something the gentleman from Michigan's bill does not do--which means that his bill will lead to higher premiums and greater uncertainty for all consumers. And his bill would undermine the health care reforms that are yielding real benefits for millions of Americans. I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation. Instead, let's work together to make sure the Affordable Care Act is implemented effectively and that Americans will continue to benefit from it. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. Lance), a member of the Health Subcommittee on Energy and Commerce. Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of Chairman Upton's legislation, which will provide much-needed certainty and relief for millions of Americans, including 800,000 in New Jersey. Regarding this issue, The New York Times editorialized this morning that the President has ``damaged his credibility, and it is uncertain how he can earn back the public's trust.'' I would suggest support of this bipartisan legislation will earn back the President's trust. This matter should be addressed legislatively and permanently and

not administratively and temporarily, as the President suggested yesterday. It is time for us to work together. I strongly support Chairman Upton's legislation. I am sure it will pass in a bipartisan fashion and there will be bipartisan support in the other House. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana, Dr. Cassidy, a member of the Health Subcommittee. Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. Speaker, for the last 30 years, I have worked in a hospital for the uninsured. What I have learned is that unless you trust the families, unless you give power to the patient, you truly cannot make good medical decisions. This is an email I got from someone who is my age--mid-50s. She says that we just got a letter from our health care provider, we had a major medical with a $10,000 deductible. We have lost that. We were told the insurance was not acceptable as written, so now our new policy has a $7,000 deductible and it cost us $10,000 more a year. The deductible goes down by $3,000, their premium up by $10,000. This is not power to the family or to the patient. This is Washington saying, thou shalt spend thy money in the way that we direct you to spend it. Frankly, I don't know if we can reconstruct the private insurance market. It may have been decimated by the Affordable Care Act. The last chance probably was the Enzi resolution on the Senate side in which it was pointed out that as many as 80 percent of Americans will lose their individual policy, but every Democrat voted against that Enzi resolution. There is hope. It is the Keep Your Health Plan Act, which allows the policies to be resold, to occasionally be tweaked and, by the way, to be sold to others, preserving, if you will, the power of big numbers, which is key to the insurance industry. {time} 1200 Now, the other option, the President and the others on the Senate side, don't allow these policies to be sold to others. And so without allowing that, of course they are eventually going to be actuarially unsound and collapse. It is a sleight of hand which is disingenuous in terms of its intent. We give power to the patients. We must trust families. We should pass the Keep Your Health Plan Act and allow families to make their own decisions. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from New York (Ms. Velazquez). Ms. VELAZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. Mr. Speaker, let's be clear about the bill before us today. This bill is not an attempt to help Americans keep their insurance plans. The President already announced a plan to help address that goal. Instead, this bill takes a meat cleaver approach, allowing insurance companies to market inadequate policies to new enrollees. Remember the bad old days when preexisting conditions were discriminated against? This bill brings back that practice. Remember women paying more for coverage simply because of their gender? That is A-okay under this bill. Remember annual caps that let insurance companies stop paying when a consumer came down with an expensive illness? That is back, too. And what about small businesses facing double-digit hikes in their premium costs? If we want to take up targeted legislation helping those whose policies are being discontinued, then let's do that. But let's call this bill what it is--a return to the day when insurance companies preyed on working families and the 46th attempt to repeal the Affordable Care Act. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. McKinley), a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee. Mr. McKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman. I rise today to be the voice of the citizens of the First District of West Virginia and support House bill H.R. 3350. Let me share just two of the messages of the thousands that we have received. Linda from Philippi, West Virginia, writes: I am losing my health insurance due to ObamaCare. My policy has been canceled, and I am being forced to enter the exchange. I like my current policy. Under the exchange, I will be forced to pay $200 more. I am being hurt by ObamaCare. This simply isn't fair. And Sherry from Weirton, West Virginia, tells us: My parents, both retired, received a letter from their insurance company letting them know their new rate starting in January. The increase is so much they can't afford it. I pray that they can continue to receive the health care that they choose so they can continue to be healthy. They deserve better. Mr. Speaker, these are only two of the stories out of the thousands we could share. Consequently, I am urging my colleagues to support this particular legislation. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, how much time remains on both sides? The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California has 6 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Michigan has 12\3/4\ minutes remaining. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. Gardner). Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the committee for his work on this bill and the legislation before us. Mr. Speaker, 250,000 Coloradoans have had their health care plans canceled. I join them. Here is my letter. As one of the insurance policyholders in Colorado, I, too, had my insurance canceled. I am part of 250,000 people who had a health care plan they were told they could keep, but they won't be able to. Noel from eastern Colorado contacted my office to tell me that his insurance has been canceled, insurance [[Page H7135]] that he liked, that he was promised by the President that he would get to keep. Mr. Speaker, Noel tells the story that he has two kids and a third on the way. He tells the story that his

premium is going to go up by about $400 as a result of the changes under the health care bill, and that with the addition of his third child, it will go up another $300 more a month. His family doesn't make much money. For eastern Colorado, they actually do better than others. They bring home $5,000 a month. But to see that kind of a health care cost increase when they were promised if they like their health care policy, they could keep it is simply wrong. We have been accused in this bill of rolling back the law. This bill does one thing. It rolls back a broken promise. It rolls back a broken promise so we can keep our health care plans and so that the 250,000 people in Colorado can keep their health care plans. In fact, it does go back. It goes back to a time when President Obama promised the American people that, if they liked their health care plan, they could keep it, period. It goes back to a time when Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of HHS, said, if you like your health care plan, you can keep it. It goes back to a time when the majority who passed the legislation in the House and in the Senate said, if you like your health care plan, you can keep it, period. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. Blumenauer), a member of the Ways and Means Committee. Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy in yielding me this time. Mr. Speaker, the expectation that somehow the elements of the Affordable Care Act would not be implemented is just simply false. People can keep health insurance, but there are always going to be the new standards to make sure that people no longer have insurance in name only. That is what we heard about repeatedly in the efforts to try to reform the health care system--that people had great health care plans until they got sick. We have minimum standards going forward, and all plans will be required to meet those standards. That was in the law, and that is reasonable. We are in the midst of the greatest, most significant reform of health care in a generation, and it is already having significant effects. Medical inflation, medical cost inflation is at a 40-year low over the course of the last 3 years. We have significant expansion of coverage already. Hundreds of thousands of people in lower incomes have been able to have access to health care for the first time. Small businesses that have been burdened for years by health care costs now get access to tax credits, and it gets better for them going forward. It is, I think, ironic for people to talk about somebody losing access to a doctor who is no longer in a network. That happens every year. It happened previously. It will happen in the future unless you are going to somehow sentence doctors to participate in plans. You can't force them. And shedding crocodile tears because there are some plans that are canceled, in the individual insurance market, routinely 40, 50, 60 percent every year are turned over. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired. Mr. WAXMAN. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds. Mr. BLUMENAUER. I sat on the floor and heard my colleague from Oregon (Mr. Walden) talk about a very attractive family from southern Oregon that is somehow going to now face a $12,000 deductible. I want to take a deep dive with Greg and find out what is going on with that family because we have found people have been using ObamaCare for an excuse for some things that are going to happen anyway, or that people misunderstand. Let's do this together. Let's explore these areas. Let's give people information going forward, and let's make the system work better, not create a parallel system that will make it work worse. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. Bilirakis), a member of the Health Subcommittee. Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for sponsoring this great bill. In my State of Florida, 300,000 individuals have lost their health care plans due to ObamaCare, and hardworking Americans, like my constituent Mark from Pasco County, are being adversely affected by this law. Mark currently has a plan that he likes, but ObamaCare will take it away. His new equivalent plan on the exchange comes with a $12,000 deductible and $1,000 monthly premiums. He and his wife are about 60 years old and do not qualify for subsidies. They are very healthy, but they are punished, Mr. Speaker. I don't understand, they are punished by the President's health care law. That is why I am proud to be an original cosponsor of the Keep Your Health Plan Act to remove the barriers preventing hardworking Americans from keeping their health care plans under ObamaCare. We need to pass this bill so we can give the American people the peace of mind they deserve. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. Terry), a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee. Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, this is really about trust, and people like Andrea from Omaha feels like that trust has been violated. It has been broken. She was told that she could keep her policy, but then she received her letter saying you cannot keep your policy. A working mom with two young children, her family's premium has risen to $770 from $450 per quarter. Her responsibility for coinsurance is now 50 percent, up from what it was before at 15 percent. Her out-of- pocket costs rose to over $2,000, and she is paying more for less now. This isn't a better policy, as we have been told. It takes a big chunk of their family budget. Unfortunately, under ObamaCare, she can't keep her plan. She gets more with less. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve

the balance of my time. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. Guthrie). Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this legislation allowing individuals to keep their plans into 2014. Yesterday, my colleagues and I shared powerful stories of many of our constituents who have experienced cancelations and mass rate increases due to ObamaCare. In addition to these individuals, I have many more stories of Kentuckians seeing their plans canceled due to ObamaCare. More recently, Sylvia Martin from Owensboro wrote to me that her coverage was canceled, and she so far has been unable to get insurance. H.R. 3350 would allow insurance companies to continue offering 2013 plans, which would benefit the millions of Americans who have seen their current plans canceled. The American people were told repeatedly that if they liked their plan, they can keep it. House Republicans today are trying to honor that promise. Mr. WAXMAN. I continue to reserve the balance of my time. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. Roe). Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman, and I rise in support of the Keep Your Health Plan Act. This bill is important for many people in my district, including Joann. Joann lives in Limestone, Tennessee, and because her policy doesn't meet the minimum requirements set by ObamaCare, she has been forced to buy a more expensive health care plan. Her premiums will rise from about $95 a month to $200 a month. Joann thought $95 was affordable, but $200 not. Despite promises of more affordable health care, this law is making insurance unattainable for many across my home State. BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee, our State's largest insurer, has announced it will be forced to send 66,000 cancelation notices to my fellow Tennesseeans because of ObamaCare; a Medicaid plan called Cover Tennessee, another 16,000 lose their care. Mr. Speaker, it is well past the time for President Obama to work with Members of Congress to provide relief to families hurting because of this law. I urge my colleagues to support the Keep Your Health Plan Act. [[Page H7136]] {time} 1215 Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, may I ask how much time is remaining? The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan has 7 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from California has 3\1/2\ minutes remaining. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. Meadows). Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3350, the Keep Your Health Plan Act, and I would like to thank Chairman Upton for bringing this bill forward. Despite President Obama's reassurances that ``if you like your health care plan, you can keep it,'' 3.5 million plans have already been canceled because of ObamaCare. Cynthia, a constituent from Granite Falls, North Carolina, told me about her family recently. She and her husband and three boys have a premium that was $300 that has now risen to $1,206, Mr. Speaker. The rhetoric from the Democrats has said that the Republicans are only interested in pushing for a repeal of the health care law, rather than fixing it, but this is not true. So far this Congress, Republicans have introduced 102 bills designed to fix the broken areas of ObamaCare. The Democrats by contrast, a mere 17. Republicans are bringing another fix today, Mr. Speaker, to the House floor. The Keep your Health Plan Act allows families across the country like Cynthia's to keep their policies without penalty. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Kelly). Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, and I rise in strong support of H.R. 3350. This is a piece of legislation that protects the people, not a political party, not politicians, not Presidents who don't keep promises. This is a letter I got from Melissa and Riley from Hermitage, Pennsylvania. Riley is a college student paying for her own education. She is working part time at minimum wage in a local grocery store, paying for what she calls an affordable $70 per month for her health care coverage. Because of the Affordable Care Act, her hours at the store have been cut back, and now, to add insult to injury, she has been notified by the insurance provider that because of ObamaCare, she will be canceled after another year and that she is going to be forced to choose a plan that costs triple what she is paying now. Riley's mom, Melissa, also sent a letter to our office, a letter of desperation stating that her health insurance provider, the one she has always relied on, has now informed her that she will no longer be covered after November 25. In her letter to our office, Melissa writes: When my daughter or I purchase our own health care in an attempt to be self-sufficient in this country, we are penalized, not rewarded. Mr. President, keep your promise. I can't believe for 3 years we have told people you can keep these policies, you don't have to worry about it, period. If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor, period. Now we find out that it was all just talk, and that is what this country is fed up with. They are tired of the talk that comes out of Washington. They want to have people start representing them. That is what we are here to do. Both sides of the aisle, ladies and gentlemen, both sides of the aisle. It is time to stop the spin. I really feel sorry for the people who sit in the gallery here. We need to put seatbelts in. This room is spinning so fast sometimes, it is hard for them to walk straight when they walk out of here. I tell you what. Our

party will continue to commit ourselves to doing what is right for the American people. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time. Mr. UPTON. May I ask the gentleman from California how many speakers he has left? Mr. WAXMAN. We have two speakers left. Mr. UPTON. We just have two speakers as well, myself and Mrs. Ellmers. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. Ellmers). Mrs. ELLMERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3350, the Keep Your Health Plan Act of 2013. As my colleagues across the aisle have pointed out over and over and over again, the ACA is law, but it cannot simply be undone by the White House, and it does call on us in the Congress to do so. Mr. Speaker, we women in this country make 80 percent of the health care decisions, and women in this country have now been told by the President and our Democratic colleagues that the health care choices that they have made to cover their families are not adequate. In fact, they are being called subpar, and they are trying to intervene. They are trying to keep the women in this country from providing that good, sound health care coverage for their families. That is why we are voting on this bill today, Mr. Speaker. We are voting on it because these are good decisions that have been made by the American people, they are good decisions that have been made by the moms across this country for their families, and we need to do everything we can to protect that. I call on my colleagues to vote ``yes'' on H.R. 3350, so that women in this country can continue to do the good job they are doing for their families and provide good health care coverage. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. Pelosi), the Democratic leader. Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I commend him for his great leadership in helping to pass the Affordable Care Act, honoring the vows of our Founders for liberty, the freedom to pursue their happiness. It is life, liberty, pursuit of happiness. A healthier life and freedom to pursue that happiness. It is a funny thing when people talk about Washington, D.C., and how people don't get along well, we disagree. We have major disagreements on policy, and one of them is whether health care is a right for all in our country or a privilege for the few, but it doesn't take away from the fact that we are people and we serve in this institution, and we have some areas of agreement one day and the kaleidoscope changes the next day to the point where people are always surprised when I say to them, ``I pray for the Congress every day, and on Sunday especially. I pray for our Republican colleagues, as well as our Democratic colleagues, as well as the President of the United States, Barack Obama or George W. Bush, or whoever he may be, because the success of the President and the success of all of us is a success for the American people, if we can work together to find common ground for the public good.'' When I pray for all of us, I have wishes for us. I wish that my Republican colleagues could see how successful the Affordable Care Act is in California. I wish you could hear the stories of family after family after family being liberated, freed from the constraint of being job-locked because the family has a preexisting condition so that now they can follow their passion and not be chained by a policy, follow their passion to be self-employed, to start a business, or to change jobs. I wish you could hear all of these stories. I wish you would not close your mind to them because this initiative has been transformative. I would have hoped that whatever had been proposed would be to strengthen or improve it, and we all have the humility to know that any bill, whatever our pride of involvement in it is, can be improved. That is why it is particularly disappointing to come to the floor today to see a bill that says to the Affordable Care Act and all of these people with all of their stories, we are going to unravel this, we are going to unravel all of the good things, whether it is preexisting conditions, ending that discrimination, whether it is lifetime limits, whether it is annual limits, whether it is being a women no longer being a preexisting condition, whether it is for seniors or for kids 18-26 years old or for little children, even now, before the bill is fully enacted. So I hope and I pray, and I wish that our colleagues [[Page H7137]] could see the evidence and that the decisions would be evidence-based rather than politically motivated. I think it is really important what this Congress does today. Each Member has to make his or her own decisions, but the fact is that in this body, our words weigh a ton and our votes are even weightier than that. I hope the message that comes out of this Congress is that there is a discussion going on, but there is a values decision that has been made in favor of the American people. If we have to thread a needle to get a result, let's do that, but let's not unravel the whole sweater because that would not be a comfort to the American people. Let's act to strengthen, not weaken. Let's vote ``no'' on the Upton bill. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time. Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Doyle), a very distinguished member of the Energy and Commerce Committee. Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, let's think about where America was prior to the enactment of the Affordable Care Act. There were 30 to 40 million of our citizens without insurance. People with preexisting conditions either couldn't get insurance or had to pay so much they couldn't afford their insurance.

Women were being charged twice as much as men. People that had insurance had annual and lifetime caps. Did you ever wonder why when you would see families holding fundraisers to raise money for their kid's drugs when a kid has cancer? These are people who had insurance and came up against the annual caps or lifetime caps, and the insurance company didn't pay any more. Half the families in America are filing bankruptcy. People with insurance up against caps, no more payments, families losing everything. We put an end to that with the Affordable Care Act. How did we do that? We come up with a private system that required everybody to participate--young and old, rich and poor, healthy and sick. When you put everybody in that risk pool, healthy people help us enable the insurance industry to keep rates at an affordable rate for those people who have preexisting conditions and who have chronic diseases. That is how the system works. What my colleague, Mr. Upton, is proposing today unravels that system. Make no mistake about it. If we continue to allow private insurance companies to sell policies that discriminate against women, that set annual caps and lifetime caps, if we continue to allow all of those practices that 80 percent to 90 percent of Americans say they want in their health care system, then that risk pool goes away, rates go sky high, and you will have raised premiums for every American in this country. I say to my colleagues, there are unforeseen circumstances we knew would come up in this bill. I led the charge in my caucus. I told my caucus if the President doesn't come up with a fix, if our leadership doesn't have an alternative solution to this, many of us would consider voting for the Upton bill, as bad as it is, because it undermines the health care bill. The good news is the President has responded. We will have a motion to recommit today that responds, and I want to make it clear that there is nothing in the Upton bill that mandates insurance companies to do this. This is a shallow bill. In the end, let me just say, my friends, have some credibility. You introduced 102 bills, and you never put one of them on the floor for a vote. So don't pretend you care about the American people's health care here. You are just trying to repeal the Affordable Care Act. Democrats are not going to let you do that. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair and not to others in the second person. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining? The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan has 2\1/2\ minutes remaining. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time. I say to my friend from Pennsylvania, we would have liked to have had some amendments when the Affordable Care Act passed. The rule denied us any amendments. Why are we here this afternoon? Most observers of the legislative process would say that the President's health care act would never have passed back in 2010 without the assurance that the President gave, even many times this year, that you could keep your health care if you liked it. If you liked it, you didn't have to do anything, period. I don't think it would have passed in this Chamber or in this Senate without that promise that the President gave. Then, millions of Americans in the last couple of months have gotten mail. In that mail, there are the cancelation notices. They are seeing their rates go up 200 percent, 300 percent, even 400 percent. Deductibles are going up in the thousands of dollars. People were coming to us all last week when we were home for our veterans events and parades and all the things that we did. They were bringing those letters to us and saying, Hey, what is going on? I thought I could keep this? Until yesterday afternoon, when it looked like we were going to get as many as 300 votes, including perhaps Mr. Doyle's and others, when it looked like we were going to get 300 votes for a bill that we introduced only a week and a half ago, all of a sudden the President felt that he needed to act. It wasn't until this bill that he came to the mic and said, You know what? I made a mistake. I am sorry. Maybe this thing will fix it. {time} 1230 But until then, he was going to sit on his hands and just watch us, watch millions of Americans literally watch their health care, watch maybe their economic lives, just go over the cliff. He was prepared to do that, until we showed that we had some bipartisan zip around here to try and, in fact, enforce, make whole his promise that he has said over and over and over again. That is what this bill does. Read it. It is not too long, a couple of sentences long. I commend our leadership for bringing this bill to the floor as fast as they can. Man, 5 or 6 legislative days from when it was introduced, that is pretty good. More importantly, it got a wake-up call to someone down the street on Pennsylvania Avenue, saying, hey, something is wrong. Let's restore what we might have said. I urge my colleagues to vote ``yes'' on the bill. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this unnecessary legislation. The President has stepped up to the plate, admitted he made a mistake, and took steps to remedy it. This legislation rolls back too many important provisions without doing anything good beyond what the President has already done. I believe in the Affordable Care Act. This important legislation ended insurance company practices that prevented Americans from accessing quality health insurance. But, I am disappointed in how the law has been rolled out since October 1st. In fact, I think that we should extend open enrollment for an equal amount of time as the website has been down. Why are we not

doing that today instead? This law is too important to fumble the roll out. I represent an area that has one of the highest uninsured rates in the country. Our district also has one of the highest rates of people who have jobs but no health insurance. Before the ACA, the individual marketplace wasn't the right solution for our constituents and after the ACA, the individual marketplace is still not the right place. The bill before us essentially restores the individual marketplace as it was prior to the ACA. It means insurance companies can refuse coverage because of pre-existing conditions and it means people can lose coverage because they have gotten too sick. I agree that we should allow people who are in the individual marketplace in 2013 and want to remain in it, to do so for another year. But the bill today is yet another attempt to undo some of the best parts of this law: the minimum essential benefits and I cannot support it. Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 3350, the ``Keep Your Health Plan Act of 2013.'' I oppose the bill for two reasons. First, the Affordable Care Act health insurance plans offered by private insurance companies have 10 basic options that saves lives. Second, the legislation is unnecessary in light of the action taken yesterday by President Obama, which should satisfy the proponents of this legislation while at the same time minimizing the risk to the health and safety of [[Page H7138]] underinsured Americans, who are persons who have insurance but spend more than 10 percent of their income on out-of-pocket medical expenses. Were it to become law, H.R. 3350 would jeopardize the life and health of those underinsured who purchase these plans this bill protects, even though health insurance plans are available that would in nearly every case provide more health coverage for less. Mr. Speaker, the Affordable Care Act that the Republicans have tried for 46 times to end, delay or impede is working my constituents of the 18th Congressional District and the people of Texas. Flora Alexandra Brewer of Fort Worth a real estate development business owner who works from home kept trying to sign into the website. She was determined to participate in the exchange. She said that her family had pre-existing conditions. Flora said that, ``There's nothing more expensive out there on any of the websites that I have looked at than what I am currently paying for COBRA. For the past 10 months, Flora has been paying nearly $1,900 a month for health insurance for her, her husband and one of her sons. She knows that she will most likely not qualify for any subsidies, but she believes she will save around $500 a month under the program commonly known as Obamacare. Those potential savings motivate Brewer not to give up on the exchange. On Wednesday, she called the toll free number listed on healthcare.gov. She spoke to a representative and enrolled in 15 minutes. She will soon receive an email and a packet in the mail detailing the polices and rates she and her family are eligible for.'' Mark Sullivan, an Entrepreneur from Austin, enrolled in a Plan that reduces his monthly premiums by half, expands his coverage, and gave him the financial security to focus on his small business. ``Mark now feels confident focusing on the success of his new consulting business, saying health insurance is 'one less thing I have to think about' as he pours his time and talent into this next major career move. Mark also thinks the marketplace will make it possible for more people to start new businesses and wants to share his success with the larger entrepreneurial community in Austin. After comparing plans, Mark settled on a bronze option and added dental insurance. He will receive an $82 per month subsidy, which will halve the monthly premium he will pay down to $78.'' Lucy after choosing from over 30 plans is saving $2,300 a year on her premium and $4,000 on her deductible, said that ``I signed up at Healthcare.gov and I'm going to save $2,300 a year on my premium alone--and more, because my deductible will drop from $7,500 a year to $3,000 a year. It's still Blue Cross insurance, and I don't have to change doctors, either. I had a choice of over 30 plans and several different companies.'' Mr. Speaker, according to the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured 47 million persons under the age of retirement were uninsured in 2012. Most of the uninsured are self-employed or employed by small businesses. Another 28 million people were enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP programs to gain access to health insurance. The overwhelming majority (59 percent) of the insured receive their insurance through employer health plans. However, one in six of the uninsured have at least one working person in their household. Mr. Speaker, this is the cost of underinsurance in America--and this is what we can expect more of should H.R. 3350 become law. The express purpose of this bill is to allow underinsured persons to retain an inadequate ``health insurance'' plan on the ground that supposedly it is the plan the person ``wants to keep.'' Unfortunately, there is nothing in this bill that would provide consumer education on the inadequacies of the plan and that something much better is available. For example, there is no requirement in this bill for the insurer to notify the insured that health insurance provided through the exchange that provides more and better coverage for less money. This means that under H.R. 3350 people will still have problems paying their medical bills, they will have high bills, and they will not be able to afford prescription medication or be hounded by medical bill collectors. Further, this bill would allow these health insurance plans to be sold to new customers who may not know about

the potentially better options available on the health insurance exchanges. The second reason for opposing this rule and bill is that it is unnecessary in view the actions taken yesterday by President Obama. As the President announced, insurers will be permitted to offer consumers the option to renew their 2013 health plans in 2014, without change, allowing them to keep their plans. This should satisfy the proponents of the bill. But the President went further than that because he recognizes that inadequate insurance is really no insurance at all. That is why the President conditioned the ability of insurers to offer plan renewals upon the following: 1. That insurers notify enrollees that they can purchase coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace where they can potentially qualify for premium tax credits; and 2. Those insurers must inform consumers of the protections they are giving up to keep the plan they have. Taken together, President Obama's actions are a tempered and measured response to the alleged problem that this bill seeks to remedy. I fully applaud what the President has done. There may be some who think the availability of the types of health care insurance that H.R. 3350 would protect is sufficient for Americans. I do not. Neither does President Obama. The majority of the American people do not. We believe, and the Affordable Care Act ensures, that healthcare should be available, accessible and adequate. Mr. Speaker, adequate health plans have in common the inclusion of certain minimal benefits and services. Mr. Speaker, my constituents in the 18th Congressional District of Texas favor the Affordable Care Act because they understand the insecurity and feeling of helplessness of being uninsured or underinsured. My home state of Texas has the highest percentage of uninsured (27.6 percent) in the nation, 4 percent more than Louisiana the next state on the list. The state of Massachusetts, in contrast, boasts the lowest uninsured rate in the country (4 percent). This is because Massachusetts several years ago adopted the health insurance system upon which the Affordable Health Care Act is based. Mr. Speaker, health care coverage must be not only available and affordable but also adequate in order for consumers to have the health security and financial protection they need and deserve. The Affordable Care Act satisfies these criteria; the bill before us does not. That is why we should reject this rule and the underlying bill. H.R. 3350 is nothing more than the House Republicans' newest variation on their very old theme, which is to repeal, impede or undermine the Affordable Care Act. This bill is the 46th attempt by the Republicans to deprive the American people of the security and peace of mind that comes with health care that is affordable, accessible and adequate. Of course we should not be surprised. After all, it was the House Republicans who shut down the Federal Government for 16 days and cost the economy $24 billion while refusing to consider any legislation that would create jobs or address the real needs of the American people. Mr. Speaker, the bill before is strongly opposed by a coalition of some of the nation's leading health and consumer organizations, including the following: Paralyzed Veterans of America. American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. American Diabetes Association. American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). American Heart Association/American Stroke Association. American Music Therapy Association. The Arc of the United States. The Autistic Self Advocacy Network. Community Catalyst. Families USA. Health and Wholeness Ministries, Disciples Center for Public Witness. Health Care for America Now. National Alliance on Mental Illness. National Association of County Behavioral Health & Developmental Disability Directors. National Council of Jewish Women. National Partnership for Women & Families. These groups oppose the bill for substantially the same reasons I have discussed. While sympathizing with consumers who are receiving notices from their insurance companies that their policies are not being renewed for next year because they do not comply with the ACA's consumer protections, the Coalition rightly observes that: [T]he solution is not to allow for the continued sale of inadequate policies[.] Rather, we must educate consumers about their new health insurance options and ensure that notices being sent by insurers clearly inform them of the shortfalls with their current coverage and explain all of their options for finding better coverage. I agree. Therefore, I urge all Members to join me in voting against this bill. Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 3350. This bill has no purpose, other than to destroy the effort to provide excellent, affordable health care to Americans in every walk of life. Yesterday, the President provided a workable solution to allow insurance companies to continue to offer existing policies to people who want to keep their policies. But the Upton bill we are considering today would allow both those that had these plans, and those that did not, to obtain care under these plans. Especially, people could buy plans that [[Page H7139]] don't really offer much ``insurance'' at all should anyone in their family get sick. The comprehensive health care reform legislation we passed in 2010 was a sincere and honorable effort to provide every American with access to affordable and quality health coverage. The law was designed to ensure that health coverage would include access to free preventive services, and would also be robust enough to actually help an individual afford critical, life-saving care should they fall ill.

The legislation that we are considering today accomplishes none of those goals. H.R. 3350 would allow insurance companies to continue to sell and attract new customers to substandard health plans that offer little protection. I have received calls and letters from constituents over the past several weeks who share with me their frustration that their health plan has been cancelled. And I sympathize with them. They tell me in complete sincerity that they like these plans--after all, they are not used to having any choice. They think their previous insurance plan is all they can afford. But under the Affordable Care Act they now have the ability to buy real insurance that will not drop them when their kid gets sick or require them to a huge deductible and with government subsidies in an active insurance marketplace, most will probably save money on their premiums. But I have also heard from constituents who have fallen ill, and during that time of personal turmoil, learn that their insurance does not cover the treatment they need. Their ``Basic and Essential Plan,'' as they're called in New Jersey, does not cover their basic or essential needs. They are on their own, and they will have to pay out- of-pocket for the chemotherapy, hospital tests, or physical therapy their doctor ordered. Prior to health reform, in 2007, more than 60 percent of all bankruptcies were a result of illness and medical bills, and nearly 80 percent of those who filed for medical bankruptcy were insured. We passed the Affordable Care Act not only to extend coverage to the 48 million uninsured Americans, but also to improve insurance for the millions more Americans who are underinsured. H.R. 3350 would undermine the Affordable Care Act by allowing new, additional customers to purchase health insurance that provides limited protection, and little prevention. It would result in even more Americans becoming underinsured and lead to additional family's filing for medical bankruptcy. Many parts of the ACA are working and have very beneficial effects for ordinary Americans--removing caps that cut off coverage even in the middle of critical treatments, allowing 25 year olds who are trying to get on their feet professionally to stay on their parent's policies, guaranteeing equally good coverage at equal cost for women, increasing access to preventive care, and other things. I would hope the sponsors of this bill would devote their best efforts to making the remaining parts of the legislation work. That is what they owe their constituents, rather than trying to destroy this sincere, honorable effort to make health care as good as possible in America. The rollout of the health insurance Marketplace has not been smooth, and I am as frustrated as everyone else, but the potential for Americans to gain affordable and comprehensive coverage is still enormous. Nearly one million New Jerseyans lack health insurance, and there are still many more underinsured. I am committed to protecting the provisions of health care reform so that New Jerseyans have access to health coverage that is affordable, comprehensive, and reliable. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing this bill and get to work on implementing the Affordable Care Act so Americans have access to better health care coverage. Mr. POSEY. ``Mr. Speaker, ``As a direct result of the health care law, 10 million Americans risk having their health insurance plans cancelled. Tens of millions more are seeing their costs go up and coverage changed, and they are losing access to their doctors and health care networks. ``I get messages daily from my constituents who have had their policies cancelled, seen 200%--400% increases in their health insurance premiums, or who have been cut to part-time work because of the new law. They are finding the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to be unaffordable for their families. ``Today the House will consider bipartisan legislation that will help reverse these effects of this law for many Americans, providing relief to some of those who have been harmed. ``The sad reality is that the ACA is inherently flawed and unworkable, and this reality is starting to catch-up with Americans across this nation. The broken website is just the tip of the disastrous iceberg as the law has fundamental and costly flaws. ``The fact that the Administration has now decided to waive ACA mandates is testimony to the fact that the health care law is directly responsible for millions of Americans losing their coverage, huge increases in health care premiums, along with the loss of access to doctors and hospital networks. There would be no need for the Administration to waive the health care law if the law was not the problem. ``Unfortunately, the Administration's proposal falls short by only providing a short-term waiver of the mandates. If it's so bad, then we really should be addressing the fundamental flaws, not simply trying to get beyond the next election. The only way to fix this situation, which will get worse, is for Washington to scrap this law and start over in a transparent process with bipartisan reforms that respect individual freedom and fairness.'' Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, today the House considered a bill introduced by Rep. Fred Upton deceptively titled the ``Keep Your Health Plan Act of 2013.'' The bill actually does nothing to address the situation in which some individuals have had their coverage canceled by their insurance provider. Rather this bill would allow insurance companies to continue selling substandard insurance plans to anyone, even those who currently do not have any insurance, on the open market without the new benefits or protections of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). In contrast, President Obama has put forth a reasonable solution that extends the grandfathering provision of the law.

Under that provision, insurance plans in place on March 23, 2010, the date the ACA was signed into law, are considered grandfathered. At issue now are those plans issued since then that do not meet the minimum standards of the ACA. This week, the President announced an extension of the grandfathering provisions that will empower insurance companies and state commissioners of insurance to allow those older plans to continue to be offered for one more year. If the insurance companies decide to continue offering those plans, they must notify all individuals who have received a cancellation notice and anyone else at risk of receiving one to inform them of their right to continue their previous coverage so long as the insurer discloses what benefits and protections-- such as caps on premiums and out-of-pocket expenses, free preventive care, or guaranteed coverage for pre-existing conditions-- will not be provided. They also have to inform these individuals of their right to pursue new coverage that does include the wide range of consumer protections and reforms through the health insurance exchanges. The reason I voted for and continue to support the ACA is precisely because of those consumer and patient protection reforms. We cannot allow Americans to be subjected to capricious cancellations, lifetime limits on their coverage, no coverage or unaffordable coverage because of pre-existing conditions, and higher premiums based on gender for the same basic coverage. Enrollment in the new insurance plans is increasing with each passing day along with reports of people being pleasantly surprised that they can in fact find insurance plans with premiums that are comparable to, or in many cases less than, their current coverage, and we expect that to continue. The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired. Pursuant to House Resolution 413, the previous question is ordered on the bill. The question is on engrossment and third reading of the bill. The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time. Motion to Recommit Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill? Mr. ANDREWS. I am opposed to the bill. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order. The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order from the gentleman from Michigan has been reserved. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit. The Clerk read as follows: Mr. Andrews moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3350 to the Committee on Energy and Commerce with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment: Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following: SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE. This Act may be cited as the ``Consumer Health Plan Protection Act of 2013''. SEC. 2. MAINTAINING EXISTING COVERAGE. (a) In General.--Notwithstanding any provision of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (including any amendment made by such Act or by the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010), in the case of health insurance coverage offered by a health insurance issuer in the individual market that is in effect for an individual as of October 1, 2013, the issuer may continue such coverage for such individual for a plan year beginning in 2014 in such market outside of an Exchange established under section 1311 or 1321 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 18031, 18041). [[Page H7140]] (b) Treatment as Grandfathered Health Plan in Satisfaction of Minimum Essential Coverage.--Health insurance coverage described in subsection (a) shall be treated as a grandfathered health plan for purposes of the amendment made by section 1501(b) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. (c) Notice.--As a condition for a health insurance issuer to continue health insurance coverage under subsection (a), the issuer shall provide for notice to each individual to be offered such continued coverage (and for other individuals covered under health insurance coverage offered by such issuer for whom such continued coverage is not offered) prompt notice of the following: (1) The health insurance coverage options available to the individual through the Marketplace under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and how to exercise such options. (2) The premium and cost-sharing assistance available for coverage obtained through such Marketplace. (3) The consumer protections provided under such Act that are not provided under the continuing health insurance coverage. SEC. 3. REQUIRING STATE INSURANCE COMMISSIONERS TO INVESTIGATE INSTANCES OF INADEQUATE NOTICES OF CANCELLATION OR CONVERSION OF INDIVIDUAL HEALTH INSURANCE POLICIES. (a) In General.--Each State insurance commissioner shall investigate and take appropriate administrative or other actions (such as the imposition of a fine) on cases of inadequate notices of cancellations or conversions of health insurance coverage in the individual market that take effect on or after January 1, 2014. (b) Inadequate Notice.--In this section, a notice of the cancellation or conversion of individual health insurance coverage shall be treated as inadequate if the notice-- (1) fails to contain information-- (A) on obtaining health insurance coverage through an Exchange under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; (B) on the possible availability of assistance under such Act towards payment of the premiums and cost-sharing for such coverage; and (C) on the improved benefits for coverage through an Exchange, compared to health insurance coverage not offered through an Exchange; (2) fails to be transparent by inappropriately steering individuals to more expensive plans provided by the cancelling issuer; or (3) fails to

otherwise comply with requirements of law. (c) Reports.-- (1) State commissioners to hhs.--Not later than March 31, 2014, each State insurance commissioner shall submit to the Secretary of Health and Human Services a report on the investigations and actions described in subsection (a). (2) HHS report to congress.--Not later than April 30, 2014, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on such investigations and actions. (d) Definitions of State, Health Insurance Coverage, and Individual Market.--In this section, the terms ``State'', ``health insurance coverage'', and ``individual market'' have the meanings given such terms for purposes of title I of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. SEC. 4. PROTECTION OF CONSUMERS FROM EXCESSIVE, UNJUSTIFIED, OR UNFAIRLY DISCRIMINATORY RATES. (a) Protection From Excessive, Unjustified, or Unfairly Discriminatory Rates.--The first section 2794 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300gg-94), as added by section 1003 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111-148), is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection: ``(e) Protection From Excessive, Unjustified, or Unfairly Discriminatory Rates.-- ``(1) Authority of states.--Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit a State from imposing requirements (including requirements relating to rate review standards and procedures and information reporting) on health insurance issuers with respect to rates that are in addition to the requirements of this section and are more protective of consumers than such requirements. ``(2) Consultation in rate review process.--In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall consult with the National Association of Insurance Commissioners and consumer groups. ``(3) Determination of who conducts reviews for each state.--The Secretary shall determine, after the date of enactment of this section and periodically thereafter, the following: ``(A) In which markets in each State the State insurance commissioner or relevant State regulator shall undertake the corrective actions under paragraph (4), as a condition of the State receiving the grant in subsection (c), based on the Secretary's determination that the State regulator is adequately undertaking and utilizing such actions in that market. ``(B) In which markets in each State the Secretary shall undertake the corrective actions under paragraph (4), in cooperation with the relevant State insurance commissioner or State regulator, based on the Secretary's determination that the State is not adequately undertaking and utilizing such actions in that market. ``(4) Corrective action for excessive, unjustified, or unfairly discriminatory rates.--In accordance with the process established under this section, the Secretary or the relevant State insurance commissioner or State regulator shall take corrective actions to ensure that any excessive, unjustified, or unfairly discriminatory rates are corrected prior to implementation, or as soon as possible thereafter, through mechanisms such as-- ``(A) denying rates; ``(B) modifying rates; or ``(C) requiring rebates to consumers. ``(5) Noncompliance.--Failure to comply with any corrective action taken by the Secretary under this subsection may result in the application of civil monetary penalties and, if the Secretary determines appropriate, make the plan involved ineligible for classification as a Qualified Health Plan.''. (b) Clarification of Regulatory Authority.--Such section is further amended-- (1) in subsection (a)-- (A) in the heading, by striking ``Premium'' and inserting ``Rate''; (B) in paragraph (1), by striking ``unreasonable increases in premiums'' and inserting ``potentially excessive, unjustified, or unfairly discriminatory rates, including premiums,''; and (C) in paragraph (2)-- (i) by striking ``an unreasonable premium increase'' and inserting ``a potentially excessive, unjustified, or unfairly discriminatory rate''; (ii) by striking ``the increase'' and inserting ``the rate''; and (iii) by striking ``such increases'' and inserting ``such rates''; (2) in subsection (b)-- (A) by striking ``premium increases'' each place it appears and inserting ``rates''; and (B) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking ``premium'' and inserting ``rate''; and (3) in subsection (c)(1)-- (A) in the heading, by striking ``Premium'' and inserting ``Rate''; (B) by inserting ``that satisfy the condition under subsection (e)(3)(A)'' after ``award grants to States''; and (C) in subparagraph (A), by striking ``premium increases'' and inserting ``rates''. (c) Conforming Amendment.--Title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300gg et seq.) is amended-- (1) in section 2723 (42 U.S.C. 300gg-22), as redesignated by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act-- (A) in subsection (a)-- (i) in paragraph (1), by inserting ``and section 2794'' after ``this part''; and (ii) in paragraph (2), by inserting ``or section 2794'' after ``this part''; and (B) in subsection (b)-- (i) in paragraph (1), by inserting ``and section 2794'' after ``this part''; and (ii) in paragraph (2)-- (I) in subparagraph (A), by inserting ``or section 2794 that is'' after ``this part''; and (II) in subparagraph (C)(ii), by inserting ``or section 2794'' after ``this part''; and (2) in section 2761 (42 U.S.C. 300gg-61)-- (A) in subsection (a)-- (i) in paragraph (1), by inserting ``and section 2794'' after ``this part''; and (ii) in paragraph (2)-- (I) by inserting ``or section 2794'' after ``set forth in this part''; and (II) by inserting ``and section 2794'' after ``the requirements of this part''; and (B) in subsection (b)-- (i) by inserting ``and section 2794'' after ``this part''; and (ii) by inserting ``and section 2794'' after ``part A''. (d) Applicability to Grandfathered Plans.--Section 1251(a)(4)(A) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public

Law 111-148), as added by section 2301 of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-152), is amended by adding at the end the following: ``(v) Section 2794 (relating to reasonableness of rates with respect to health insurance coverage).''. (e) Authorization of Appropriations.--There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section, such sums as may be necessary. (f) Effective Date.--The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act and shall be implemented with respect to health plans beginning not later than January 1, 2014. Mr. ANDREWS (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I object. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Objection is heard. The Clerk will continue to read. The Clerk continued to read. Mr. UPTON (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading of the motion. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan? There was no objection. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion. (Mr. ANDREWS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.) Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, and my colleagues, we have listened to the many stories told by people this morning with great empathy about people [[Page H7141]] who got a cancelation notice and want to keep the policy that they have. The issue before the House is whether we want to solve the problem or create another problem. That is the issue. If we want to work together, as we should, to solve the problem of Americans receiving cancelation notices and not being able to keep policies that they have, it requires us to do three things. First, we have to legally authorize insurance companies to offer these policies on into the future. The Democratic plan which I have proposed does that and, frankly, so does Mr. Upton's bill. The second thing that we have to do, though, is make sure that the insurance companies offer the plans for sale. It really does you no good at all if you have the right to buy a plan that the insurance company refuses to sell. Mr. Upton's bill is mute on that point. It might be called the ``Insurance Companies Bill of Rights'' because they have the right to do or not do anything they choose, but the people that we all say that we want to protect really have no rights at all. This is an important distinguishing point in the plan that I am offering now, and I would urge everyone to support. We have drawn from language offered by my friend from Illinois (Ms. Schakowsky) which requires State insurance commissioners around this country to be vigilant protectors of consumers, rather than corporate apologists for insurance companies. Our plan says that if someone's cancelation was arbitrary and thoughtless and unfair, the insurance commissioner must act and protect the people that we heard read in those letters today. Our plan says that if rate increases are discriminatory, if you got a rate increase because you are a woman who is pregnant, or you got a rate increase because you had skin cancer, or breast cancer, or diabetes, that the insurance commissioner must act and protect the consumer against that indignity. It does you no good that this bill is called the ``Keep Your Insurance If You Want To Bill.'' It should be called the ``Keep Your Insurance If You Want To And The Insurance Company Allows You To Bill.'' We are correcting that wrong and remedying that wrong with our plan. Thirdly, it doesn't do any good to give people the chance to renew their plans if that renewal results in a huge premium increase for everyone else in the country. That is what the underlying bill does. The underlying bill says that these plans, which I would really equate to selling an automobile with no airbags and no seatbelts--now, our plan says, look, if you want to keep driving a car with no airbags and no seatbelts, you can keep driving, but people can't sell a car with no airbags and no seatbelts to a new consumer, which is what the underlying bill permits. Now, when that happens, here is what is going to happen. People in the new State marketplaces are going to see a huge increase in their premiums. People who get covered at work are going to see a huge increase in their premiums. It is going to spill over to Medigap policies for seniors and people on Medicare. The bill really should be called the ``Guaranteed Premium Increase Act of 2013'' because that is what it is. Our bill corrects that by saying, let's help the people we say we want to try to help, people who like their plan and want to keep it, not everyone that the insurance company could dupe or lure into buying a car with no airbag and no seatbelts. Finally, working together means not forgetting about some other people who write letters we haven't heard much about today, the family that Mr. Doyle talked about, whose daughter has cancer, who has an insurance policy, but has to have a beef and beer or a golf tournament to raise money to pay their bills. I want to help that person and not repeal the Affordable Care Act. How about the woman who had breast cancer 10 years ago and can now be told, we are sorry, you can't buy an insurance policy. You have got to pay more if you do. I want to help her by banning discrimination based on preexisting conditions. If we really want to work together, let's adopt this plan. Let's really help the people we say we are trying to help, and not the insurance industry of the United States of America. I yield back the balance of my time. Point of Order Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I do insist on the point of order. In my opinion, the pending amendment violates clause 7

of rule XVI of the rules of the House which requires that an amendment be germane to the matter it is amending. It is not germane to the bill because section 3 imposes a mandate on State insurance commissioners, and section 4 amends the Public Health Service Act which is, in fact, beyond the scope of the base text. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does any Member wish to speak to the point of order? Mr. ANDREWS. I do, Mr. Speaker. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized to speak to the point of order. Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, my understanding is my friend, the chairman's objection is based on the principle of germaneness. The underlying bill, by its very title, purports to protect Americans who have received a cancelation notice for a policy that they want to keep. Now, there is a disagreement here over how to protect those Americans. The underlying bill does not have requirements that State insurance commissioners act to protect those individuals. Our plan does. Our plan does. This is a disagreement over the means to protect American consumers. The underlying bill says we will trust the insurance industry. Our bill says, no, we will enforce the insurance laws. I would respectfully submit this does not rise to a difference in germaneness. This is a difference of opinion. The bill on the floor purports to protect the Americans that I talked about. We think it doesn't. Our plan does protect those Americans in a different way. The underlying subject matter of this bill is how do you protect Americans who wish to keep the insurance plan that they have. We believe we have a more effective way of doing that. The majority disagrees. The House deserves a vote on that. No technicality, no procedural nicety should deny us the chance to take a vote on whose plan is right. We should proceed with this vote. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does any other Member wish to speak to the point of order? Seeing none, the Chair is prepared to rule. The gentleman from Michigan makes a point of order that the instructions proposed in the motion to recommit offered by the gentleman from New Jersey are not germane. Clause 7 of rule XVI, the germaneness rule, provides that no proposition on a subject different from that under consideration shall be admitted under color of amendment. The bill permits health insurance issuers that offered health insurance coverage in the individual market on January 1, 2013, to continue to make such coverage available for sale during 2014. The amendment proposed in the motion to recommit, in pertinent part, requires State insurance commissioners to examine notices of health insurance cancelations or conversions. It also addresses the regulation of health insurance rates. Specifically, the amendment delineates what would constitute inadequate notice of cancelation or conversions of health insurance coverage, and directs State insurance commissioners to investigate such cases of inadequate notice. Additionally, it permits the Secretary of Health and Human Services or the relevant State insurance regulator to take corrective actions if health insurance rates are determined to be excessive, unjustified, or unfairly discriminatory. Such corrective action may include the assessment of civil monetary penalties. The bill does not address any of these subject matters. Instead, it is confined to the subject matter of extending into 2014 the authority to offer health insurance coverage that was for sale on the individual market in 2013. The Chair finds that the amendment proposed in the motion to recommit goes beyond the subject matter of the underlying bill. It is therefore not germane. The point of order is sustained. Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully appeal the ruling of the Chair. [[Page H7142]] The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is, Shall the decision of the Chair stand as the judgment of the House? Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to table the appeal of the ruling of the Chair. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to table. The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it. Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The yeas and nays were ordered. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on the motion to table will be followed by a 5-minute vote on passage of the bill, if arising without further proceedings in recommittal. The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were--yeas 229, nays 191, not voting 10, as follows: [Roll No. 585] YEAS--229 Aderholt Amash Amodei Bachmann Bachus Barletta Barr Barton Benishek Bentivolio Bilirakis Bishop (UT) Black Blackburn Boustany Brady (TX) Bridenstine Brooks (AL) Brooks (IN) Broun (GA) Buchanan Bucshon Burgess Calvert Camp Cantor Capito Carter Cassidy Chabot Chaffetz Coble Coffman Cole Collins (GA) Collins (NY) Conaway Cook Cotton Cramer Crawford Crenshaw Culberson Daines Davis, Rodney Denham Dent DeSantis DesJarlais Diaz-Balart Duffy Duncan (SC) Duncan (TN) Ellmers Farenthold Fincher Fitzpatrick Fleischmann Fleming Flores Forbes Fortenberry Foxx Franks (AZ) Frelinghuysen Gardner Garrett Gerlach Gibbs Gibson Gingrey (GA) Gohmert Goodlatte Gowdy Graves (GA) Graves (MO) Griffin (AR) Griffith (VA) Grimm Guthrie Hall Hanna Harper Harris Hartzler Hastings (WA) Heck (NV) Hensarling Herrera Beutler Holding Hudson Huelskamp Huizenga (MI) Hultgren Hunter Hurt Issa Jenkins Johnson (OH) Johnson, Sam Jordan Joyce Kelly (PA) King (IA) King (NY) Kingston Kinzinger (IL) Kline Labrador LaMalfa Lamborn Lance Lankford Latham Latta LoBiondo Long Lucas Luetkemeyer Lummis Marchant Marino Massie Matheson McCarthy (CA) McCaul McClintock McHenry McIntyre

McKeon McKinley McMorris Rodgers Meadows Meehan Messer Mica Miller (FL) Miller (MI) Miller, Gary Mullin Mulvaney Murphy (PA) Neugebauer Noem Nugent Nunes Nunnelee Olson Palazzo Paulsen Pearce Perry Petri Pittenger Pitts Poe (TX) Pompeo Posey Price (GA) Radel Reed Reichert Renacci Ribble Rice (SC) Rigell Roby Roe (TN) Rogers (AL) Rogers (KY) Rogers (MI) Rohrabacher Rokita Rooney Ros-Lehtinen Roskam Ross Rothfus Royce Runyan Ryan (WI) Salmon Sanford Scalise Schock Schrader Schweikert Scott, Austin Sensenbrenner Sessions Shimkus Shuster Simpson Smith (MO) Smith (NE) Smith (NJ) Smith (TX) Southerland Stewart Stivers Stockman Stutzman Terry Thompson (PA) Thornberry Tiberi Tipton Turner Upton Valadao Wagner Walberg Walden Walorski Weber (TX) Webster (FL) Wenstrup Westmoreland Whitfield Williams Wilson (SC) Wittman Wolf Womack Woodall Yoder Yoho Young (AK) Young (IN) NAYS--191 Andrews Barber Barrow (GA) Bass Beatty Bera (CA) Bishop (GA) Bishop (NY) Blumenauer Bonamici Brady (PA) Braley (IA) Brown (FL) Brownley (CA) Bustos Butterfield Capps Capuano Cardenas Carney Carson (IN) Cartwright Castor (FL) Castro (TX) Chu Cicilline Clarke Clay Cleaver Clyburn Cohen Connolly Conyers Cooper Costa Courtney Crowley Cuellar Cummings Davis (CA) Davis, Danny DeFazio DeGette Delaney DeLauro DelBene Deutch Dingell Doggett Doyle Duckworth Edwards Ellison Engel Enyart Eshoo Esty Farr Fattah Foster Frankel (FL) Fudge Gabbard Gallego Garamendi Garcia Grayson Green, Al Green, Gene Grijalva Gutierrez Hahn Hanabusa Hastings (FL) Heck (WA) Higgins Himes Hinojosa Holt Honda Horsford Hoyer Huffman Israel Jackson Lee Jeffries Johnson (GA) Johnson, E. B. Kaptur Keating Kelly (IL) Kennedy Kildee Kilmer Kind Kirkpatrick Kuster Langevin Larsen (WA) Larson (CT) Lee (CA) Levin Lewis Lipinski Loebsack Lofgren Lowenthal Lowey **Lujan** Grisham (NM) **Lujan,** Ben Ray (NM) Lynch Maffei Maloney, Carolyn Maloney, Sean Matsui McCollum McDermott McGovern McNerney Meeks Meng Michaud Moore Moran Murphy (FL) Nadler Napolitano Neal Negrete McLeod Nolan O'Rourke Owens Pallone Pascrell Pastor (AZ) Payne Pelosi Perlmutter Peters (CA) Peters (MI) Peterson Pingree (ME) Pocan Polis Price (NC) Quigley Rahall Rangel Richmond Roybal-Allard Ruiz Ruppersberger Ryan (OH) Sanchez, Linda T. Sanchez, Loretta Sarbanes Schakowsky Schiff Schneider Schwartz Scott (VA) Scott, David Serrano Sewell (AL) Shea-Porter Sherman Sinema Slaughter Smith (WA) Speier Swalwell (CA) Takano Thompson (CA) Thompson (MS) Tierney Titus Tonko Van Hollen Vargas Veasey Vela Velazquez Visclosky Walz Wasserman Schultz Waters Watt Waxman Welch Wilson (FL) Yarmuth NOT VOTING--10 Becerra Campbell Gosar Granger Jones McCarthy (NY) Miller, George Rush Sires Tsongas {time} 1307 Messrs. GARAMENDI, DEUTCH, BLUMENAUER, OWENS, LARSEN of Washington, **BEN RAY LUJAN** of New Mexico, and Ms. WILSON of Florida changed their vote from ``yea'' to ``nay.'' Messrs. ROE of Tennessee, TERRY, JORDAN, BARTON, TIBERI, MURPHY of Pennsylvania, KING of New York, CANTOR, and McINTYRE changed their vote from ``nay'' to ``yea.'' So the motion to table was agreed to. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded. A motion to reconsider was laid on the table. Motion to Recommit Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill? Mr. ANDREWS. I am opposed to the bill. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit. The Clerk read as follows: Mr. Andrews moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3350 to the Committee on Energy and Commerce with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment: Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following: SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE. This Act may be cited as the ``Consumer Health Plan Protection Act of 2013''. SEC. 2. MAINTAINING EXISTING COVERAGE. (a) In General.--Notwithstanding any provision of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (including any amendment made by such Act or by the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010), in the case of health insurance coverage offered by a health insurance issuer in the individual market that is in effect for an individual as of October 1, 2013, the issuer may continue such coverage for such individual for a plan year beginning in 2014 in such market outside of an Exchange established under section 1311 or 1321 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 18031, 18041). (b) Treatment as Grandfathered Health Plan in Satisfaction of Minimum Essential Coverage.--Health insurance coverage described in subsection (a) shall be treated as a grandfathered health plan for purposes of the amendment made by section 1501(b) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. (c) Notice.--As a condition for a health insurance issuer to continue health insurance coverage under subsection (a), the issuer shall provide for notice to each individual to be offered such continued coverage (and for other individuals covered under health insurance coverage offered by such issuer for whom such continued coverage is not offered) prompt notice of the following: (1) The health insurance coverage options available to the individual through the Marketplace under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and how to exercise such options. (2) The premium and cost-sharing assistance available for coverage obtained through such Marketplace. (3) The consumer protections provided under such Act that are not provided under the continuing health insurance coverage. (d) Construction Regarding Notices of Cancellation or

Conversion.-- (1) In general.--Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the Secretary of Health and Human Services from requiring State insurance commissioners-- (A) to investigate and take appropriate administrative or other actions (such as the imposition of a fine) on cases of inadequate notices of cancellations or conversions of health insurance coverage in the individual market that take effect on or after January 1, 2014; and (B) to submit to the Secretary reports on the investigations and actions so taken. [[Page H7143]] (2) Inadequate notice.--In this subection, a notice of the cancellation or conversion of individual health insurance coverage shall be treated as inadequate if the notice-- (A) fails to contain information contained in subsection (c); (B) fails to be transparent by inappropriately steering individuals to more expensive plans provided by the cancelling issuer; or (C) fails to otherwise comply with requirements of law. (e) Construction Regarding Protection Against Discriminatory Rates.--Nothing in this section shall be construed as preventing the Secretary or the relevant State insurance commissioner or State regulator from taking corrective actions to ensure that any excessive, unjustified, or unfairly discriminatory rates for the continued coverage offered under subsection (a) are corrected prior to renewal. (f) Construction Regarding Premium Protection.--Nothing in this section shall be construed as preventing the Secretary from using all available tools to ensure that Marketplace premiums are not adversely affected by the operation of this section. Mr. UPTON (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order. The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order is reserved. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion. (Mr. ANDREWS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.) Mr. ANDREWS. We come here as stewards of a very sacred trust--to look after the people that are the backbone of this country. We are having this debate this afternoon because we have all heard from men and women across this country who are very upset that an insurance policy that they want to keep has been canceled. {time} 1315 These constituents are very upset and very troubled, and we are brought here to work together to figure out a solution to that problem. What is the solution? First of all, they ought to have the ability to have their insurance companies offer them the policies for sale. Frankly, the underlying bill does that, and so does the plan that I am presenting. Secondly, there ought to be some way that the insurance companies are given some incentive at the very at least, direction, to sell the policy. It doesn't do you a whole lot of good to have the right to buy a policy that the insurance company is not selling, and this plan has some measures which make it more likely that insurance companies would do that. Thirdly, to solve that person's problem, we have to make sure that in solving his problem we are not creating another one; that by permitting these policies to be sold for another year, which this does, that we are not spiking the premiums of people in the exchange marketplaces or of people who get their insurance through work. I have heard a number of Members say that they want a chance for us to work together to solve this problem. Here is that chance because this plan does the three things that I just talked about, but this plan, I think, is different than the underlying bill because this is not a step to unravel the Affordable Care Act; it is a step to improve it--which is the fundamental question, and there are some other people whose stories ought to be told here this afternoon, too. There is a family this weekend that is having a social to raise money to pay the medical bills for their son or daughter who has cancer, because the insurance policy they thought they had stopped paying their son's or daughter's bills. Their voice should be heard. If you repeal the Affordable Care Act, their voice is silenced. There are women in this country who go to try to start a business. They try to buy an insurance policy, and they are told, We won't sell you one because you had children or you are a female or you had breast cancer 10 years ago. If you repeal the Affordable Care Act, her voice is silenced. Mr. Speaker, there are sons and daughters of Americans who are 22, 23 years old who didn't have health insurance before because they couldn't get that first full-time job who now have health insurance because they are on their moms' or dads' policies. If you repeal the Affordable Care Act, their voices will be silenced. There are senior citizens who used to run out of drug coverage, prescription coverage, around Labor Day because the Medicare doughnut hole popped up. Because of the Affordable Care Act, they are now able to buy their prescriptions at an affordable price and are now able to pay their prescription bills until the end of the year. If you repeal the Affordable Care Act, their voices are silenced. We come here this afternoon to solve the problem of Americans who want to keep their coverage but who have had it canceled. We want to work together to solve that problem. That is what this plan does. When we look at women being turned away because of preexisting conditions, we will not be silenced. When we look at 22-year-olds who will lose their coverage if you repeal the Affordable Care Act, we will not be silenced. When you look at seniors who will lose the ability to pay their prescription drugs if you repeal the ACA, we will not be silenced. We are here to solve problems, not to create them. If you want to work together in a way that improves this law, we are your able and willing partner, but if the intention is to unravel this protection for the

American people, we will stand, we will speak, we will fight, and we will oppose every such effort. Vote ``yes'' for this motion and ``no'' on the underlying bill. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my point of order and seek time in opposition to the motion to recommit. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The point of order is withdrawn. The gentleman from Michigan is recognized for 5 minutes. Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, the debate today on whether to support this bill comes down to a very simple question: Why not? If millions of Americans want the choice of keeping the insurance that they have, why not? If you believe Congress acting together, not the President acting unilaterally, should try to help people who have lost their coverage, why not? If you believe that ordinary Americans, not the Federal Government, should decide what their insurance plans look like, why not? We have a chance today to provide hope to millions of Americans who got that cancelation notice, hope that they can keep the insurance that they like, hope that they are going to have even more choices, and hope that they, not the Federal Government, can pick what their insurance plans actually look like. So let me be clear. Our bill, H.R. 3350, does not fix ObamaCare, the President's health care bill. It is only an attempt to help people harmed by this law. But if we can provide some relief to people from this disaster, why not? Let's defeat the motion to recommit and pass the underlying bill. I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit. There was no objection. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit. The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it. Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The yeas and nays were ordered. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of passage. This is a 5-minute vote. The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were--yeas 187, nays 230, not voting 13, as follows: [Roll No. 586] YEAS--187 Andrews Barber Barrow (GA) Bass Beatty Bera (CA) Bishop (GA) Bishop (NY) Blumenauer Bonamici Brady (PA) Braley (IA) Brown (FL) Brownley (CA) Bustos Capps Capuano Cardenas Carney Carson (IN) Cartwright Castor (FL) Castro (TX) Chu Cicilline Clarke Clay Cleaver Clyburn Cohen Connolly Conyers Cooper Costa Courtney Crowley Cuellar Cummings Davis (CA) Davis, Danny DeFazio DeGette Delaney DeLauro DelBene Deutch Dingell Doggett Doyle Duckworth Edwards Ellison Engel Enyart Eshoo Esty Farr Fattah Foster Frankel (FL) Fudge Gabbard Gallego Garamendi Garcia Grayson Green, Al Grijalva Gutierrez [[Page H7144]] Hahn Hanabusa Hastings (FL) Heck (WA) Higgins Himes Hinojosa Holt Honda Horsford Hoyer Huffman Israel Jackson Lee Johnson (GA) Johnson, E. B. Kaptur Keating Kelly (IL) Kennedy Kildee Kilmer Kind Kirkpatrick Kuster Langevin Larsen (WA) Larson (CT) Lee (CA) Levin Lewis Lipinski Loebsack Lofgren Lowenthal Lowey **Lujan** Grisham (NM) **Lujan,** Ben Ray (NM) Lynch Maffei Maloney, Carolyn Maloney, Sean Matsui McCollum McDermott McGovern McNerney Meeks Meng Moore Moran Murphy (FL) Nadler Napolitano Neal Negrete McLeod Nolan O'Rourke Owens Pallone Pascrell Pastor (AZ) Payne Pelosi Perlmutter Peters (CA) Peters (MI) Peterson Pingree (ME) Pocan Polis Price (NC) Quigley Rahall Rangel Richmond Roybal-Allard Ruiz Ruppersberger Ryan (OH) Sanchez, Linda T. Sanchez, Loretta Sarbanes Schakowsky Schiff Schneider Schrader Schwartz Scott (VA) Scott, David Serrano Sewell (AL) Shea-Porter Sherman Sinema Slaughter Speier Swalwell (CA) Takano Thompson (CA) Thompson (MS) Tierney Titus Tonko Van Hollen Vargas Veasey Vela Velazquez Visclosky Walz Wasserman Schultz Waters Watt Waxman Welch Wilson (FL) Yarmuth NAYS--230 Aderholt Amash Amodei Bachmann Bachus Barletta Barr Barton Benishek Bentivolio Bilirakis Bishop (UT) Black Blackburn Boustany Brady (TX) Bridenstine Brooks (AL) Brooks (IN) Broun (GA) Buchanan Bucshon Burgess Calvert Camp Cantor Capito Carter Cassidy Chabot Chaffetz Coble Coffman Cole Collins (GA) Collins (NY) Conaway Cook Cotton Cramer Crawford Crenshaw Culberson Daines Davis, Rodney Denham Dent DeSantis DesJarlais Diaz-Balart Duffy Duncan (SC) Duncan (TN) Ellmers Farenthold Fincher Fitzpatrick Fleischmann Fleming Flores Forbes Fortenberry Foxx Franks (AZ) Frelinghuysen Gardner Garrett Gerlach Gibbs Gibson Gingrey (GA) Gohmert Goodlatte Gowdy Graves (GA) Graves (MO) Griffin (AR) Griffith (VA) Grimm Guthrie Hall Hanna Harper Harris Hartzler Hastings (WA) Heck (NV) Hensarling Herrera Beutler Holding Hudson Huelskamp Huizenga (MI) Hultgren Hunter Hurt Issa Jenkins Johnson (OH) Johnson, Sam Jordan Joyce Kelly (PA) King (IA) King (NY) Kingston Kinzinger (IL) Kline Labrador LaMalfa Lamborn Lance Lankford Latham Latta LoBiondo Long Lucas Luetkemeyer Lummis Marchant Marino Massie Matheson McCarthy (CA) McCaul McClintock McHenry McIntyre McKeon McKinley McMorris Rodgers Meadows Meehan Messer Mica Michaud Miller (FL) Miller (MI) Miller, Gary Mullin Mulvaney Murphy (PA) Neugebauer Noem Nugent Nunes Nunnelee Olson Palazzo Paulsen Pearce Perry Petri Pittenger Pitts Poe (TX) Pompeo Posey Price (GA) Radel Reed Reichert Renacci Ribble Rice (SC) Rigell Roby Roe (TN) Rogers (AL) Rogers (KY) Rogers (MI) Rohrabacher Rokita Rooney Ros-Lehtinen Roskam Ross Rothfus Royce Runyan Ryan (WI) Salmon Sanford Scalise Schock Schweikert Scott, Austin Sensenbrenner Sessions Shimkus Shuster Simpson Smith (MO)

Smith (NE) Smith (NJ) Smith (TX) Smith (WA) Southerland Stewart Stivers Stockman Stutzman Terry Thompson (PA) Thornberry Tiberi Tipton Turner Upton Valadao Wagner Walberg Walden Walorski Weber (TX) Webster (FL) Wenstrup Westmoreland Whitfield Williams Wilson (SC) Wittman Wolf Womack Woodall Yoder Yoho Young (AK) Young (IN) NOT VOTING--13 Becerra Butterfield Campbell Gosar Granger Green, Gene Jeffries Jones McCarthy (NY) Miller, George Rush Sires Tsongas {time} 1327 Mr. VEASEY changed his vote from ``yea'' to ``nay.'' So the motion to recommit was rejected. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill. The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it. Recorded Vote Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote. A recorded vote was ordered. The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote. The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were--ayes 261, noes 157, not voting 12, as follows: [Roll No. 587] AYES--261 Aderholt Amash Amodei Bachmann Bachus Barber Barletta Barr Barrow (GA) Barton Benishek Bentivolio Bera (CA) Bilirakis Bishop (NY) Bishop (UT) Black Blackburn Boustany Brady (TX) Braley (IA) Brooks (AL) Brooks (IN) Brownley (CA) Buchanan Bucshon Burgess Bustos Calvert Camp Cantor Capito Carter Cassidy Chabot Chaffetz Coble Coffman Cole Collins (GA) Collins (NY) Conaway Cook Costa Cotton Cramer Crawford Crenshaw Culberson Daines Davis, Rodney DeFazio DelBene Denham Dent DeSantis DesJarlais Diaz-Balart Duckworth Duffy Duncan (SC) Duncan (TN) Ellmers Enyart Esty Farenthold Fincher Fitzpatrick Fleischmann Fleming Flores Forbes Fortenberry Foster Foxx Franks (AZ) Frelinghuysen Gallego Garamendi Garcia Gardner Garrett Gerlach Gibbs Gibson Gingrey (GA) Gohmert Goodlatte Gowdy Graves (GA) Graves (MO) Griffin (AR) Griffith (VA) Grimm Guthrie Hanna Harper Harris Hartzler Hastings (WA) Heck (NV) Hensarling Herrera Beutler Holding Hudson Huelskamp Huizenga (MI) Hultgren Hunter Hurt Issa Jenkins Johnson (OH) Johnson, Sam Jordan Joyce Kelly (PA) Kind King (IA) King (NY) Kingston Kinzinger (IL) Kline Kuster Labrador LaMalfa Lamborn Lance Lankford Latham Latta LoBiondo Loebsack Long Lucas Luetkemeyer Lummis Maffei Maloney, Sean Marchant Marino Matheson McCarthy (CA) McCaul McClintock McHenry McIntyre McKeon McKinley McMorris Rodgers McNerney Meadows Meehan Messer Mica Miller (FL) Miller (MI) Miller, Gary Mullin Mulvaney Murphy (FL) Murphy (PA) Neugebauer Noem Nolan Nugent Nunes Nunnelee Olson Owens Palazzo Paulsen Pearce Perry Peters (CA) Peters (MI) Peterson Petri Pittenger Pitts Poe (TX) Pompeo Posey Price (GA) Radel Rahall Reed Reichert Renacci Ribble Rice (SC) Rigell Roby Roe (TN) Rogers (AL) Rogers (KY) Rogers (MI) Rohrabacher Rokita Rooney Ros-Lehtinen Roskam Ross Rothfus Royce Ruiz Runyan Ryan (WI) Salmon Sanford Scalise Schneider Schock Schrader Schweikert Scott, Austin Sensenbrenner Sessions Shea-Porter Shimkus Shuster Simpson Sinema Smith (MO) Smith (NE) Smith (NJ) Smith (TX) Southerland Stewart Stivers Stockman Stutzman Terry Thompson (PA) Thornberry Tiberi Tipton Turner Upton Valadao Vela Wagner Walberg Walden Walorski Walz Weber (TX) Webster (FL) Wenstrup Westmoreland Whitfield Williams Wilson (SC) Wittman Wolf Womack Woodall Yoder Yoho Young (AK) Young (IN) NOES--157 Andrews Bass Beatty Bishop (GA) Blumenauer Bonamici Brady (PA) Bridenstine Broun (GA) Brown (FL) Butterfield Capps Capuano Carney Carson (IN) Cartwright Castor (FL) Castro (TX) Chu Cicilline Clarke Clay Cleaver Clyburn Cohen Connolly Conyers Cooper Courtney Crowley Cuellar Cummings Davis (CA) Davis, Danny DeGette Delaney DeLauro Deutch Dingell Doggett Doyle Edwards Ellison Engel Eshoo Farr Fattah Frankel (FL) Fudge Gabbard Grayson Green, Al Grijalva Gutierrez Hahn Hall Hanabusa Hastings (FL) Heck (WA) Higgins Himes Hinojosa Holt Honda Horsford Hoyer Huffman Israel Jackson Lee Jeffries Johnson (GA) Johnson, E. B. Kaptur Keating Kelly (IL) Kennedy Kildee Kilmer Kirkpatrick Langevin Larsen (WA) Larson (CT) Lee (CA) Levin Lewis Lipinski Lofgren Lowenthal Lowey **Lujan** Grisham (NM) **Lujan,** Ben Ray (NM) Lynch Maloney, Carolyn Massie Matsui McCollum McDermott McGovern Meeks Meng Michaud Moore Moran Nadler Napolitano Neal Negrete McLeod O'Rourke Pallone Pascrell Pastor (AZ) Payne Pelosi Perlmutter Pingree (ME) Pocan Polis Price (NC) Quigley Rangel Richmond Roybal-Allard Ruppersberger Ryan (OH) Sanchez, Linda T. Sanchez, Loretta Sarbanes Schakowsky Schiff Schwartz Scott (VA) Scott, David Serrano Sewell (AL) Sherman Slaughter Smith (WA) Speier Swalwell (CA) Takano [[Page H7145]] Thompson (CA) Thompson (MS) Tierney Titus Tonko Van Hollen Vargas Veasey Velazquez Visclosky Wasserman Schultz Waters Watt Waxman Welch Wilson (FL) Yarmuth NOT VOTING--12 Becerra Campbell Cardenas Gosar Granger Green, Gene Jones McCarthy (NY) Miller, George Rush Sires Tsongas {time} 1334 So the bill was passed. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded. A motion to reconsider was laid on the table. Stated against: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 587--Final Passage. Had I been present, I would have voted ``no.'' Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, November 15, 2013, I was unable to cast my floor vote on rollcall votes. Had I been present for the votes, I would have voted ``nay'' on rollcall vote 587. Personal Explanation Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained due to official business in California today and missed roll Nos.

583 through 587. Had I been present, I would have voted ``yea'' on roll No. 586. I would have voted ``nay'' on roll Nos. 583, 584, 585, and 587.

For more information please visit: http://beta.congress.gov

LOAD-DATE: November 17, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

401 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Arizona Republic (Phoenix)

November 14, 2013 Thursday
Final Chaser Edition

Copper-mine bill stalls in House

BYLINE: By, Erin Kelly, Republic Washington Bureau

SECTION: VALLEY & STATE; Pg. B1

LENGTH: 1069 words

Plans to build North America's largest copper mine near Superior were dealt a major blow Wednesday when congressional supporters of the project canceled a vote on their bill after a strong lobbying effort against the mine by Native American tribes throughout the nation.

For the second time in two months, Rep. Paul Gosar, R-Ariz., was forced to pull his bill, the Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act, from the House floor or risk defeat.

Gosar is the lead sponsor of the bill, which is co-sponsored by Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick, D-Ariz.

Supporters and opponents of the bill credited heavy lobbying by tribes for derailing the bill.

The San Carlos Apache Tribe, which fears the mine will destroy its sacred land, reached out to tribes across the country for help in stopping the project.

Those tribes then lobbied Republican House members in states with significant Native American populations to oppose a federal land swap that would have paved the way for Resolution Copper Co. to build the mine.

Lawmakers who didn't care one way or another about a copper mine in Arizona began to oppose Gosar's bill to avoid getting in political trouble with their own tribal constituents, according to supporters and opponents of Gosar's bill.

To make matters worse for mine supporters, the bill was scheduled to come to a vote Wednesday in the midst of a Tribal Nations Conference this week that brought tribal leaders, including San Carlos Chairman Terry Rambler, to the nation's capital to meet with White House officials.

President Barack Obama spoke to the tribal leaders Wednesday. Those leaders included representatives from tribes in states such as Oklahoma, where lawmakers had been wavering on Gosar's bill.

Opponents of the mine say it would weaken the ground beneath sacred Native American lands such as Apache Leap, harm the environment and rock-climbing areas, and threaten the Phoenix area's water supply.

Gosar was angry about Wednesday's setback but said he will try again if he can secure the votes. He and other supporters of the mine say it would create more than 3,700 jobs, generate more than $61billion in economic activity over the 66-year life of the mine, and supply 25percent or more of the nation's demand for copper.

"Today's setback will not discourage me from my continued fight for this important Arizona jobs bill," Gosar said in a statement. "I am disappointed that a mine of national significance that would have employed so many Native Americans was opposed by the leadership of the San Carlos Apache Tribe - a tribe plagued with excessively high unemployment and poverty.

"It is inexplicable decisions like this that directly result in the continued poverty of the tribe and the deterioration of the economic prospects of the town of Superior and the entire state of Arizona."

Gosar accused San Carlos leaders of misleading other tribes about the project. Tribal leaders had no immediate comment Wednesday.

"Polls show the majority of San Carlos Apache tribal members support the mine and the jobs," Gosar said. "Their tribal leadership is out of touch with its own people. I am confident that the truth will prevail and the will of the members of the tribe and surrounding communities will be done."

Kirkpatrick also vowed to keep trying.

"The families in Arizona's Copper Corridor need these jobs, and Arizona's economy needs this boost," she said in a statement. "I remain committed to moving this forward, working across the aisle with Congressman Gosar and my colleagues and bringing local stakeholders together. When it comes to creating jobs and strengthening the economy, we need to find common ground."

Rep. Raúl Grijalva, D-Ariz., one of the major opponents of the mine, had no immediate reaction to Wednesday's turn of events.

But he said in an interview last week that he believed an amendment to Gosar's bill proposed by Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., was causing a problem for the mine's supporters. Any attempt to ignore or kill the amendment would cause "a political firestorm" for mine supporters, Grijalva said.

Lujan's amendment had been scheduled for a vote Wednesday, in advance of Gosar's bill. The amendment would have given the federal government greater authority to protect sacred Native American land not under tribal ownership.

Supporters of the copper mine said it was intended as a "poison pill" to kill the Resolution Copper project. But **Lujan** said his amendment would improve the bill, and tribal leaders urged their members of Congress to support his proposed change.

Lujan, in a recent speech on the House floor, cited strong tribal opposition to Gosar's bill as a key reason he wanted to amend the legislation. Among the groups opposing the bill are the National Congress of American Indians, the United South and Eastern Tribes, the All Indian Pueblo Council of New Mexico, and the Jicarilla and Mescalero Apache tribes of New Mexico.

"The cultural and sacred sites of Apache Leap and Oak Flat are located on public land and not on an Indian reservation," **Lujan** said. "Although these sites are not on an Indian reservation, they are still sacred to the San Carlos Apache, the Yavapai Indian Tribe, and other tribes in Arizona - just as a Catholic church, where I practice my faith, is considered a holy place even though it's not located in Vatican City."

However, Resolution Copper officials have said they would not mine beneath Apache Leap.

The decision by the mine's supporters to pull their bill is the latest twist in a saga that dates to 2005, when Resolution Copper began seeking a federal land exchange. Eleven versions of a land-exchange bill have been introduced in Congress.

If the bill was approved by both chambers of Congress, Resolution Copper would get about 2,400 acres in the Oak Flat area of the Tonto National Forest in return for giving more than 5,000 acres of environmentally sensitive land throughout Arizona to the federal government.

"Resolution Copper is disappointed that a vote on (the bill) did not occur today," company spokesman Troy Corder said. "We are focusing on the submission of our Mine Plan of Operation to the U.S. Forest Service this week. We are confident that our MPO will dispel misinformation around the project and establish that we have submitted the project for regulatory review. We feel that as the details of the MPO emerge, support will continue to grow for the legislation."

|

Reach the reporter at ekelly@gannett.com

LOAD-DATE: November 15, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: pho

Copyright 2013 The Arizona Republic
All Rights Reserved

Gannett News Service

November 13, 2013 Wednesday

House vote on Resolution Copper mine put off indefinitely

BYLINE: Erin Kelly, Gannett Washington Bureau

SECTION: Pg. ARC

LENGTH: 1173 words

By Erin Kelly, Gannett Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON -- Plans to build North America's largest copper mine were dealt a major blow Wednesday when congressional supporters of the southeast Arizona project canceled a vote on their bill after a strong lobbying effort against the mine by Native American tribes throughout the nation.

For the second time in two months, Rep. Paul Gosar, R-Ariz., was forced to pull his bill -- the Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act -- from the House floor or risk defeat. Gosar is the lead sponsor of the bill, which is co-sponsored by Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick, D-Ariz.

Supporters and opponents of the bill credited heavy lobbying by tribes for derailing the bill. The San Carlos Apache Tribe, which fears the mine will destroy its sacred tribal lands in Arizona, reached out to tribes across the country for help in stopping the project. Those tribes then lobbied Republican House members in states with significant Native American populations to oppose a federal land swap that would have paved the way for Resolution Copper Co. to build the mine near Superior, Ariz.

Lawmakers who didn't really care one way or another about a copper mine in Arizona began to oppose Gosar's bill to avoid getting in political trouble with their own tribal constituents, supporters and opponents of Gosar's bill said.

To make matters worse for mine supporters, the bill was scheduled to come to a vote Wednesday in the midst of a Tribal Nations Conference this week that brought tribal leaders -- including San Carlos Apache Tribal Chairman Terry Rambler -- to the nation's capital to meet with Obama administration officials just as the House was scheduled to take up the bill. President Barack Obama spoke to the tribal leaders Wednesday. Those leaders included representatives from tribes in states such as Oklahoma, where lawmakers had been wavering on Gosar's bill.

Opponents of the mine say it would weaken the ground beneath sacred Native American lands such as Apache Leap, harm the environment and rock-climbing areas, and threaten the Phoenix area's water supply.

Gosar was angry about Wednesday's setback but said he will try again if he can secure the votes. He and other supporters of the mine project say it would create more than 3,700 local jobs, generate more than $61 billion in economic activity over the 66-year life of the mine, and supply 25 percent or more of the nation's demand for copper.

"Today's setback will not discourage me from my continued fight for this important Arizona jobs bill," Gosar said in a statement. "I am disappointed that a mine of national significance that would have employed so many Native Americans was opposed by the leadership of the San Carlos Apache Tribe -- a tribe plagued with excessively high unemployment and poverty. It is inexplicable decisions like this that directly result in the continued poverty of the tribe and the deterioration of the economic prospects of the town of Superior and the entire state of Arizona."

Gosar accused San Carlos Apache leaders of misleading other tribes about the project. Tribal leaders had no immediate comment Wednesday.

"Polls show the majority of San Carlos Apache tribal members support the mine and the jobs," Gosar said. "Their tribal leadership is out of touch with its own people. I am confident that the truth will prevail and the will of the members of the tribe and surrounding communities will be done."

Kirkpatrick also vowed to keep trying.

"The families in Arizona's Copper Corridor need these jobs, and Arizona's economy needs this boost," she said in a statement. "I remain committed to moving this forward, working across the aisle with Congressman Gosar and my colleagues, and bringing local stakeholders together. When it comes to creating jobs and strengthening the economy, we need to find common ground."

Rep. Raul Grijalva, D-Ariz., one of the major opponents of the mine, had no immediate reaction to Wednesday's turn of events. But he said in an interview last week that he believed an amendment to Gosar's bill proposed by Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., was causing a problem for the mine's

supporters. Any attempt to ignore or kill the amendment would cause "a political firestorm" for mine supporters, Grijalva said.

Lujan's amendment had been scheduled for a vote Wednesday, in advance of Gosar's bill. The amendment would have given the federal government greater authority to protect sacred Native American lands that are not under tribal ownership.

Supporters of the copper mine said it was intended as a "poison pill" to kill the Resolution Copper project. But **Lujan** said his amendment would improve the bill, and tribal leaders urged their members of Congress to support his proposed change.

Lujan, in a recent speech on the House floor, cited strong tribal opposition to Gosar's bill as a key reason why he wanted to amend the legislation. Among the groups opposing the bill are: the National Congress of American Indians, the United South and Eastern Tribes, the All Indian Pueblo Council of New Mexico, and the Jicarilla and Mescalero Apache tribes of New Mexico.

"The cultural and sacred sites of Apache Leap and Oak Flat are located on public land and not on an Indian Reservation," **Lujan** said. "Although these sites are not on an Indian Reservation, they are still sacred to the San Carlos Apache, the Yavapai Indian Tribe, and other tribes in Arizona -- just as a Catholic church, where I practice my faith, is considered a holy place even though it's not located in Vatican City."

Transferring the land from the federal to private ownership would take away its protections, **Lujan** argued.

However, Resolution Copper officials have said they would not mine beneath Apache Leap.

The decision by the mine's supporters to pull their bill is the latest twist in a saga that dates back nearly a decade.

Resolution Copper has been seeking a federal land exchange since 2005. Eleven versions of a land-exchange bill have been introduced in Congress. In 2011, the House approved a different version of Gosar's bill, but the legislation never came to a vote in the Senate.

If the bill is approved by both chambers of Congress, Resolution Copper would get about 2,400 acres in the Oak Flat area of the Tonto National Forest in return for giving more than 5,000 acres of environmentally sensitive land throughout Arizona to the federal government.

"Resolution Copper is disappointed that a vote on (the bill) did not occur today," said company spokesman Troy Corder. "We are focusing on the submission of our Mine Plan of Operation to the U.S. Forest Service this week. We are confident that our MPO will dispel misinformation around the project and establish that we have submitted the project for regulatory review. We feel that as the details of the MPO emerge, support will continue to grow for the legislation."

While the bill has now stalled in the House, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee has scheduled a hearing on the mine project for Wednesday.

--

Contact Erin Kelly at ekelly@gannett.com

LOAD-DATE: November 14, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Gannett Company, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

November 13, 2013 Wednesday 11:26 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: Congressman Ben Ray Lujan Announces Federal Assistance for Santa Clara Pueblo

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 360 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** joined with U.S. Senator Tom Udall yesterday to announce that more than $2.8 million in federal assistance relief is being made available to Santa Clara Pueblo through the Public Assistance Grant Program to assist with the installation of debris collection structures. As a result of a disaster declaration in August of 2012 in response to severe flooding from June 22 to July 12, 2012, the pueblo was made eligible for funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Senator Udall, then-Senator Jeff Bingaman, and Rep. **Lujan** wrote letters in support of Santa Clara and the State's request for a disaster declaration to assist the pueblo.

"I am very glad to see this funding finally come to Santa Clara Pueblo. The Las Conchas fire caused significant damage that has been compounded by serious floods over two years," Udall said. "Santa Clara Pueblo had to wait too long for assistance, so it is very good to be able to announce this funding to help them rebuild and recover."

"The Las Conchas Fire left lasting scars that have continued to impact Santa Clara Pueblo over the past few years," **Lujan** said. "These vital funds will help the pueblo move forward with critical efforts to recover from flooding that occurred last summer, as well as more recent flooding that has impacted the community."

Santa Clara Pueblo will receive $2,841,759 that will allow the pueblo to take emergency protective measures and install temporary structures to collect debris resulting from flooding. These structures will reduce the flow of large vegetative and rock debris being washed down the side canyons leading to the main Santa Clara Creek Canyon.

Santa Clara Pueblo, which is downstream of land damaged in the 2011 Las Conchas Fire, has experienced severe flooding caused by runoff over the burn scar on multiple occasions in the years following the fire. These federal funds will be made available to State of New Mexico administrative agents, who will then distribute the money to Santa Clara Pueblo.

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage4psi-131114-30VitinMar-4547811

LOAD-DATE: November 14, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

404 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Quay County Sun (Tucumcari, New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

November 12, 2013 Tuesday

Veterans honored at ceremony

BYLINE: Thomas Garcia, Quay County Sun, Tucumcari, N.M.

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 691 words

Nov. 12--Veterans' Day is our way of honoring those who answered the call to serve, to fight for our rights and freedoms, and those who made the bravest sacrifice and did not return home, said Col. Timothy Paul, New Mexico National Guard Chief of Staff.

Paul was the guest speaker for Monday morning's Veterans' Day memorial ceremony at Tucumcari Memorial Park Cemetery, hosted by Tucumcari VFW Post 2528.

Paul said it is in human nature to have conflict and battle; it is not something that we want but is something that we cannot ignore. He said this nation stands for the ideal that all men are created equal and shall stand for those who cannot fight tyranny and bring freedom to those who are being oppressed.

"It is an honor to be here in Tucumcari, where so many brave men and women have served and continue to serve their country," Paul said.

Paul said New Mexico's residents have had a long, proud history of serving in the Armed Forces. He said the brave men of the 200th and 515th Coast Artillery, New Mexico National Guard unit had been sent to the Philippines to provide air defense for Clark Field.

The 200th, 515th Coast Artillery and Filipino defenders fought for four months until they had to retreat into the Bataan Peninsula. On April 9, 1942, the 200th and 515th Coast Artillery, along with the rest of the Bataan defenders, began the march to prison camps known as the Bataan Death March. They would then be interned for more than three years.

Paul said Quay County was the home to many who had survived the Bataan Death March. He said those men suffered horrible atrocities in defense of our liberties and freedom.

One of two remaining Bataan Death March survivors Melvin C. Waltmon died on Oct. 29. Alfred A. Haws currently resides in Logan.

Ron Wilmot, regional representative for U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-N.M.), read a letter from **Lujan**.

"Today, our nation will join together to honor the brave service of the men and women who have worn our nation's uniform and who have sacrificed in order to uphold the values that make America great," **Lujan's** letter said.

Lujan said the sons and daughters of New Mexico bravely served when their country needed them most. He said New Mexicans are proud of the long tradition of service and the many contributions New Mexicans have made through military service.

"From the Navajo Code Talkers and the soldiers who endured the Bataan Death March in World War II, to Medal of Honor recipients Leroy Petry and Hiroshi Miyamura, their stories of heroism are inspiring," **Lujan** said. "For all those whose stories may not be as well-known, but whose service will never be forgotten."

Lujan said honoring these heroes is just one service we must provide for military veterans returning home. He said we must also thank them in deeds. Veterans deserve the benefits they have been promised -- from health care to education -- as well as the opportunity to succeed when their service has concluded.

"Just as these heroes have answered the call of duty, so must we, as a community and a country, answer the call to care for them when they return home," **Lujan** said.

Lujan said too many veterans struggle to find work when their military service ends despite the excellent training and leadership qualities they possess. He said Americans must work together so that when the country welcomes home the men and women who have protected the nation's freedoms, they are welcoming home the entrepreneurs and small-business owners who will be leaders in our community.

More than 90 people attended the American Legion Post 77 Veterans Day dinner and appreciation program Saturday in Logan. The dinner and program were free and was held to honor local Veterans and women currently serving in the military.

The Tucumcari chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution hosted an appreciation breakfast on Saturday for veterans and active-duty service personnel, and a ceremony honoring veterans and men and women currently serving in the armed forces on Sunday.

___ (c)2013 the Quay County Sun (Tucumcari, N.M.) Visit the Quay County Sun (Tucumcari, N.M.) at www.qcsunonline.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: November 13, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20131112-QY-Veterans-honored-at-ceremony-1112-20131112

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: QY

Copyright 2013 Quay County Sun

Targeted News Service

November 9, 2013 Saturday 8:41 PM EST

Udall and Lujan Announce Federal Assistance for Santa Clara Pueblo

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 358 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** announced that more than $2.8 million in federal assistance relief is being made available to Santa Clara Pueblo through the Public Assistance Grant Program to assist with the installation of debris collection structures. As a result of a disaster declaration in August of 2012 in response to severe flooding from June 22 to July 12, 2012, the pueblo was made eligible for funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Senator Udall, then-Senator Jeff Bingaman, and Rep. **Lujan** wrote letters in support of Santa Clara and the State's request for a disaster declaration to assist the pueblo.

"I am very glad to see this funding finally come to Santa Clara Pueblo. The Las Conchas fire caused significant damage that has been compounded by serious floods over two years," Udall said. "Santa Clara Pueblo had to wait too long for assistance, so it is very good to be able to announce this funding to help them rebuild and recover."

"The Las Conchas Fire left lasting scars that have continued to impact Santa Clara Pueblo over the past few years," **Lujan** said. "These vital funds will help the pueblo move forward with critical efforts to recover from flooding that occurred last summer, as well as more recent flooding that has impacted the community."

Santa Clara Pueblo will receive $2,841,759 that will allow the pueblo to take emergency protective measures and install temporary structures to collect debris resulting from flooding. These structures will reduce the flow of large vegetative and rock debris being washed down the side canyons leading to the main Santa Clara Creek Canyon.

Santa Clara Pueblo, which is downstream of land damaged in the 2011 Las Conchas Fire, has experienced severe flooding caused by runoff over the burn scar on multiple occasions in the years following the fire. These federal funds will be made available to State of New Mexico administrative agents, who will then distribute the money to Santa Clara Pueblo.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131121-4555489 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: November 24, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

406 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

November 8, 2013

LUJAN STATEMENT CELEBRATING VETERANS DAY; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 360 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today in celebration of Veterans Day, which is on Monday, November 11.

"On Monday, our nation will join together to honor the brave service of the men and women who have worn our nation's uniform and who have sacrificed in order to uphold the values that make America great. In New Mexico, we are proud of the long tradition of service and the many contributions that the people of our great state have made through their military service.

"From the Navajo Code Talkers and the soldiers who endured the Bataan Death March in World War II to Medal of Honor recipients Leroy Petry and Hiroshi Miyamura, their stories of heroism are inspiring. And for all those whose stories may not be as well known, but whose service will never be forgotten - the sons and daughters of New Mexico have bravely served when their country needed them most.

"Just as these heroes have answered the call of duty, so must we, as a community and a country, answer the call to care for them when they return home. We must not only thank them in words, but in deeds as well. Our veterans deserve the benefits they have been promised - from health care to education - as well as the opportunity to succeed when their service has concluded. Too many veterans struggle to find work when their military service ends despite the excellent training and leadership qualities they possess. We must work together so that when we welcome home the men and women who have protected our freedoms, we are welcoming home the entrepreneurs and small business owners who will be leaders in our community. From job training to incentives to hire veterans, we must invest in the men and women who served with distinction.

"This Veterans Day, let us express our gratitude to our nation's veterans and recommit to ensuring that our veterans are given the opportunities that befit our nation's heroes. We also remember all of those still serving and hope for their safe and speedy return home."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-statement-celebrating-veterans-day/

LOAD-DATE: November 11, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMB

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Targeted News Service

November 8, 2013 Friday 9:14 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: Congressmen Lujan and Lujan Grisham Applaud Historic Vote to End Discrimination in the Senate; Call for Passage in the House

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 443 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Both of New Mexico's Democratic members of the U.S. House of Representatives joined in applauding the historic 64-32 vote in the United States Senate for passage of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-113s815rs/pdf/BILLS-113s815rs.pdf) (ENDA) yesterday, and called for swift passage in the House of Representatives.

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and a cosponsor of the House version of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) applauded the Senate passage of legislation that would prohibit discrimination in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

"As a cosponsor and strong supporter of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, I am encouraged that the Senate passed this important legislation, with strong bipartisan support, that would ensure no one is discriminated against in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation. With more than 90 percent of Fortune 500 companies already implementing policies like ENDA, it is time to adopt these best practices into law, and provide the LGBT community assurance that discrimination will not be tolerated. Workers should be judged on their ability and work ethic, not their sexual orientation.

"Now that this bill has cleared the Senate, I hope that Republican leaders in the House will reconsider their opposition to this legislation and not stand in the way of the fight against discrimination. I call upon House Republican leaders to allow a vote on this important bill."

Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham of New Mexico's First Congressional District released the following statement after Senate passage of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA):

"With its strong bipartisan vote to pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, the United States Senate today reaffirmed a basic but vital principle: everyone in this country should be treated equally under the law. Nobody should have to go to work every day fearful that they'll lose their job simply because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. America's workers should be judged based on their job performance, not on who they are or who they love.

"Now it's time for the House to side with most Fortune 500 companies, countless small businesses, the state of New Mexico and a majority of Americans by passing the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. I'm proud to join nearly 200 of my House colleagues in co-sponsoring ENDA, and I urge Speaker Boehner to allow a vote on this bipartisan legislation."

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage4psi-131109-30VitinMar-4543675

LOAD-DATE: November 9, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

November 8, 2013 Friday 7:51 PM EST

Lujan Statement Celebrating Veterans Day

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 362 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today in celebration of Veterans Day, which is on Monday, November 11.

"On Monday, our nation will join together to honor the brave service of the men and women who have worn our nation's uniform and who have sacrificed in order to uphold the values that make America great. In New Mexico, we are proud of the long tradition of service and the many contributions that the people of our great state have made through their military service.

"From the Navajo Code Talkers and the soldiers who endured the Bataan Death March in World War II to Medal of Honor recipients Leroy Petry and Hiroshi Miyamura, their stories of heroism are inspiring. And for all those whose stories may not be as well known, but whose service will never be forgotten - the sons and daughters of New Mexico have bravely served when their country needed them most.

"Just as these heroes have answered the call of duty, so must we, as a community and a country, answer the call to care for them when they return home. We must not only thank them in words, but in deeds as well. Our veterans deserve the benefits they have been promised - from health care to education - as well as the opportunity to succeed when their service has concluded. Too many veterans struggle to find work when their military service ends despite the excellent training and leadership qualities they possess. We must work together so that when we welcome home the men and women who have protected our freedoms, we are welcoming home the entrepreneurs and small business owners who will be leaders in our community. From job training to incentives to hire veterans, we must invest in the men and women who served with distinction.

"This Veterans Day, let us express our gratitude to our nation's veterans and recommit to ensuring that our veterans are given the opportunities that befit our nation's heroes. We also remember all of those still serving and hope for their safe and speedy return home."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131109-4543532 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: November 8, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

409 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal: Blogs (New Mexico)

November 7, 2013 Thursday

NM senators support federal Employment Non-Discrimination Act

BYLINE: Michael Coleman, JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: INSIDE THE BELTWAY

LENGTH: 521 words

New Mexico's U.S. senators voted for a bill Thursday that would ban workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, a measure which passed the Senate 64-32.

"In New Mexico, we are proud of our diverse people and also our work ethic and we believe individuals should be judged on their ability to do their job and their performance, not by anything else," Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., said after voting for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. "We also have a strong history of protecting human rights, which is why we've had a similar state nondiscrimination law on the books for 10 years."

Current federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, race and national origin. But it doesn't stop an employer from firing or refusing to hire workers because they are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender. The Senate bill would bar employers with 15 or more workers from using a person's sexual orientation or gender identity as the basis for making employment decisions, including hiring, firing, compensation, or promotion. The legislation would exempt religious institutions and the military.

New Mexico state law already prohibits hiring discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as in housing and consumer credit. The state is considered to have some of the nation's strictest protections.

"Passing the Employment Non-Discrimination Act ensures that every employee in every state is judged not on who they are or who they love, but on the quality of their work," said Sen. Martin Heinrich. "I'm proud to be a longtime supporter of ENDA and to represent a state that was at the forefront of providing these kinds of workplace protections for our LGBT community a decade ago."

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., said the bill makes good business sense.

"With more than 90 percent of Fortune 500 companies already implementing policies like ENDA, it is time to adopt these best practices into law, and provide the LGBT community assurance that discrimination will not be tolerated," he said. "Workers should be judged on their ability and work ethic, not their sexual orientation.

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., tweeted her support for the bill today, as well. Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., voted against a similar bill in 2007.

Meanwhile, gender equality made news in a New Mexico in a different way Wednesday when a top New Mexico regulator directed insurance companies to provide marital discounts to same-sex married couples in the state. As the Journal's Dan Boyd reported on today's front page of the Journal: "In an order released Wednesday by his office, state Insurance Superintendent John Franchini told insurance companies that failure to give such discounts would be viewed by his office as an unfair, and illegal, business practice.

"The superintendent expects all married couples to be treated equally and without prejudice by all persons engaged in the business of insurance in New Mexico," Franchini wrote. "The practice of applying discounts for policy-holders who are married shall apply to all policy-holders, regardless of gender or sexual orientation."

LOAD-DATE: November 8, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2013 Albuquerque Journal.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

LUJAN APPLAUDS SENATE PASSAGE OF EMPLOYMENT NON-DISCRIMINATION ACT, URGES HOUSE TO ACT;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 223 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and a cosponsor of the House version of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) applauded the Senate passage of legislation that would prohibit discrimination in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

"As a cosponsor and strong supporter of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, I am encouraged that the Senate passed this important legislation, with strong bipartisan support, that would ensure no one is discriminated against in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation. With more than 90 percent of Fortune 500 companies already implementing policies like ENDA, it is time to adopt these best practices into law, and provide the LGBT community assurance that discrimination will not be tolerated. Workers should be judged on their ability and work ethic, not their sexual orientation.

"Now that this bill has cleared the Senate, I hope that Republican leaders in the House will reconsider their opposition to this legislation and not stand in the way of the fight against discrimination. I call upon House Republican leaders to allow a vote on this important bill."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-applauds-senate-passage-of-employment-nondiscrimination-act-urges-house-to-act/

LOAD-DATE: November 8, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMB

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

411 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

November 7, 2013

LUJAN ANNOUNCES $2.4 MILLION FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS IN NEW MEXICO TO EXPAND ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 288 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, three community health centers in New Mexico are receiving $2,409,873 in grant awards to expand access to health care. These funds will allow the centers to serve 9,100 additional patients in New Mexico. Nationwide, more than 230 health center programs are receiving approximately $150 million to serve more than 1.25 million additional patients.

Lujan also announced that two of the community health centers receiving a grant are in his northern New Mexico congressional district. Presbyterian Medical Services in Santa Fe is receiving $733,333 and the Pueblo of Jemez is receiving $818,207.

"Community health centers provide vital primary health care services to our communities, and thanks to these federal funds, more of our families, friends, and neighbors will have access to affordable, quality care," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Strengthening and growing these essential centers is an important component of the Affordable Care Act's goal of offering greater access to the care New Mexicans need."

The grants under the Affordable Care Act will be used by the community health centers to support the establishment of new full-time service delivery sites. Nationwide, approximately 1,200 health centers operate more than 9,000 service delivery sites that provide care to more than 21 million patients in every state. In New Mexico last year, community health centers served 284,246 patients, 42 percent of whom were uninsured.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-announces-24-million-for-community-health-centers-in-new-mexico-to-expand-access-to-health-care/

LOAD-DATE: November 8, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMB

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

November 7, 2013 Thursday

LUJAN APPLAUDS SENATE PASSAGE OF EMPLOYMENT NON-DISCRIMINATION ACT, URGES HOUSE TO ACT

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 208 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and a cosponsor of the House version of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) applauded the Senate passage of legislation that would prohibit discrimination in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

"As a cosponsor and strong supporter of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, I am encouraged that the Senate passed this important legislation, with strong bipartisan support, that would ensure no one is discriminated against in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation. With more than 90 percent of Fortune 500 companies already implementing policies like ENDA, it is time to adopt these best practices into law, and provide the LGBT community assurance that discrimination will not be tolerated. Workers should be judged on their ability and work ethic, not their sexual orientation.

"Now that this bill has cleared the Senate, I hope that Republican leaders in the House will reconsider their opposition to this legislation and not stand in the way of the fight against discrimination. I call upon House Republican leaders to allow a vote on this important bill."

LOAD-DATE: November 14, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

States News Service

November 7, 2013 Thursday

LUJAN ANNOUNCES $2.4 MILLION FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS IN NEW MEXICO TO EXPAND ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 270 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, three community health centers in New Mexico are receiving $2,409,873 in grant awards to expand access to health care. These funds will allow the centers to serve 9,100 additional patients in New Mexico. Nationwide, more than 230 health center programs are receiving approximately $150 million to serve more than 1.25 million additional patients.

Lujan also announced that two of the community health centers receiving a grant are in his northern New Mexico congressional district. Presbyterian Medical Services in Santa Fe is receiving $733,333 and the Pueblo of Jemez is receiving $818,207.

"Community health centers provide vital primary health care services to our communities, and thanks to these federal funds, more of our families, friends, and neighbors will have access to affordable, quality care," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Strengthening and growing these essential centers is an important component of the Affordable Care Act's goal of offering greater access to the care New Mexicans need."

The grants under the Affordable Care Act will be used by the community health centers to support the establishment of new full-time service delivery sites. Nationwide, approximately 1,200 health centers operate more than 9,000 service delivery sites that provide care to more than 21 million patients in every state. In New Mexico last year, community health centers served 284,246 patients, 42 percent of whom were uninsured.

LOAD-DATE: November 14, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

Targeted News Service

November 7, 2013 Thursday 8:32 PM EST

Lujan Announces $2.4 Million for Community Health Centers in New Mexico to Expand Access to Health Care

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 280 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, three community health centers in New Mexico are receiving $2,409,873 in grant awards to expand access to health care. These funds will allow the centers to serve 9,100 additional patients in New Mexico. Nationwide, more than 230 health center programs are receiving approximately $150 million to serve more than 1.25 million additional patients.

Lujan also announced that two of the community health centers receiving a grant are in his northern New Mexico congressional district. Presbyterian Medical Services in Santa Fe is receiving $733,333 and the Pueblo of Jemez is receiving $818,207.

"Community health centers provide vital primary health care services to our communities, and thanks to these federal funds, more of our families, friends, and neighbors will have access to affordable, quality care," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Strengthening and growing these essential centers is an important component of the Affordable Care Act's goal of offering greater access to the care New Mexicans need."

The grants under the Affordable Care Act will be used by the community health centers to support the establishment of new full-time service delivery sites. Nationwide, approximately 1,200 health centers operate more than 9,000 service delivery sites that provide care to more than 21 million patients in every state. In New Mexico last year, community health centers served 284,246 patients, 42 percent of whom were uninsured.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131108-4541931 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: November 7, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

November 7, 2013 Thursday 8:31 PM EST

Lujan Applauds Senate Passage of Employment Non-Discrimination Act, Urges House to Act

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 218 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and a cosponsor of the House version of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) applauded the Senate passage of legislation that would prohibit discrimination in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

"As a cosponsor and strong supporter of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, I am encouraged that the Senate passed this important legislation, with strong bipartisan support, that would ensure no one is discriminated against in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation. With more than 90 percent of Fortune 500 companies already implementing policies like ENDA, it is time to adopt these best practices into law, and provide the LGBT community assurance that discrimination will not be tolerated. Workers should be judged on their ability and work ethic, not their sexual orientation.

"Now that this bill has cleared the Senate, I hope that Republican leaders in the House will reconsider their opposition to this legislation and not stand in the way of the fight against discrimination. I call upon House Republican leaders to allow a vote on this important bill."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131108-4541930 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: November 7, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

November 4, 2013 Monday

Battle for amendments to RECA law continues

BYLINE: Kathy Helms Diné Bureau navajo1@gallupindependent.com

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1A

LENGTH: 1102 words

WINDOW ROCK - Norris Nez, a traditional Navajo medicine man, lives in the area of Coalmine Mesa by the Hosteen Nez uranium mine at Gold Spring.

"I used to haul truckloads of uranium for processing to Winslow, Gallup, Shiprock and Blanding. The only compensation my family got was some groceries," he once testified.

The mine operated from 1951 to 1956, first as Hosteen Nez Mining from 1951 to 1952, and United Exploration in 1956. Total production volume was 61 tons, according to documents from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Nez said he drove for the mines for at least two years. "He hauled uranium, he slept in the pits, he's eaten in the pits for all those years. He feels ill," and now that it is known that many people who worked for the uranium mines have become ill, he feels that could be to blame, according to Larry Gordy of Cameron, who translated for Nez. "He said it's like a medicine. It's really strong and he can feel it, but he hasn't had a doctor completely evaluate him because, through their eyes, there's no paperwork that he's ever worked or been around uranium."

Contaminants still

there Because Nez's work record is nonexistent, even if he has a compensable illness under the federal Radiation Exposure Compensation Act - which is designed to compensate individuals who worked in the uranium industry prior to Dec. 31, 1971 - he can't get compensation because of the missing paper trail.

For 20 years, radioactive clouds drifted across the United States leaving a trail of fallout from above-ground atomic testing at Nevada Test Site.The Navajo Nation was a hot spot for fallout on numerous occasions in the 1950s - three times just in March 1955 alone - and Nez said contamination from the blasts hasn't gone away.

"They put it in the atmosphere and we're still breathing it. Also, things flying in the air have contaminated the atmosphere. It has affected the breathing and the esophagus and down into your lungs. So there's a lot of things that we still have to cover and we need to hold (prayer) meetings for. Those are some of the things that people don't talk about," Nez said. Three years and

counting J. Keith Killian of the Killian Davis Richter & Mayle law firm in Grand Junction, Colo., has spent years lobbying on behalf of the Navajo Nation for amendments to the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act. Killian and senior paralegal Jennifer McCall were scheduled to present a RECA update last Wednesday to the Navajo Nation Council's Health, Education and Human Services Committee, however, their plane was grounded due to engine trouble so the presentation had to be postponed. Since the RECA Amendments of 2013 were introduced in April by Sen. Tom Udall and Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** Jr., the bill has been referred to the Judiciary Committee in the Senate, and three committees in the House, which then referred it to three subcommittees. On July 8, it moved from the House Education and the Workforce Committee to the Subcommittee on Workforce Protections, where, on Oct. 11, it gained three cosponsors: Reps. Carol Shea-Porter, DN.H., Dina Titus, D-Nev., and Paul Tonko, D-N.Y. In addition, Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., 2nd District, became a co-sponsor in May, followed by Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., 1st District, in June, and Ed Perlmutter, D-Colo., in August. "The new legislation was first introduced in 2010, so it's been three years now. Each year, Tom Udall and **Ben Ray Lujan** have introduced it, and each year there have been all these constraints on the budget. So this year is better than it was in 2010, '11 and '12," Killian said.

"Will it pass? We don't know. To be honest with you, it has to do with whether we're financially capable of doing it and whether it's politically acceptable. From a political standpoint, it's nice to have the Four Corners states basically pitching in and saying, 'Yes, this is a good idea for us.' And from a political standpoint.. it's likely that as we mine uranium, that we're going to want to take care of the ones that mined in the past in order to make it acceptable to do it in the future."

Killian said they are continuing to coordinate with Simon Boyce at the Navajo Nation Washington Office and with the New Mexico delegation. At some point, another trip to Washington could be in order to try to generate movement in the subcommittees. "That would be, in my mind, the best thing to do," Killian said.

Where's the logic?

Under the proposed amendments, downwind states would be expanded to include all of Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming. The Territory of Guam would be added for the Pacific Test Sites.

"One of the things that's very ironic to me is that the first nuclear test site (Trinity), we had all that radiation that was spread around New Mexico and there's never been compensation for that. It seems that there ought to be that," he said.

"The thing that is so sad to me, and of course Jennifer and I have seen this happen for 20 years, is that we know there are people that suffered and are dying and have died as a result of radiation exposure - uranium miners, millers, ore haulers, core drillers and downwinders - but we can't get them compensation" because proof can't be established under the current law. In the case of former workers such as Nez, the new law would expand the use of affidavits to substantiate their employment history as a miner, miller, core driller or ore transporter. For downwinders, affidavits could be used to establish proof of residency, and in the case of on-site participants, affidavits could establish proof of on-site presence when the blasts occurred.

Many of those who are now sick but not eligible for benefits are post-'71 uranium workers. Under the new law, coverage would extend from Dec. 31, 1971, to Dec. 31, 1990. Others who would be helped are core drillers, Killian said, who currently are not eligible.

The amendments also would include additional compensation for downwinders and expand the list of compensable diseases. "Right now, if you're a miner or miller, you can get $150, 000; but if you're a downwinder, of course, you can't. There are other things - like the renal cancers that are applicable to millers and not miners. There's a historical reason for it but when you start examining it from a logical standpoint, it doesn't work," Killian said.

"The fact that core drillers are not included either, it's just not logical. It's like the downwind counties: Why is one county included and the other is not? I guess the edges of the law are where the problems exist, and there are some harsh edges here."

LOAD-DATE: November 7, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: Courtesy photo Navajo traditional medicine man Norris Nez, in dark glasses, talks with attorney James W. Zion, Debbie Yazzie and Myrtle Yellowhorse about relocation. Nez used to transport uranium ore from the Hosteen Nez Mine near Gold Spring to area mills, but because he was paid in groceries, he has no work record to pursue federal compensation.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

417 of 500 DOCUMENTS

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

November 4, 2013 Monday

Luj án touts Native American Heritage Month

BYLINE: Bernie Dotson Staff writer city@gallupindependent.com

SECTION: LOCAL NEWS; Pg. 2A

LENGTH: 330 words

SANTA FE - U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., who is the co-chair of the Congressional Native American Caucus, released a statement Friday on Native American Heritage Month, which is celebrated during November.

"Native American Heritage Month is a time to look back at the many contributions of the First Americans, while also looking forward to ways we can build a brighter future for tribal communities," **Luján** stated. "As home to one of the richest indigenous tribal populations in the United States, New Mexico is proud of the influences and contributions of the 19 Pueblo nations, two Apache nations, and the Navajo Nation. Their impact on art, architecture and agriculture can be felt in so many facets of our lives today. New Mexico's history has been shaped by Native American culture and enriched by its deep-rooted traditions that will always be part of the fabric of our state.

"Native Americans have contributed to all aspects of American society and have a proud tradition of military service to our nation. Later this month, many will join together in Washington, D.C. to honor the Native American Code Talkers of World War I and World War II who played a key role in achieving victory. We remember their heroic efforts and thank them for their brave service. This month, let us remember all our Native American brothers and sisters who have worn our nation's uniform."

Lujan continued in the release, "As we celebrate Native American culture, Congress must also respect tribal sovereignty and do its part to protect it. From funding tribal programs to preserving traditional languages and protecting sacred and religious sites, Congress has important obligations to uphold. By working together to meet our trust responsibilities and strengthen government-togovernment relations, we can provide greater opportunities for Native Americans across our nation."

Luján represents the 3rd District, which includes McKinley County and most of the northwestern part of New Mexico.

LOAD-DATE: November 7, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

November 4, 2013 Monday 11:22 PM EST

Rep. Swalwell Introduces Bill to Permit Use of Grants with Department of Energy National Laboratory

BYLINE: by GEMA VIANA, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 219 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Nov. 4 -- Rep. Eric Swalwell, R-Calif., has introduced legislation (H.R. 3438) to "amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to authorize use of grants under the Urban Area Security Initiative and the State Homeland Security Grant Program to work in conjunction with a Department of Energy national laboratory."

The bill was introduced on Oct. 30 and has six co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. Michael K. Simpson, R-Idaho, Zoe Lofgren, D-Calif., Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., Bill Foster, D-Ill., and Grace F. Napolitano, D-Calif.

The legislation was referred to the House Homeland Security Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/LegislativeData.php?&n=BillText. For more information

about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information about Targeted News Service products and services, please contact: Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://targetednews.com.

30VianaGem11042013-db-1143123

LOAD-DATE: November 5, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

November 2, 2013 Saturday

Swalwell Introduces the Bipartisan National Laboratories Mean National Security Act

LENGTH: 366 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the House of Representative Eric Swalwell, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

U.S. Representative Eric Swalwell (CA-15) introduced H.R. 3438, the National Laboratories Mean National Security Act, to ensure the full resources of Department of Energy (DOE) labs like Lawrence Livermore and Sandia National Laboratories are clearly available to help states and localities secure our country. The government-owned, contractor-operated structure of the national labs has caused some state and local recipients of federal homeland security grants to decline to utilize DOE labs because of a mistaken belief that these funds would be paid impermissibly to the federal government as opposed to contract operators.

"Lawrence Livermore, Sandia and our other DOE national laboratories are world-class scientific research and development institutions with expertise relevant to addressing our homeland security challenges," said Swalwell. "States and localities should feel free to utilize these capabilities, but the unique structure of these labs means they aren't always being used fully. It's in our homeland security interest to remove this existing barrier and clearly establish in statute that national labs can work with recipients of key federal homeland security initiatives and grants."

The research, expertise and knowledge of DOE labs are all directly relevant to addressing how to prevent and respond to attacks involving the worst threats, such as chemical, biological, and radiological weapons. Swalwell was joined on the bipartisan bill by U.S. Reps. Mike Simpson (R-ID), Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (D-NM), **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-NM), Zoe Lofgren (D-CA), Grace Napolitano (D-CA) and Bill Foster (D-IL). A similar bill passed the House of Representatives by voice vote in the 112th Congress but was not taken up by the Senate.

"We can't let a lack of clarity prevent states and localities from consulting with the best and brightest at our national labs on issues as critical as our homeland security. This is commonsense legislation that would provide a boost to the safety of our communities," Swalwell added.

For further information please visit: http://swalwell.house.gov/

LOAD-DATE: November 4, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

420 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

November 1, 2013 Friday

Sen. Udall calls again for Senate rules reform

BYLINE: MICHAEL COLEMAN Washington Notebook

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C1

LENGTH: 518 words

Sen. Tom Udall resurrected his call for Senate rules reform Thursday after Republicans blocked two of President Barack Obama's key nominees.

The New Mexico Democrat said the GOP's filibuster of Rep. Mel Watt's nomination as secretary of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, as well as that of Patricia Millett for the D.C. circuit Court of Appeals, again shows a dire need for a rules change.

Udall has tried since 2009 to convince his fellow senators to change the chamber's rules to require that senators who threaten a filibuster actually come to the floor and speak - much like Jimmy Stewart in the classic movie "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington."

Watt's backers are upset that the North Carolina Democrat would be the first sitting member of Congress to have his nomination blocked in more than 150 years. Republicans have questioned Watt's qualifications for the job.

"I have said for a long time: The Senate is broken. I called for changes in the Senate rules at the beginning of this Congress, but we didn't do enough," Udall said. "And now we're right back in the same dysfunctional situation. I'm going to keep fighting for a talking filibuster and other changes to end the tyranny of the minority."

OBAMACARE: Last week, Udall and Sen. Martin Heinrich, both Democrats, signed a letter urging the president to postpone the enrollment deadline for Obamacare, citing problems with the launch of the exchange website.

Few House Democrats have voiced support for a delay, but on Thursday Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., told the Journal he was open to the idea.

"The problems facing HealthCare.gov are disappointing and unacceptable," **Lujan** said. "The administration is working around the clock to fix them; however, if adjusting any deadlines will better achieve the overall goals of providing affordable, quality health care to the people of New Mexico, the Congress should certainly be open to doing so."

A spokesman for Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., said she does not support an enrollment deadline extension "at this point."

IMMIGRATION: Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., introduced legislation Thursday that could make it easier for select families separated by U.S. immigration laws to reunite in the United States.

A Pearce news release said his bill would allow for a Department of Homeland Security or a judge to review "only in very limited cases in which a small number of Americans who are separated from their families due to minor earlier violations which are technical in nature or occurred when the family member was a minor."

The legislation would not allow such reviews for those without a legal basis to live in the U.S., or with a serious criminal record.

Rep. Beto O'Rourke, a Democrat who represents the Texas border with Mexico, is a co-sponsor.

Pearce's legislation comes at a time when President Obama has called for a comprehensive overhaul of the nation's immigration laws. Pearce and other House Republicans have suggested that it would be easier to pass more targeted legislation to deal with the nation's roughly 12 million illegal immigrants.

Contact Michael Coleman at mcoleman@abqjournal.com

LOAD-DATE: November 1, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Albuquerque Journal

LUJEN STATEMENT ON NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 330 words

Santa Fe, NM - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and Co-Vice Chair of the Congressional Native American Caucus released the following statement today on Native American Heritage Month, which is celebrated during November.

"Native American Heritage Month is a time to look back at the many contributions of the First Americans, while also looking forward to ways we can build a brighter future for tribal communities.

"As home to one of the richest indigenous tribal populations in the United States, New Mexico is proud of the influences and contributions of the 19 Pueblo nations, two Apache nations, and the Navajo Nation. Their impact on art, architecture, and agriculture can be felt in so many facets of our lives today. New Mexico's history has been shaped by Native American culture and enriched by its deep-rooted traditions that will always be part of the fabric of our state.

"Native Americans have contributed to all aspects of American society and have a proud tradition of military service to our nation. Later this month, many will join together in Washington, D.C. to honor the Native American Code Talkers of World War I and World War II who played a key role in achieving victory. We remember their heroic efforts and thank them for their brave service. This month, let us remember all our Native American brothers and sisters who have worn our nation's uniform.

"As we celebrate Native American culture, Congress must also respect tribal sovereignty and do its part to protect it. From funding tribal programs to preserving traditional languages and protecting sacred and religious sites, Congress has important obligations to uphold. By working together to meet our trust responsibilities and strengthen government-to-government relations, we can provide greater opportunities for Native Americans across our nation."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-statement-on-native-american-heritage-month/

LOAD-DATE: November 4, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMB

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

November 1, 2013 Friday

SWALWELL INTRODUCES THE BIPARTISAN NATIONAL LABORATORIES MEAN NATIONAL SECURITY ACT

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 352 words

DATELINE: PLEASANTON, Calif.

The following information was released by the office of California Rep. Eric Swalwell:

U.S. Representative Eric Swalwell (CA-15) introduced H.R. 3438, the National Laboratories Mean National Security Act, to ensure the full resources of Department of Energy (DOE) labs like Lawrence Livermore and Sandia National Laboratories are clearly available to help states and localities secure our country. The government-owned, contractor-operated structure of the national labs has caused some state and local recipients of federal homeland security grants to decline to utilize DOE labs because of a mistaken belief that these funds would be paid impermissibly to the federal government as opposed to contract operators.

"Lawrence Livermore, Sandia and our other DOE national laboratories are world-class scientific research and development institutions with expertise relevant to addressing our homeland security challenges," said Swalwell. "States and localities should feel free to utilize these capabilities, but the unique structure of these labs means they aren't always being used fully. It's in our homeland security interest to remove this existing barrier and clearly establish in statute that national labs can work with recipients of key federal homeland security initiatives and grants."

The research, expertise and knowledge of DOE labs are all directly relevant to addressing how to prevent and respond to attacks involving the worst threats, such as chemical, biological, and radiological weapons. Swalwell was joined on the bipartisan bill by U.S. Reps. Mike Simpson (R-ID), Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (D-NM), **Ben Ray Lujan** (D-NM), Zoe Lofgren (D-CA), Grace Napolitano (D-CA) and Bill Foster (D-IL). A similar bill passed the House of Representatives by voice vote in the 112th Congress but was not taken up by the Senate.

"We can't let a lack of clarity prevent states and localities from consulting with the best and brightest at our national labs on issues as critical as our homeland security. This is commonsense legislation that would provide a boost to the safety of our communities," Swalwell added.

###

LOAD-DATE: November 1, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

Targeted News Service

November 1, 2013 Friday 1:49 AM EST

Lujan Statement on Native American Heritage Month

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 330 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and Co-Vice Chair of the Congressional Native American Caucus released the following statement today on Native American Heritage Month, which is celebrated during November.

"Native American Heritage Month is a time to look back at the many contributions of the First Americans, while also looking forward to ways we can build a brighter future for tribal communities.

"As home to one of the richest indigenous tribal populations in the United States, New Mexico is proud of the influences and contributions of the 19 Pueblo nations, two Apache nations, and the Navajo Nation. Their impact on art, architecture, and agriculture can be felt in so many facets of our lives today. New Mexico's history has been shaped by Native American culture and enriched by its deep-rooted traditions that will always be part of the fabric of our state.

"Native Americans have contributed to all aspects of American society and have a proud tradition of military service to our nation. Later this month, many will join together in Washington, D.C. to honor the Native American Code Talkers of World War I and World War II who played a key role in achieving victory. We remember their heroic efforts and thank them for their brave service. This month, let us remember all our Native American brothers and sisters who have worn our nation's uniform.

"As we celebrate Native American culture, Congress must also respect tribal sovereignty and do its part to protect it. From funding tribal programs to preserving traditional languages and protecting sacred and religious sites, Congress has important obligations to uphold. By working together to meet our trust responsibilities and strengthen government-to-government relations, we can provide greater opportunities for Native Americans across our nation."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131102-4536717 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: November 2, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

October 30, 2013 Wednesday

Rep. Lujan (gently) questions Sebelius on Obamacare

BYLINE: Michael Coleman, JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: INSIDE THE BELTWAY

LENGTH: 993 words

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., was among a slew of congressmen who questioned Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius today, but **Lujan's** queries surely came as a relief to the embattled health care chief.

Sebelius, under heavy fire for the botched rollout of Obamacare's enrollment wesbite, weathered a barrage of mostly Republican criticism at a hearing of the House Energy and Commerce committee today. But she also received some support from Democrats, including **Lujan**.

"Madam Secretary, I don't think that I've heard anyone from the other side of the aisle today, my Republican colleagues, ask you, "How can Congress work with you and support you in fixing this website and fixing this problem," **Lujan** said. "I hope that we all agree we want this website fixed. I would yield to anyone that would disagree. Seeing no one accepting that, I am glad to hear that we agree with this. Now Madam Secretary, what can Congress do to work with you to fix this website?

Here's the complete text (provided by **Lujan's** office) of the congressman's exchange with Sebelius:

Luján: Madam Secretary, I was intrigued by a line of questioning by Congressman [Gene] Green asking questions about the individual marketplace. How volatile was the individual marketplace before the Affordable Care Act became law?

Sebelius: I would say it wasn't a marketplace at all. It was unprotected, unregulated, and people were really on their own.

Luján: Madam Secretary, the Kaiser Family Foundation reports that over 50 percent churn - out of individuals that have coverage in the individual market - churn out of coverage every year. They lose coverage, they are priced out, or drop it. Is that consistent with what you are aware of?

Sebelius: That is an accurate snapshot. About a third of the people are in for about 6 months and over half are in for a year or less.

Luján: So individuals that were in the individual marketplace before the passage of the Affordable Care Act did not have the same protections as those that were in group coverage?

Sebelius: That's true.

Luján: And would those individuals in the individual marketplace sometimes have higher copays?

Sebelius: Higher copays, unlimited out-of-pocket costs for often coverage that was medically underwritten or excluded whatever medical condition they had in the first place.

Luján: So these were typically one-year contracts. If they use the plan because they got sick or in a car accident or a victim of domestic violence, sometimes they would be thrown off their plan or their rates would go up?

Sebelius: Yes.

Luján: I think that's important to note, Madam Secretary. And I'm intrigued, as well, that my understanding is last month HHS conducted an analysis that found that nearly 6 out of 10 uninsured Americans getting coverage through the marketplace will pay less than $100 per month. Is that correct?

Sebelius: They will have a plan available for less than $100 if that's their choice, yes.

Luján: And that number would be even higher - would be better - if more states chose the option of using federal funds to expand Medicaid to cover their low-income population?

Sebelius: Very definitely. That's just a marketplace snapshot. Those are people who will be in the marketplace.

Luján: Madam Secretary, I don't think that I've heard anyone from the other side of the aisle today, my Republican colleagues, ask you, "How can Congress work with you and support you in fixing this website and fixing this problem." I hope that we all agree we want this website fixed. I would yield to anyone that would disagree. Seeing no one accepting that, I am glad to hear that we agree with this. Now Madam Secretary, what can Congress do to work with you to fix this website?

Sebelius: Well, I'm not sure that there is hands-on work that you can do; maybe we have some technical expertise. But I would say getting accurate information to constituents is helpful, letting people know that they can check out the facts in the law, that they may be entitled to some financial support, that cancelation of policies means that the policy they had may not exist but they have a lot of choices of new policies and a law that now says they must be insured in a new policy - that they don't have to be insured by their company at a higher price.

Luján: I appreciate that Madam Secretary. Going back to the individual marketplace, Madam Secretary, did this Congress in previous years before the Affordable Care Act make it illegal for health insurance companies to raise rates on someone after they submitted a claim for going to the hospital or becoming sick or getting rid of pre-existing conditions.

Sebelius: No sir.

Luján: Madam Secretary, one last note here. It seems that we've received some horrible news that there are bad actors already taking place - fraudulent websites that imitate the health care exchange or misleading seniors into disclosing their personal information. I've signed onto a letter to you, led by my colleague Representative Raul Ruiz out of California, to request that you prioritize fraud prevention efforts. What has the administration done to prevent these fraudulent acts and protect personal information?

Sebelius: I can tell you, Congressman, that the President felt very strongly that that needed to be part of our outreach effort, which is why the Attorney General and I convened representatives of state Attorneys General, Insurance Commissioners, the U.S. Attorneys, and the Justice Department, and the Federal Trade Commission - which has jurisdiction - to make sure that we first got out ahead some of this, developing consumer outreach. No one should ever give personal health information because personal health information is not needed for these policies any longer. That is as red flag. We want to make sure that people turn over potential fraudulent acts. We have put training in place for navigators. We have our law enforcement folks doing outreach.

LOAD-DATE: October 31, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2013 Albuquerque Journal.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

CNN

October 30, 2013 Wednesday

SHOW: CNN NEWSROOM 11:30 AM EST

Congressional Hearing on Obamacare

SECTION: NEWS; Domestic

LENGTH: 4863 words

HIGHLIGHT: Kathleen Sebelius, secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, testifies before the House Energy and Commerce Committee regarding the Obamacare rollout.

REP. GREGG HARPER, (R), MISSISSIPPI: The president is ultimately responsible for -- for the rollout, ultimately? You work --

KATHLEEN SEBELIUS, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES SECRETARY: No, sir.

HARPER: OK. All right.

SEBELIUS: No, sir. We are responsible for the rollout.

HARPER: But who do you answer to?

SEBELIUS: I answer to the president.

HARPER: Is the president not ultimately responsible, like a company CEO would be?

SEBELIUS: Sir, he's the president of the United States. I have given him regular reports. And those -- I am responsible for the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. That's what he asked me to do and that's what I'll continue to do.

HARPER: So you're saying that the president is not responsible for HHS?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I didn't say that.

HARPER: OK. So the president ultimately is responsible. While I think that it's great that you're a team player and taking responsibility, it is the president's ultimate responsibility, correct?

SEBELIUS: You clearly -- whatever. Yes. He is the president. He is responsible for government programs.

HARPER: My time as expired.

REP. FRED UPTON, (R-MI), CHAIRMAN, HOUSE ENERGY AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE: Gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. **Lujan**?

REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN**, (D), NEW MEXICO: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. Before I begin, I would like to ask unanimous consent to submit into the record articles from New Mexico publications, "The Albuquerque Journal" and "The Albuquerque Business Journal," the first entitled "Small Business Owner: Health Exchange Will Save Me $1,000 a Month."

ROGER: Without objection.

LUJAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And I see my time did begin there. So I'll try to get through this.

Madame Secretary, I was intrigued by a line of questioning by Congressman Green asking questions about the individual marketplace. How volatile was the individual marketplace before the Affordable Care Act became law?

SEBELIUS: I would say it wasn't a marketplace at all. It was unprotected, unregulated, and people were really on their own.

LUJAN: Madame Secretary, the Kaiser Family Foundation reports that over 50 percent turn out of individuals that have coverage on the individual market turn out of coverage every year. Is that consistent with what you're aware of?

SEBELIUS: That's an accurate snapshot. About a third of the people are in for about six months and over half are in for a year or less.

LUJAN: So individuals that were in the individual marketplace before the package of the Affordable Care Act did not have the same protections as those that were in group coverage?

SEBELIUS: That's true.

LUJAN: And would those individuals in the individual marketplace sometimes have higher copays?

SEBELIUS: Higher copays, unlimited out-of-pocket costs for often coverage that was medically underwritten or excluded whatever medical condition they had in the first place.

LUJAN: These were typically one year contracted. If they used the plan, sometimes they would be thrown off their plans or their rates would go up?

SEBELIUS: Yes.

LUJAN: I think that's important to note, Madame Secretary. And I'm intrigued as well that my understanding is last month HHS conducted an analysis and found that nearly six out of 10 uninsured Americans getting coverage will pay less than $100 a month, is that correct?

SEBELIUS: They will have a plan available for less than $100 if that's their choice, yes.

LUJAN: And that number be would be higher and be better if more states chose the option of using federal funds to expand Medicaid to cover their low-income population?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Oh, very definitely. That's just a marketplace snapshot. Those are people who will be in the marketplace.

LUJAN: Madame Secretary, I don't think I've heard anyone from the other side of the aisle today, my Republican colleagues, ask you, how can Congress work with you and support you in fixing this website and fixing this problem. I hope that we all agree went this website fixed.

I would yield to anyone that would disagree.

Seeing no one accepting that. I'm glad to hear that we agree with this.

Now, Madame Secretary, what can Congress do to work with you to fix this website?

SEBELIUS: Well, I'm not sure that there is hands-on work that you can do. Maybe we have some technical expertise. But I would say getting accurate information to constituents is helpful. Letting people know that they can check out the facts and the law, that they may be entitled to some financial support. That cancelation of policies means that the policy that they had may not exist but they have a lot of choices of new policies and a law that says they must be insured in a new policy, that they don't have to be insured by their company at a higher price.

LUJAN: I appreciate that, Madame Secretary. Going back to the individual marketplace, did this Congress in previous years before the Affordable Care Act make it illegal for health insurance companies to raise rates on someone after they submitted a claim for going to the hospital or becoming sick or getting rid of preexisting conditions?

SEBELIUS: No, sir.

LUJAN: One last note here. It seems that we've received some horrible news that there are bad actors already taking place of fraudulent websites to imitate the health care exchange or misleading seniors to disclosing their personal information. I've signed on a letter to you to request that you prioritize fraud prevention efforts. What's the administration done to prevent these acts to protect personal information?

SEBELIUS: I can tell you, Congressman, that the president felt strongly that that needed to be part of our outreach effort, which is why the attorney general and I convened representatives of state attorneys general, insurance commissioners, the U.S. attorneys and the Justice Department and Federal Trade Commission, which has jurisdiction to make sure that we first got out ahead of some of this developing consumer outreach. No one should ever give personal health information. It's not needed for these policies any longer. That's a red flag. We want to make sure that people turn over potential fraudulent acts. We have put training in place for navigators. We have our law enforcement --

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Gentleman's time has expired. I would just note that we -- with the indulgence of the secretary, we're hoping that we can have all members ask some questions. We know that with four minutes we're going to have trouble. I'm going to ask unanimous consent that we try to limit our questions and answers to no more than two minutes.

And I've talked to Mr. Waxman.

Is that OK? Otherwise, we will -- they'll be a lot of folks who will not be allowed to ask questions at all.

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: And, Mr. Chairman, I would submit that if the questions get submitted, we would be happy to provide timely answers.

UPTON: OK. So with that, we'll try two minutes.

Mr. Lance?

REP. LEONARD LANCE, (R), NEW JERSEY: I guess I won the lottery on the two minutes --

(LAUGHTER)

-- Madame Secretary.

UPTON: Time is expired. OK.

(LAUGHTER)

LANCE: 20 seconds, Mr. Chairman.

On the website, Madame Secretary, the contractors testified last week that they need more than two weeks for end-to-end testing. Why, in your opinion, was there not more than two weeks?

SEBELIUS: Again, we had products. The insurance policies themselves by companies were loaded into the system. So we could test up until then. But it wasn't until September, mid-September, that that was done.

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: And again, the contractors said we would have loved more testing time, but we think we're ready to go ahead.

LANCE: I believe that will ultimately be a dispute between CMS and HHS and contractors. And if there's anything we can do regarding that, because obviously that didn't work. And I had thought, given this as the signature issue of the president, that the website would be ready.

Number two, in my judgment, the president's statements were overstatements. The four Pinocchios were an indication of that. There's a report in the New Jersey newspapers this morning that 800,000 people in New Jersey who purchased their policies in individual or small employer markets will be affected by this.

Mr. (INAUDIBLE), in a previous question, mentioned the fact that in an individual market you would be able to keep your policy grandfathered. Yet regulations issued by HHS say that grandfathered status would not be continued for so much as a $5 change in a copay. Is that accurate and do you believe that that is a significant change?

SEBELIUS: Sir, we gave, I think, in the grandfather regulations, a guide for how pricing could change, medical inflation, and I think it was in most cases, plus-15 percent. There were some individual consumer outfacing issues that were more ridged than that. But I would say that in terms of having companies being able to collect a profit margin, that was certainly built in to the grandfather status.

LANCE: I think that's two little a change (INAUDIBLE).

UPTON: Gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Tonko.

REP. PAUL TONKO, (D), NEW YORK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And welcome honorable secretary. Thank you for fielding our questions and for responding when you are extended the courtesy to offer a response.

As a strong supporter of the Affordable Care Act, I'm frustrated and I think it's fair to say that the American people are frustrated as well. And I heard you say many times this morning you're frustrated. I think by and large people want this law to work. When I talk to folks back home that I represent, even people who opposed the law initially aren't rooting for the failure of the Affordable Care Act. Instead, they want Congress to come together to fix these problems so we can move on to real issues that matter. My home state of New York, which also experienced website problems at the outset, has now completed enrollment on 150,000 New Yorkers, with more than that signing up.

Given that many states have had success overcoming these initial issues, has HHS looked at what it's doing and getting solutions for fixing it?

SEBELIUS: Absolutely. We shared a lot of the information going in. I think that the hub feature that we have in our website that all states are using, including the state of New York, is fully functional. And that's good news for the states running their own state websites. We are learning from them. We've shared information with them. And we are eager for all of the help and assistant moving forward.

TONKO: Many stated made the choice of rejecting Medicaid expansion that would help some of the poor steps get access to the health care. Can you comment broadly on HHS's plan in the future to encourage more states to run their own marketplaces and expand Medicaid so the law can function as it's designed?

SEBELIUS: Absolutely. Most recently, last week, the state of Ohio did move into the Medicaid market. And we now have 30 governors. I think 27 states have fully completed the process. Another three are in the process. Republicans and Democrats who -- some of who sued us about the constitutionality of the act, who are now deciding that for the citizens of their state, they want to be part of the expanding Medicaid. And we will continue to have those conversations. It's not just about the marketplace. It's also about Medicaid.

TONKO: Thank you very much.

UPTON: The gentleman's time is expired.

Mr. Cassidy -- Dr. Cassidy?

REP. BILL CASSIDY, (R), LOUISIANA: You said that only if an individual policy is only canceled if it changes significantly. But to be clear, after May 2010, if coinsurance went up by any amount, even by a dollar, according to your regulations, that would not qualified as a grandfathered clause. Just to have that out there for the record. I gather even by a dollar.

That said, I get a letter from someone in my district, Adrienne (ph). She says that she lost her coverage. She lost her coverage because spousal coverage is gone. She's going on the exchange and doesn't qualify for a subsidiary. But her premium and out-of-pocket costs under any plan is $10,000 a year. She writes this. She feels betrayed by her government. She has to sit there asking herself, is this fair? If you were she, do you think that this would be fair?

SEBELIUS: Dr. Cassidy, I want to start by the amount that you gave is not accurate. It told $5 not $1.

CASSIDY: That's for the copay, not for the coinsurance. For the coinsurance it's any amount. But I have limited time. Do you think that it's fair -- if you were she, if you were Adrianne (ph), do you think this is fair? Losses her spousal coverage, now it's 10K, no subsidies?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I don't have any idea what she's looking at. I can tell you, again, that what we've seen in the market and in the plans, people will be getting full insurance for the first time at --

(CROSSTALK)

CASSIDY: Again, this is what she reports. If what she reports is true, do you think it's fair?

SEBELIUS: I can't answer fair or not fair. I don't know what she was paying or what --

(CROSSTALK)

CASSIDY: That's OK. Let's move on.

SEBELIUS: Did she have full insurance in --

CASSIDY: Richard writes that his daughter received a note that the premium is going up because she's being lumped with older costlier patients. Now it's possible that only those that will sign up will be more costly. Does HHS have plans on what to do if that happens and premiums rise for everybody?

SEBELIUS: I think that's what we're trying to make sure that --

(CROSSTALK)

CASSIDY: But if only the costly sign up, do you have plans?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: That's of the importance of individual mandate that you've just out lined. Getting rid of preexisting conditions --

(CROSSTALK)

CASSIDY: But if only the more costly sign up, do you have backup plans?

SEBELIUS: We will encourage others to sign up. It's why there is a penalty and --

(CROSSTALK)

CASSIDY: Is this to assume there are no back-up plans --

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Yarmuth?

REP. JOHN YARMUTH, (D), KENTUCKY: Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Madame Secretary, nice to see you.

I come to this hearing with a little bit different perspective. Kentucky is doing a great job with our exchange. As of this morning we had 350,000 people who have explored the website. 59,000 started applications. 31,000 are fully enrolled in new coverage and 5,000 just in the last week. And I think very importantly more than 400 businesses have gun applying for their employees as well. The idea that somehow this is going to be bad for businesses is not born out in Kentucky.

Would it be safe to say that if 36 states had done what Kentucky and New York and California had done that the rollout would have been much smoother and the website would have been much easier to construct?

SEBELIUS: I don't think there's any question that in January of 2013 we knew how many states were not running their own website. In, I think, mid-February, we learned about partnerships. So it was northwest until that point that we learned that 36 stated -- having said that, we should have anticipated and planned better. That's not an excuse. But we clearly are running a different vehicle for enrollment than we thought we were going to run in March of 2010. YARMUTH: On the subject of cancelation of policies. Isn't it true that the federal government can't require insurance companies to sell insurance?

SEBELIUS: That they can't?

YARMUTH: The federal government can't require insurance companies to sell insurance?

SEBELIUS: Yes. Yes, sir.

YARMUTH: And, in fact, insurance companies all over the country are making difficult decisions now about where they want to participate and where they don't. And in some markets, they're trying to get out of the market, canceling people because they want to play in other markets and so forth. They're all making those decisions now.

SEBELIUS: Well, we know we have more insurers, 25 percent more insurers in the individual market than we did prior to the law being passed.

YARMUTH: So there a lot of dynamics going on here that are not necessarily an indication that the president misled anybody. There are business decisions being made all over now?

SEBELIUS: Now in cancelation of policies, again, the one-year contract notice is routine in the individual market. It has been in place for years. And for a lot of people, they are policies now, they're being canceled because they're being notified that you can no longer be medically underwritten. We can't charge you more because you're a woman. We won't ever have the kind of limitation on what your policy can pay out or charge exorbitant out-of-pocket rates. Those policies will cease to be offered in the marketplace.

UPTON: Gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Guthrie.

REP. BRETT GUTHRIE, (R), KENTUCKY: Thank you, Madame Secretary, for being here.

Last week, Mr. Lauh (ph) from Sirco (ph) was here. I know the president has talked about the alternatives to the website, his phone call, calling or using paper application, and what he said, and I think you said it, they take the paper application but enter it into the same web portal. But also, there are still issues with data within the web portal. As you said, you can't get reliable data who has even signed up. He also said, because of the surge in paper applications, it's like six to eight weeks to process. If November 30th is when this will be ready, they can use and somebody does lose their insurance so they're signing up to this and they get to January 1st, even though you have a March 31st open enrollment, is there a contingency plan for these people to continue their insurance?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I think that we have improvements every day on the speed of the site. Sirco (ph) was giving you early snapshots of difficulty of accessing the site. I think that's greatly improved.

GUTHRIE: They said just processing the paper, actually.

SEBELIUS: I understand. But it is the site for dash they put the application into the site and get a determination. That's part of what the process is. So the site is part of the portal all the way through. This is an integrated insurance vehicle. And so that will improve. And we, again, with four months of continuous service, which is far longer than most people had, some of these cancelation numbers, Mr. Garrity (ph), again, pointed this out from Florida BlueCross, but it's true of everyone else. These are not January 1st numbers. They are year-long numbers. So over the course of 2014 when an individual's policy is due to expire --

(CROSSTALK)

GUTHRIE: But somebody's could expire January 1st and not be able to get coverage in the website -- and the vendors said they needed and liked to have months and months to test. If we're going to --

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I would say we're testing as we go. This is beta testing going on right now. That's why we're fixing and how we can identify things. People are getting through every day.

GUTHRIE: But the paper process, if it takes four weeks, November 30th and people canceling on January 1st, there needs to be contingency for that person.

SEBELIUS: Well, again, typical insurance is two to four weeks of signup. They will have two full months of signup.

UPTON: Gentleman's time has expired.

Ms. Schakowsky?

REP. JAN SCHAKOWSKY, (D), ILLINOIS: Thank you, Madame Secretary, for bringing to millions of Americans access to affordable, comprehensive health care coverage that's going to be there when they that's going to be there.

I want to thank you especially as a woman. Being a woman can no longer be considered a pre-existing condition. Women can no longer be charged more than a man for coverage. Women have access to prescription drugs, free preventive screenings and free maternity care which is often left out of coverage. And the days of complicated pregnancy or diabetes or domestic violence being a pre-existing conditions, those days are over.

You know, I want to say to my colleagues, after a three-and-a-half year campaign to repeal to discredit, to even shut down the government over Obamacare, I want to say get over it. We all agree that there are problems, but these are problems that I see being fixed.

And so I want to ask one -- I want to say that what we did under Medicare Part D can be an example of how we can work together. And in fact, Chairman Upton and I both sent a letter asking for more money for community-based groups to help implement the program and make it work. We can work together.

So if you could just briefly say, how are the navigators, how important are they in making this system work for the American people?

SEBELIUS: Well, what we know, Congresswoman, is that a lot of people are not web savvy and are not frustrated because they don't trust a computer, they need a live human being to ask questions, get questions answered, talk about the plan, talk about insurance. So the navigators play a hugely important role. We have about 2500 trained navigators on the ground right now. We have thousands more community assisters trained and ready to go. About 45,000 agents and brokers have gone through Affordable Care Act training. But those individuals working with their clients, customers and, in the case of navigators and community assisters, is just the public at large. They are not paid by a company. They are not collecting a fee. They just want to help people get coverage. They're hugely important.

UPTON: The gentlelady's time.

Mr. Olson.

REP. PETE OLSON, (R), TEXAS: Welcome, Madame Secretary.

I'd like to open with a quote from an American icon and hold up a poster. It says, "If the user is having a problem, it's our problem."

I'm glad to hear that you embrace this is philosophy during your testimony today, ma'am.

Obamacare was signed into law 1,256 days ago. And since then, there's been user problem after user problem after user problem. Regarding healthcare.gov, your deputy administrator for consumer information, Gary Cohen, testified one month ago, right where you're sitting that, and this a quote, "CMS has worked hard to test the infrastructure that will allow Americans to enroll in coverage confidently, simply, and securely," end quote.

Yet, according to Forbes, and the "Wall Street Journal," you told them that you need five years of construction and one year of testing. The program has crashed and burned at least three times. And the user is still having problems.

Get up here, ma'am.

It's been down the whole time you've been testifying. The system is down at this moment.

My question, ma'am, is very simple: When did you know the exchanges were going down, a month, a day, a quarter, and did you tell the president what you knew?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I was informed that we were ready to launch on October 1st. The contractors, who we had as our private partners, told us and told this committee that have they had never suggested a delay, and that is accurate. Our CMS team felt we were ready to go. I told the president that we were ready to go. Clearly, I was wrong. We were wrong. We knew that in any big new complicated system, there would be problems. No one ever imagined the volume of issues and problems that we've had. And we must fix it.

OLSON: Yes, ma'am. Credible journalists said you knew you needed six years to get this program --

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: That quote has been repeated. I can guarantee I would have never stated that because the law was passed in March of 2010. I chose the open enrollment date. I don't know where that quote comes from, but that is not from me.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Barrow?

REP. JOHN BARROW, (D), GEORGIA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks for attending today, Madame Secretary.

I suspect deep down most people on this committee accept the concept of the performing insurance markets so more people have access to better insurance coverage. We have disagreements about the means used to get to those ends which is why I voted against the Affordable Care Act.

It seems every day we're hearing of something new going wrong. I'm many concerned the long-term enrollment problems could be market problems. My students are losing confidence. The way to restore their trust is to delay the penalties till we're sure the system is going to work. It's not fair to penalize consumers. We also need to take the time to make sure fits and starts won't cause larger problems.

Right now, I'm less concerned about who's to blame and what went wrong and how to fix it and we'll assure it doesn't happen again.

Nearly all of our constituents want and need health insurance. It would be a huge mistake if we're so blinded by our love or hatred of Obamacare that we miss opportunities to address its flaws.

To the subject of technical problems becoming market problems. Can problems of folks getting into the system snowball into risk pool problems where those who choose not to enroll can actually affect the cost of those who do choose to enroll?

SEBELIUS: Certainly, a risk pool needs a balanced market. So you need people who are older and sicker to be balanced with people who are younger and healthier. That's how a pool works.

BARROW: At what point are we going to see a problem having the risk pool if the tech problems affect the folks entering? What are we going to look for? What are we going to use to decide something needs to be done?

SEBELIUS: Well, again, sir, we be monitoring during the six months of open enrollment as will our insurance partners who is coming into the pool. That's why we want to give this committee and others reliable, informed data about not only who it is but what the demographics are and where they live.

BARROW: If things aren't better by the end of this next month, at what point will we start thinking about further delays and imposing penalties?

SEBELIUS: Again, I think having a defined open enrollment period is one of the ways you make an assessment if you have a pool that works or not. You can't have an unlimited open enrollment period with any insurance company because that really doesn't work.

BARROW: Thank you.

UPTON: Mr. McKinley.

REP. DAVID MCKINLEY, (R), WEST VIRGINIA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Last week, CGI representative Campbell said that she had met her contract obligations and specifications. And she said the only problem she had was pace. But the pace wasn't part of the specification. Do you -- and we asked her what you would testify to. Did -- she said you would testify that she did complete her contract in accordance with the specifications. Would you?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I don't think until the product is working the way it's designed to work that anybody has finished their job. That's really my --

MCKINLEY: I'm sorry. They've shortened our time.

So if she hasn't met their specifications but yet we're still using her, is the American taxpayer still paying money to fix the problems that she didn't do and her company didn't do appropriately in the first place?

SEBELIUS: None of our contractors have been paid the amount of their --

MCKINLEY: Will she be paid for this work into the future as we go to correct this problem?

SEBELIUS: We will make that determination as the work goes forward. I would tell you as we learn what needs to be fixed --

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: -- we'll know more about whether they delivered.

MCKINLEY: I'm very sorry, the time frame. I'm sorry but the time frame has been cut down.

Who owns the software now, now that this has been developed with taxpayer money to develop the software to do this?

SEBELIUS: It is owned by the Centers for Medicare, Medicaid Services.

MCKINLEY: So it's all owned by us. OK. Will they be able to use it by a license for other clients?

SEBELIUS: Not to my knowledge. I think it is specifically designed for the marketplace with these products in mind.

MCKINLEY: Then the last question --

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: And the clients are the American public.

MCKINLEY: -- that under I.V. & V, and she testified that she thought that was something we should have done. Under HHS, you recommend or the HHS recommends that for software development that they should you have an independent verification validation program, but it wasn't used in this case. Can you share with us -- the time is gone -- why we didn't use I.V. and V on something as crucial as this?

SEBELIUS: Again, I don't think that's accurate. At every point along the way, there is independent testing --

MCKINLEY: Independent?

SEBELIUS: Yes.

MCKINLEY: You recommend --

SEBELIUS: An outside --

MCKINLEY: -- independent testing and validation, not someone within your staff.

SEBELIUS: Pardon me. There is a level of company self-attested testing. There is a level of CMS testing and then there is an independent test on each piece of the contracting. An independent not --

(CROSSTALK)

MCKINLEY: What she's done independently. And that's what --

UPTON: Gentleman's time --

MCKINLEY: It needs to be done independently. People that do not have --

UPTON: -- has expired.

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: No, it isn't CMS. I will get you the information. One of the three levels of testing. One of them is independent for every piece of this contracting, yes.

UPTON: Mrs. Castor.

REP. KATHY CASTOR, D-FLA.: Good morning.

When open enrollment began a few weeks ago the people back home in Florida who are helping neighbors sort through the new options for coverage, the navigators, were taken aback by how grateful people are to have new pathway to the doctor's office and the care they need.

LOAD-DATE: October 31, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

TRANSCRIPT: 103006CN.V11

DOCUMENT-TYPE: SHOW

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Transcript

Copyright 2013 Cable News Network
All Rights Reserved

426 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 30, 2013

LUJAN QUESTIONS HHS SECRETARY SEBELIUS ON AFFORDABLE CARE ACT;
Highlights Improvements and Protections to Consumers in Individual Marketplace Under the Law;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 904 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee participated in a hearing today in which Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius testified on the Affordable Care Act. Below is a transcript of **Lujan's** exchange with the Secretary, in which they discussed important consumer protections under the law and their commitment to preventing and combating fraud.

Lujan: Madam Secretary, I was intrigued by a line of questioning by Congressman [Gene] Green asking questions about the individual marketplace. How volatile was the individual marketplace before the Affordable Care Act became law?

Sebelius: I would say it wasn't a marketplace at all. It was unprotected, unregulated, and people were really on their own.

Lujan: Madam Secretary, the Kaiser Family Foundation reports that over 50 percent churn - out of individuals that have coverage in the individual market - churn out of coverage every year. They lose coverage, they are priced out, or drop it. Is that consistent with what you are aware of?

Sebelius: That is an accurate snapshot. About a third of the people are in for about 6 months and over half are in for a year or less.

Lujan: So individuals that were in the individual marketplace before the passage of the Affordable Care Act did not have the same protections as those that were in group coverage?

Sebelius: That's true.

Lujan: And would those individuals in the individual marketplace sometimes have higher copays?

Sebelius: Higher copays, unlimited out-of-pocket costs for often coverage that was medically underwritten or excluded whatever medical condition they had in the first place.

Lujan: So these were typically one-year contracts. If they use the plan because they got sick or in a car accident or a victim of domestic violence, sometimes they would be thrown off their plan or their rates would go up?

Sebelius: Yes.

Lujan: I think that's important to note, Madam Secretary. And I'm intrigued, as well, that my understanding is last month HHS conducted an analysis that found that nearly 6 out of 10 uninsured Americans getting coverage through the marketplace will pay less than $100 per month. Is that correct?

Sebelius: They will have a plan available for less than $100 if that's their choice, yes.

Lujan: And that number would be even higher - would be better - if more states chose the option of using federal funds to expand Medicaid to cover their low-income population?

Sebelius: Very definitely. That's just a marketplace snapshot. Those are people who will be in the marketplace.

Lujan: Madam Secretary, I don't think that I've heard anyone from the other side of the aisle today, my Republican colleagues, ask you, "How can Congress work with you and support you in fixing this website and fixing this problem." I hope that we all agree we want this website fixed. I would yield to anyone that would disagree. Seeing no one accepting that, I am glad to hear that we agree with this. Now Madam Secretary, what can Congress do to work with you to fix this website?

Sebelius: Well, I'm not sure that there is hands-on work that you can do; maybe we have some technical expertise. But I would say getting accurate information to constituents is helpful, letting people know that they can check out the facts in the law, that they may be entitled to some financial support, that cancelation of policies means that the policy they had may not exist but they have a lot of choices of new policies and a law that now says they must be insured in a new policy - that they don't have to be insured by their company at a higher price.

Lujan: I appreciate that Madam Secretary. Going back to the individual marketplace, Madam Secretary, did this Congress in previous years before the Affordable Care Act make it illegal for health insurance companies to raise rates on someone after they submitted a claim for going to the hospital or becoming sick or getting rid of pre-existing conditions.

Sebelius: No sir.

Lujan: Madam Secretary, one last note here. It seems that we've received some horrible news that there are bad actors already taking place - fraudulent websites that imitate the health care exchange or misleading seniors into disclosing their personal information. I've signed onto a letter to you, led by my colleague Representative Raul Ruiz out of California, to request that you prioritize fraud prevention efforts. What has the administration done to prevent these fraudulent acts and protect personal information?

Sebelius: I can tell you, Congressman, that the President felt very strongly that that needed to be part of our outreach effort, which is why the Attorney General and I convened representatives of state Attorneys General, Insurance Commissioners, the U.S. Attorneys, and the Justice Department, and the Federal Trade Commission - which has jurisdiction - to make sure that we first got out ahead some of this, developing consumer outreach. No one should ever give personal health information because personal health information is not needed for these policies any longer. That is as red flag. We want to make sure that people turn over potential fraudulent acts. We have put training in place for navigators. We have our law enforcement folks doing outreach.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/luj%C3%A1n-questions-hhs-secretary-sebelius-on-affordable-care-act/

LOAD-DATE: October 31, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMA

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Copyright 2013 CQ Transcriptions, LLC
All Rights Reserved
CQ Transcriptions

All materials herein are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of CQ Transcriptions. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.

REP. FRED UPTON HOLDS A HEARING ON AFFORDABLE CARE ACT AND HEALTH CARE ENROLLMENT

October 30, 2013 Wednesday

EVENT DATE: **October 30, 2013**

TYPE: COMMITTEE HEARING

LOCATION: WASHINGTON, D.C.

COMMITTEE: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

SPEAKER: REP. FRED UPTON, CHAIRMAN

WITNESSES:
REP. FRED UPTON, R-MICH. CHAIRMAN
REP. HENRY A. WAXMAN, D-CALIF. RANKING MEMBER
WITNESSES: KATHLEEN SEBELIUS, SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
REP. MARSHA BLACKBURN, R-TENN.
REP. JOHN D. DINGELL, D-MICH.
REP. JOE L. BARTON, R-TEXAS
REP. FRANK PALLONE JR., D-N.J.
REP. RALPH M. HALL, R-TEXAS
REP. ANNA G. ESHOO, D-CALIF.
REP. JOHN SHIMKUS, R-ILL.
REP. ELIOT L. ENGEL, D-N.Y.
REP. JOE PITTS, R-PA.
REP. GENE GREEN, D-TEXAS
REP. GREG WALDEN, R-ORE.

REP. DIANA DEGETTE, D-COLO.
REP. LEE TERRY, R-NEB.
REP. LOIS CAPPS, D-CALIF.
REP. MIKE ROGERS, R-MICH.
REP. MIKE DOYLE, D-PA.
REP. TIM MURPHY, R-PA.
REP. G.K. BUTTERFIELD, D-N.C.
REP. MICHAEL C. BURGESS, R-TEXAS
REP. DORIS MATSUI, D-CALIF.
REP. PHIL GINGREY, R-GA.
REP. KATHY CASTOR, D-FLA. DEL. DONNA M.C. CHRISTENSEN, D-VIRGIN IS.
REP. STEVE SCALISE, R-LA.
REP. JERRY MCNERNEY, D-CALIF.
REP. BOB LATTA, R-OHIO
REP. BRUCE BRALEY, D-IOWA
REP. GREGG HARPER, R-MISS.
REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M.
REP. LEONARD LANCE, R-N.J.
REP. PAUL TONKO, D-N.Y.
REP. BILL CASSIDY, R-LA.
REP. JOHN YARMUTH, D-KY.
REP. BRETT GUTHRIE, R-KY.
REP. JAN SCHAKOWSKY, D-ILL.
REP. PETE OLSON, R-TEXAS
REP. JOHN BARROW, D-GA.
REP. DAVID B. MCKINLEY, R-W.VA.
REP. KATHY CASTOR, D-FLA. DEL. DONNA M.C. CHRISTENSEN, D-VIRGIN IS.
REP. CORY GARDNER, R-COLO.
REP. JIM MATHESON, D-UTAH
REP. MIKE POMPEO, R-KAN.
REP. PETER WELCH, D-VT.
REP. ADAM KINZINGER, R-ILL.
REP. JOHN SARBANES, D-MD.
REP. MORGAN GRIFFITH, R-VA.
REP. GUS BILIRAKIS, R-FLA.
REP. BILL JOHNSON, R-OHIO
REP. BILLY LONG, R-MO.
REP. RENEE ELLMERS, R-N.C.
REP. CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS, R-WASH.
REP. CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS, R-WASH.

TEXT:

UPTON: Good morning.

The Energy and Commerce Committee welcomes the president's point person on health care, Secretary Sebelius, as part of our continuing oversight of the health care law.

And we look forward to a thoughtful conversation on a number of issues including transparency and fairness. Over the months leading up to October 1 launch, the secretary and her colleagues at HHS repeatedly looked us in the eye and testified that everything was on track. And despite the numerous red flags and lack of testing, they assured us that all systems were a go.

But something happened along the way. Either those officials did not know how bad the situation was, or they did not disclose it.

And, sadly, here we are now, five weeks into enrollment and the news seems to get worse by the day. Healthcare.gov was down last night at 5:00 p.m. It was also down on Monday, and it crashed last weekend.

And even this morning when we attempted to view the site before the hearing, we were hit with an error message.

But this is more than just a Web site problem. That was supposed to be the easy part, remember? Americans were assured that their experience would be similar to other online transactions, like purchasing a flight or ordering a pizza, and that their sensitive personal information would always be secure.

But, after more than three years to prepare, malfunctions have become the norm, and the administration has pivoted from saying they're on track to setting a new target date of November 30th.

And for those few Americans who have successfully applied, will the Web site glitches become provider glitches come January 1st?

Americans are scared and frustrated, and this situation should rise above politics. Many folks at home watching us today have spent hours or even days trying to sign up. They continue to take time away from work or loved ones, but have made little progress.

And soon they may worry about being on the wrong side of their government, facing potential penalties.

I recently spoke to a woman from Buchanan (ph), Michigan, who was excited to sign up, but has since become very disillusioned after spending hours on the phone and Web site with little success.

There are also millions of Americans coast to coast who no doubt believe that the president's repeated promises that if they liked their plan that they would be able to keep it, no matter what.

They are now receiving termination notices. And for those who lose their coverage, they, like -- they may be losing their faith in their government.

Today's hearing is about fairness for the American people who are losing their coverage or seeing their premiums skyrocket as high as 400 percent.

This hearing is also about transparency. While the administration continues to boast the number of Americans that have applied, they intentionally withhold precise enrollment numbers.

Why? These numbers are critical to fully understand the status and gauging the progress of implementation.

Lead contractor, CGI, testified only last week that they had the data, but needed the administration's permission to release it.

We asked the secretary on October 8th for those figures, but we still have not received a response. We hope to get one today. The American people deserve answers as well as the peace of mind that promises will be kept. The secretary has an opportunity today to embrace transparency and start restoring the public's faith in the administration and the government.

I yield to my colleague, ranking member of the committee, Mr. Waxman.

WAXMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm pleased Secretary Sebelius is here today. She's here to discuss the Affordable Care Act. Just like with Medicare Part D, the launch of the new Web site has not gone well. But, just like Medicare Part D, the early glitches in this rollout will soon be forgotten.

A lot of the discussion today will focus on that Web site. This is an important issue, and I want to learn what the secretary can tell us about the problems being experienced and how they will be fixed.

But we should keep this issue in perspective. The Affordable Care Act is working. It has been improving the health security of millions of Americans for the past three years.

Because of the Affordable Care Act, more than 7 million people on Medicare have saved more than $8 billion on their prescription drugs. More than 100 million Americans have access to free preventive coverage and no longer face lifetime limits on their coverage. Over 10 million Americans have received rebates from insurance companies.

And, finally, this January, the worst abuses of insurance industry will be halted. Never again will a family be denied coverage because their child has a chronic health condition. Never again will individuals see their premiums shoot up because they got sick or faced an unexpected medical expense. Never again will a woman have to pay twice as much as a man for the same insurance.

That is why allowing insurers to continue offering deficient plans next year is such a bad policy. The law says that all plans except those that were grandfathered in 2010 must meet the new consumer protection standards.

If we don't enforce this policy, insurance companies can continue offering flimsy coverage that disappears when people actually need it, and no one should want that.

It is understandable that there will be a focus today on what isn't working, but we must also remember what is working. The health insurance plans that are being offered in the exchanges are good plans. Their premiums are much lower than expected. Sixty percent of the uninsured individuals shopping in the new marketplaces will be able to get coverage for less than $100 per month. Half of the young adults will be able to get coverage for less than $50 per month.

And since Congress adopted the Affordable Care Act, health care costs across the whole economy have grown at their lowest level in decades.

The success of the Affordable Care Act is due to the efforts of many people, but one individual more than any other is responsible for all the good that has been accomplished, and that is our witness today, Secretary Sebelius.

WAXMAN: So I would urge my colleagues to stop hyperventilating. The problems with healthcare.gov are unfortunate and we should investigate them, but they will be fixed. And then every American will have -- finally have access to affordable health insurance.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Thank you.

Before we swear in Secretary Sebelius, I want to clarify Energy and Commerce Committee practice for the swearing in of witnesses.

The committee typically has two types of hearings, oversight hearings and hearings that focus on legislation and policy.

Secretary Sebelius, for example, has testified previously before our committee to discuss issues related to the HHS budget or other policy matters. As is the case with all policy witnesses, Secretary Sebelius was not required to take an oath prior to testifying.

Today's hearing is different. It is an oversight hearing. It is a long standing committee practice to swear in all witnesses at oversight hearings whether they be private citizens or cabinet secretaries.

WAXMAN: Mr. Chairman, I thank you for your comments. And I just want to join you in simply explaining that it -- swearing in of the witness before an oversight committee hearing has always been under oath.

That is a standard procedure in this committee when we're conducting an oversight hearing, so it may seem strange to have the secretary of Health and Human Services have to be sworn in, but all witnesses in an oversight hearing are sworn in and that is our procedure.

UPTON: Thank you.

So I would now like to introduce our witness for today's hearing. The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius is the secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. She was appointed to this position in April of 2009 and was sworn in as the 21st secretary on April 28th, 2009.

So I will now swear you in if you would rise.

As Ranking Waxman and I just discussed, the committee is holding an investigative hearing and when doing so have had the practice of taking testimony under oath.

Do you have any objection to testifying under oath?

SEBELIUS: (Inaudible).

UPTON: And the chair now advises you that you are -- see -- I would now read you -- do you swear that the testimony you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

SEBELIUS: (Inaudible).

UPTON: You are now under oath and subject to penalties set forth in Title 18, Section 1001 of the U.S. Code. You may now give a five- minute summary of your written statement.

Welcome again and thank you for being here.

You got to use that mike. You don't know how many people want to hear you this morning.

(LAUGHTER)

SEBELIUS: Thank you, Chairman Upton, Ranking Member Waxman, members of the committee.

I left my position as governor of Kansas 41/2 years ago for the opportunity to continue work I've been doing for most of my over 35 years of public service, to expand the opportunities for all Americans regardless of geography or gender or income to have affordable health coverage.

During my years as the state legislator, as an elected insurance commissioner, as head of the National Association of Insurance Commissioners and as a two-term governor and now as HHS secretary, I have worked on that effort that I care deeply about.

There are still millions of Americans who are uninsured as well as underinsured, people who have some coverage at some price for some illness but have no real protection from financial ruin and no real confidence they'll be able to take care of themselves and their families if they have an accident or an illness. And for them a new day has finally come.

In these early weeks, access to healthcare.gov has been a miserably frustrating experience for way too many Americans including many who have waited years, in some cases their entire lives for the

security of health insurance. I am as frustrated and angry as anyone with the flawed launch of healthcare.gov.

So let me say directly to these Americans, you deserve better. I apologize. I'm accountable to you for fixing these problems. And I'm committed to earning your confidence back by fixing the site. We're working day and night and will continue until it's fixed.

We've recently added new management talent, additional technical expertise and a new general contractor to identify, prioritize and manage fixes across the system in two broad categories: performance, which deals with speed and reliability and function, which deals with bugs and problems in the system.

Our extensive assessment has determined that healthcare.gov is fixable. And I want to just outline a couple of the improvements we've made to date.

We now have more users successfully creating accounts. We can process up to 17,000 account registrations per hour or nearly five per second.

Instead of some of the users seeing a blank screen at the end of the application process, they can now see whether they're eligible for financial assistance and make more informed decisions.

Because we've improved performance, customers can now shop for plans quickly; filtering plans takes seconds and not minutes. Users are getting fewer errors and time-out messages as they move through the application process and the system has been strengthened with double the size of servers, software that's better optimized and a high-capacity physical database which replaces a virtual system.

The chairman referred to outages this weekend and again yesterday. And I would suggest to the committee that if you read the statement of Verizon who hosts the cloud service, it is the Verizon server that failed, not healthcare.gov, and it affected not only HHS but other customers.

We still have a lot of work to do. We have a plan in place to address key outstanding issues. It includes fixing bugs in software that prevented it from working the way it's supposed to and refreshing the user experience so folks can navigate the site without encountering error messages, time out and slow response times.

And by the end of November, we're committed that the vast majority of users will be able to review their options, shop for plans and enroll in coverage without the problems way too many have being experiencing.

But consumers are using the site every day and continue to do so. And problems are being solved. But we know that we don't have a fully functioning system that consumers need and deserve. We are still at the beginning of a six-month open enrollment which extends through the end of March and there's plenty of time to sign up.

And just to put it in perspective, the average open enrollment for an insurance plan is two to four weeks. The new marketplace has a 26-week open enrollment and those who enroll by December 15th will be able to access their benefits on day one.

Even with the unacceptable problems with healthcare.gov, which we are committed to fixing, the Affordable Care Act by any fair measure is working for millions of Americans who are benefiting from new health security, young adults, Americans living with pre-existing health conditions, seniors on Medicare.

Eighty-five percent of Americans who already have health coverage are protected with new rights and benefits.

The 15 percent of our neighbors and friends who are uninsured have affordable new options in a competitive market and cost growth for health care is lower than it's been in years. Millions of Americans are clearly eager to learn about their options and to finally achieve health security made possible by the Affordable Care Act.

And my commitment is to deliver on that promise.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Well, thank you very much.

Yes, if you -- the mike got pulled a little bit from you.

Yes, let's start this clock. Can you fix that? (Inaudible).

I appreciate you being here this morning and we've worked with our leadership to see that we don't have votes on the House floor this morning so we won't be interrupted.

I appreciate your time for sure and in an effort to allow every member to ask a question, we're going to be reducing the time for questions to be just four minutes, so hopefully we can get through all the members that are here. And I'm going to be pretty fast with the gavel, let me just say.

So we have got plenty of questions. So let's try and get through them.

(Inaudible).

You know, I think everyone in America remembers the president's words. If you like your health care plan, you can keep it, period. Under the Affordable Care Act insurance policies that were in effect on March 23rd, 2010, when the law was enacted, would be grandfathered.

Then a few months later, despite the president's word, HHS helped promulgate a new reg that in your own review showed that it effectively could deny perhaps as many as more than 50 percent, maybe even higher, of those holding individual policies the right to renew their own insurance plan.

UPTON: And I would guess that there are a lot of us on this panel today that are hearing from angry and confused constituents who are now being forced to go onto an inept website, whether they like it or not, to shop for a new replacement policy. They're finding premiums often more than 100 percent what they were paying before, some even as high as 400 percent, as I've heard from, and rising deductibles as well.

So when was the president specifically informed of the regulation change? And if so, was it pointed out that this totally undermines his biggest selling point? And I would note, that on the screen, in a statement that he made more than three years after the regulation change was promulgated, the President said again, "So the first thing you need to know is this. If you already have health care, you don't have to do anything." So he's been on the same page from the very start, yet the regulations changed months after the bill was enacted that are now causing perhaps millions of Americans to be denied the ability to renew their individual coverage.

Why was that change made, and did the President know it?

SEBELIUS: Well Mr. Chairman, there was no change. The regulation involving grandfathered plans, which applied to both the employer market and the individual market indicated that if a plan that was in effect in March of 2010 stayed in effect without unduly burdening the consumer with reducing benefits and adding on huge costs, that plan would stay in effect and never have to comply with any of the regulations of the Affordable Care Act. That's what the grandfather clause said. The individual market which affects about 12 million Americans, about 5 percent of the market, people move in and out, they often have coverage for less than a year. A third of them have coverage for about six

months, and if a plan was in place of March of 2010 and again, did not impose additional burdens on the consumer, they still have it. It's grandfathered in.

UPTON: But why not let the consumer decide whether they want to renew it or not? Why was -- why were regulations promulgated in the summer of 2010 that then undermined the ability for those folks to re- sign up, which is one of the reasons for the large number of cancellation notes?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: And there were no regulations changed We outlined the grandfather policy so people could keep their own plan. We then began to implement the other features of the Affordable Care Act, so if someone is buying a brand new policy in the individual market today, or last week, they will have consumer protections for the first time. Many people in the under -- individual market are medically underwritten. That will be illegal. Many women are charged 50 percent more than men. That will be illegal. You cannot, again, eliminate someone because of a pre-existing health condition. You cannot dump someone out or lock someone out, so those provisions. But if again, a plan is in place, and was in place at the time that the President signed the bill and the consumer wants to keep the plan, those individuals are grandfathered in and that's happening across the country in the individual market.

UPTON: We're learning in fact that folks who did have a plan who liked it in fact are being told that it's canceled in the -- in the last -- my time is expired. Let me yield to the Ranking Member, Mr. Waxman for four minutes.

WAXMAN: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I have to smile at your line of questioning because everybody expected this hearing was about the website. That's all we've been hearing about is the website. But that's not the only complaint we've been hearing about since the Affordable Care Act was adopted. We were told by our Republican friends that millions of jobs would be lost and in fact, there have been a gain of 7 million jobs. They said that they -- the -- the cost for health care would skyrocket, and in fact, the opposite is true. They said there would be a massive shift to part-time jobs, and the evidence doesn't support that. They said tens of millions will lose their insurance, but in fact, everybody in this country has got to have access to health insurance because they won't be discriminated against. They said that it would explode the deficit, and yet all the reputable organizations like the Congressional Budget Office have told us that it's going to save us $100 billion over 10 years, so we've had a litany of objections for the Republicans about the Affordable Care Act which have driven them to such a frenzy they even closed the government.

So now we have you before the committee. And you're being asked, I suppose later you'll be asked about the website. But let me pursue this question about individuals who have gotten notices, that they're going to have their individual insurance policies canceled. They'll be able to get another plan, won't they?

SEBELIUS: Actually, it's the law that they must get another plan. Continuous coverage is part of the law.

WAXMAN: So the ...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: That wasn't the case in the past.

WAXMAN: So the Affordable Care Act said we're going to end the worst abuses of insurance companies. We're going to create consumer protections in the marketplace that they will be able to buy a policy even if they've been sick in the past. That women won't be charged more than me. That we're not going to let insurance companies deny coverage because of pre-existing conditions, and we're not going to let them put these lifetime caps. And there'll be an essential benefit package, so you're not just buying some things and not having other things covered. You're going to have the minimum that everybody should have, prescription drugs, mental health coverage, doctors and hospitals. Are these important consumer protections?

SEBELIUS: Well I would say, Mr. Waxman, they're very important. As a former insurance commissioner, I can tell you that the individual market in Kansas and anywhere in the country has never had consumer protections. People are on their own. They could be locked out, priced out, dumped out, and that happens each and every day. So this will finally provide the kind of protections that we all enjoy in our health care plans, as part of a group, as part of a plan that has pre-negotiated benefits, we enjoy that kind of health security, and individuals in the buying insurance on their own, farm families, young adults have never had that kind of health security.

WAXMAN: Well now they're going to have this health security, and most of the plans, as I understand it, that -- that they're no longer going to be able to keep, don't meet all the standards of the law.

SEBELIUS: Again, I think you may have heard Pat Geraghty from Florida Blues who was on some of the Sunday shows and he talks about the fact that the Florida plans want to keep their customers. They have new plans to offer, they feel that a lot of people, and these are Mr. Geraghty's words, "will have a much better plan at a similar or lower cost. Fifty percent of these 11 to 12 million people qualify for a subsidy, quality for financial help purchasing insurance for the first time ever."

WAXMAN: The bottom line is that people with good coverage like Medicare, Medicaid, employer coverage, can keep that. People with grandfathered plans in the individual market will be able to keep it. But if an insurance company sold you a new modified health insurance policy after the date of the enactment that does not meet the law's standards, then those people will be able to go into the exchange and buy a real solid health insurance plan that won't discriminate against them or anybody else. I think that's a good result. I'm pleased with it, and I think most people will be as well.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired. The Chair would recognize the Vice Chair of the committee, Ms. Blackburn.

BLACKBURN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Secretary, during -- before, during and after the law was passed, the President kept saying, "if you like your health care plan, you can keep it," so is he keeping his promise?

SEBELIUS: Yes, he is.

BLACKBURN: OK. What do you say to the 300,000 people in Florida you just mentioned, or to the 28,000 in Tennessee that cannot get health insurance? Their plans are terminated. Is he keeping his promise to them?

SEBELIUS: Well first of all, Congresswoman, they can get health insurance. They must be offered new plans, new options either inside the marketplace, or if they don't qualify for a financial subsidy, they can shop in or out of the marketplace.

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: But would you say to ...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: They absolutely will have new coverage.

BLACKBURN: What would you say to NBC news who says, "Millions are going to lose their coverage?"

SEBELIUS: Well, in all deference to the press corps, many of whom are here today, I think it's -- it's important to be accurate about what is going on, and I would defer, again, to the President of the (inaudible) plan.

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: Reclaiming ...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: (inaudible) ongoing coverage, they will be offered new plans.

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: Madam Secretary, let me tell you something.

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Fifty percent of them in the market right now will -- will qualify for ...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: What do you say to Mark and Lucinda in my district who had a plan, they liked it, it was affordable, but it is being terminated and now they do not have health insurance?

SEBELIUS: Insurance companies cancel individual policies year in and year out. They're a one-year contract with individuals. They are not lifetime plans, they are not an employer plan. Your constituents will have lots of options.

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: Let me -- let me move -- let me move on. It's what they wanted, and I will remind you, some people like to drive a Ford, not a Ferrari, and some people like to drink out of a red Solo cup and not a crystal stem. Your taking away their choice. Let's put the screen shot up. I want to go to the cost of the website and talk about the website. This is what is happening right now with this website. We've had somebody in the back trying to sign on. It is down. It is not working. Last week I asked for the cost from each of the contractors that were with us last week. So can you give me a ballpark on what you have spent on this website that does not work, that individuals cannot get to? What is your cost estimate?

SEBELIUS: So far, Congresswoman, we have spent about $118 million on the website itself, and about $56 million has been expended on other IT to support the web.

BLACKBURN: OK. Would you submit a detailed accounting of exactly what has been spent? And when do you expect constituents to stop getting these kind of error messages?

SEBELIUS: Again, I was with the -- I talked to the president of Verizon over the weekend on two occasions. Verizon hosts the cloud, which is not part of the website. It is a host for a number of websites. The Verizon system was taken down Saturday night into Sunday. It was down almost all day Sunday. They had an additional problem that they notified us about yesterday and it continues on. So I'd be happy to talk to the president of Verizon and get him to give you...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: OK, let me -- let me come back to that, because I want to get to this issue of exactly who is in charge of this project. Because you're now blaming it on the contractors and saying it's Verizon's fault.

So let me ask you this: Did you ever look at outsourcing the role of the system integrator -- and obviously you did not from the contractors that we had last week -- you all -- they had several different people, whether it was you or Gary Cohen or Michelle Snyder or Henry Chao, that they thought were in charge. So who is responsible for overseeing this project? Is it you or your designee?

SEBELIUS: Let me be clear, I'm not pointing fingers at Verizon. I'm trying to explain the way the site operates. We are -- we own the site. The site has had serious problems. I...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: Who is in charge, Madam Secretary?

SEBELIUS: The person now in charge as an integrator is QSSI, one of our...

BLACKBURN: Who was in charge as it was being built?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: ... CMS was in charge up...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: At that team, who is the individual...

SEBELIUS: Michelle Snyder is...

BLACKBURN: Michelle Snyder is the one responsible for this debacle?

SEBELIUS: Well, excuse me, Congresswoman. Michelle Snyder is not responsible for the debacle. Hold me accountable for the debacle. I'm responsible.

BLACKBURN: Thank you. I yield back.

UPTON: Chair would recognize Mr. Dingell from the great state of Michigan.

DINGELL: Thank you for your courtesy.

I have a few questions I'll be asking you on behalf of Congresswoman Shea-Porter, but I'll do that by writing. I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to revise and extend my remarks.

UPTON: Without objection.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, I would like to begin by thanking you; welcoming the secretary to a room in which her distinguished father, former governor of Ohio, served for so many years.

I begin my questions by quoting from an expert for whom I have enormous respect. He said as follows: "As I mentioned earlier, the new benefits and its implementation are hardly perfect. Rather than trying to scare and confuse seniors, I would hope that we could work together as we go through the implementation phase to find out what is wrong with the program, and if we can make some changes to fix it.

"Let us do it, and let us do it in a bipartisan fashion. It is too big a program and is too important to too many people to do that. But having said that, it does appear that it is working. Let us admit it, you know, and not keep beating a dead horse."

My beloved friend, Mr. Barton -- who I think gave us the beginning of our efforts today.

Madam Secretary, I've seen reports that consumers receiving plan cancellation notices from their insurance companies saying that plans are no longer available. Does the ACA require insurance companies to discontinue the plans that people had when the law was passed, yes or no?

SEBELIUS: Not when the law was passed if the plans have not changed, no, sir.

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: That's the grandfather clause.

DINGELL: Now, that's because the plans existed prior to the passage of the law are grandfathered in, as you have said?

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

DINGELL: So if an insurance company is no longer offering a certain plan, that's because that insurance company made a decision to change their policies, and that caused them to take away the grandfather status from their insurance purchasers, is that right?

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

DINGELL: Now, Madam Secretary, I want you to submit for the record a statement of what it is we can do about insurance companies that run around canceling the policies of their people. And I don't have time to get -- get the answer, but I want to get a very clear statement from you as to what you can do so we can take some skin off some folks that have it coming.

(LAUGHTER)

Now, Madam Secretary, it's my understanding that these decisions of a business character are most common in the individual insurance market, and that much turnover already exists and existed prior to the enactment of the legislation.

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

DINGELL: Is that correct?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Is it correct that 35 percent to 67 percent (ph) of the enrollees in the individual market leave their plan after one year for different reasons?

SEBELIUS: A third are in about less than six months in the individual market and over 50 percent are in for less than a year, yes, sir.

DINGELL: Now, in the cancellation letters, which move around from the insurance companies, some insurance companies are suggesting an alternative plan at a higher price. Do they have the right to do that?

SEBELIUS: Well, they have a right to do that, sir, but consumers have a right to shop anywhere to compare plans and they have choices now that they've never had before -- and some financial assistance...

DINGELL: And they have no right...

SEBELIUS: ... coming their way for about 50 percent of those people.

DINGELL: ... to enforce that demand on the insurance company?

SEBELIUS: Oh, absolutely not. No one is rolled over into a plan. And in fact, individuals for the first time ever will have the ability to compare plans, to shop, and to make a choice inside or outside the marketplace.

DINGELL: Looks to me like the insurance companies are trying to inflict on their -- on their customers the view that this is their right and that this is the only option available to them, is that correct?

SEBELIUS: Well, I -- I think that insurance companies would like to keep their customers. Having said that, customers for the first time have a lot of choices, because they can't be locked out...

(CROSSTALK)

DINGELL: But the insurance companies have no right to enforce that view on the customer?

SEBELIUS: There is no rule that says you have to stay with your company or you have to be rolled over...

(CROSSTALK)

DINGELL: And you don't...

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

(CROSSTALK)

DINGELL: ... when they come forward and tell you that you've got to buy a particular policy, is that right?

SEBELIUS: Absolutely.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

Chair would recognize the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Barton.

BARTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Before I ask my questions, we have a former member of the committee on the Democrat side from the great state of Kansas in the audience, Mr. Slattery. And we are -- we're glad to have you.

And Madam Secretary, we're glad to have you too.

SEBELIUS: Thank you, sir.

BARTON: There is a famous movie called the "Wizard of Oz," and in the "Wizard of Oz" there is a great line. Dorothy at some point in the movie turns to her little dog Toto and says, "Toto, we're not in Kansas anymore."

Well, Madam Secretary, while you're from Kansas, we're not in Kansas anymore. Some might say that we are actually in the "Wizard of Oz" land given the parallel universes we appear to be habitating.

Mr. Waxman and most of those on the Democrat side think things are great. You apparently, although you did apologize and you have said it's a debacle, you also seem to think that the Affordable Care Act is great. Well, myself and others have a different view. Ultimately the American people will decide.

Now, last week when the contractors were here, I focused my attention on the apparent lack of privacy in the website. If we'll put up the first slide that I had last week -- if we can.

This -- this is what's public, Madam Secretary. And it's -- it's basically a disclaimer that says that any unauthorized attempt to upload information or change information on the website is prohibited. It

really doesn't say anything about privacy. But you do have to accept that in order to go forward with the application.

The next slide shows what's not public. And this is in the source code. We tried to determine this morning if it was still in the source code, but it's (ph) been pointed out, the website's down.

This is much more what I would say -- frightening to me. It says, "You have no reasonable expectation of privacy regarding any communication or data transiting or stored (ph) on the information system. At any time and for any lawful government purpose, the government may monitor, intercept, search and seize any communication or data transiting or stored (ph) on the information system. Any communication or data transiting or stored (ph) on this information system may be disclosed or used for any lawful government purpose."

Cheryl Campbell of CGI Federal said she was aware of it, but said that it wasn't her responsibility to put that in the source code. Were you a aware of it? And was it your responsibility to put this in the source code?

SEBELIUS: Mr. Barton, I did not put things in the source code. I can tell you, it's my understanding that that is boiler plate language that should not have been in this particular contract, because there are -- the highest security standards are in place, and people have every right to expect privacy.

BARTON: All right.

Now, the last time we could check, this was still there. You are given almost unlimited authority under the Affordable Care Act to administer it. Will you commit to the committee and to the American people that, one, you do want to protect their privacy and, two, you will take this out, fix it, make sure that it -- it doesn't have bearing on people that try to apply through the website?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir. And we have had those discussions with CGI, and it is under way. I do absolutely commit to protecting the privacy of the American public, and we have asked them to remove that statement. It is there in error. It needs to be taken down, and we should be held accountable for protecting privacy...

(CROSSTALK)

BARTON: Well, thank you, Madam Secretary. I -- I sincerely appreciate that, and I'm sure the American people do too.

My last question -- or it's really a comment. I've introduced H.R. 3348, which says, let's make this system voluntary for the first year since we're having so many problems and let the American people decide. What that means is, if people choose not to participate they will not be charged the penalty for non-participation. Would you support such a reasonable approach to this while we work out the problems in the system?

SEBELIUS: No, sir.

BARTON: OK. Well, that's an honest answer.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

BARTON: Thank you, Madam...

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Chair would recognize the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Pallone.

PALLONE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I know we're not in Kansas, but I do believe increasingly we're in Oz because of what I see here.

(LAUGHTER)

So this "Wizard of Oz" comment by my colleague from Texas I think is particularly apropos, given what we hear (ph) on the other side of the aisle. I don't know how you keep your cool, Madam Secretary, you know, with this continuous effort on the part of the GOP to sabotage the ACA, to scare people and bring up red herrings. And I think that this privacy issue is another red herring. And I'm gonna ask you a question about that.

But before that, I just wanted to say, this whole idea that's being brought up today that somehow, you know, policies are being canceled and people don't have alternatives is just another red herring. You know, what I think my colleagues on the other side forget is that this is not socialized medicine. This is in fact private insurance in a competitive market.

And if I'm an insurance company and all of a sudden everyone else is selling a better policy with better benefits at a lower price, I can't continue to sell a lousy skeletal policy that doesn't provide benefits and cost more because I'll be out of the market. And so that's what's happening here. Insurance companies are canceling lousy policies with high prices because they can't compete. And that's what's gonna happen when you have a private insurance market, which is what we have here. We don't have a government-controlled system. We have private markets.

So I just wanted to make that point.

But I have to drill down on what Mr. Barton said here. You know, before reform, the individual insurance market was dysfunctional, premiums would shoot up if people got sick, their coverage could be canceled if they had a pre-existing condition, and they did not have secure, quality coverage.

Now, I've heard my Republican colleagues say that patient health information will be at risk in this application process, and this is flat out false. In fact, the ACA makes a giant leap forward for protecting health insurance by taking it completely out of the insurance application process by banning discrimination based on pre- existing conditions.

Mr. Barton, again, is, you know, raising this red herring just like the cancellation of insurance by talking about privacy. But Madam Secretary, prior to the ACA when people applied for insurance coverage, did insurers make them provide a long, detailed, invasive medical history, but now because the law bans discrimination based on pre-existing conditions, individuals will not have to provide this information in their applications?

So regardless of this clause, please comment on the privacy issue and why it's irrelevant.

SEBELIUS: Well, Mr. Pallone, in the past, any individual American who was in an employer-based coverage, in government coverage like the ones we enjoy in Medicare, in Medicaid, the V.A., a whole variety of plans, that's about 95 percent of insured Americans had no medical underwriting, had group protections, had consumer protections.

The people who were outside that consumer-protected space were individuals buying their own coverage in an individual market. Medical underwriting demanding health records and often going through extensive doctor interviews and getting health records was a standard for that market. Pricing could vary widely depending on gender, depending on health condition. People could be denied coverage and were frequently. That's the market that is currently being reformed with consumer protections.

If a person had a policy in place in March of 2010 like that policy and the insurance company made no changes to disadvantage the consumer, those policies are in place, you keep your plan, you like it, and that goes on.

For the people who, though, had a medically underwritten policy, were paying more than their neighbor because they happened to be female, could not get their health condition for a fixed hip written into their insurance plan, they will have a new day in a very competitive market; 25 percent of the insurers are brand new to the market and they are offering competitive plans.

PALLONE: Mr. Chairman, could I just ask that this document...

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Sure. Put it into the record without objection.

PALLONE: Thank you.

UPTON: Chair would recognize Mr. Hall.

HALL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, I think Congresswoman Blackburn asked you about the federal government and how much they'd spent today and they're spending some money as we speak, aren't they?

It's down right now, isn't it?

Is that -- are you had -- you projected ongoing problems?

SEBELIUS: I'm sorry, sir. I'm having a hard time...

HALL: OK.

SEBELIUS: ... hearing.

What was the...

HALL: She asked you how much it had spent today and I'm asking what you expect to pay in addition to that on the repairs that the website is going to require and they're requiring them as we speak here.

So those are things you projected; you knew they would happen and they will happen. But you surely looked ahead and you have some estimate of what is going to happen.

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

HALL: And going to cost.

SEBELIUS: For our two major contractors who are USSI, a subsidiary of United and for CGI, there are obligated amounts. For CGI, who is in charge of the entire application, there has been $197 million obligated and that is to last through March of 2014.

And as I said before about $104 million has been expended in that obligated amount.

HALL: I'm going to try to be here on 2014 to be sure that your testimony is correct, OK?

(LAUGHTER)

I'm just joking with you.

(LAUGHTER)

SEBELIUS: OK.

HALL: And if -- were you born in Kansas, Meade (ph) -- Kansas?

SEBELIUS: I was not. I was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. I married a Kansan and went to Kansas.

HALL: All right. I was in the third grade there. And I thought I saw you on a tricycle there one day.

(LAUGHTER)

SEBELIUS: Well, it was an illusion.

HALL: Let me ask you a question, have you ever rejected a financial bill from one of the contractors?

Have you ever?

SEBELIUS: Have I ever...

HALL: Rejected a financial bill from one of them?

SEBELIUS: Sir, again, I -- our...

HALL: Well, I guess you can say yes or no.

SEBELIUS: ... our accounting office does a routine audit and review of every bill that comes in before they do it. I do not personally. I want to be very accurate about -- I don't personally pay contracts, negotiate contracts. By law and by precedent that's really illegal for someone who isn't a warranted contract officer to engage in the debate or discussion around federal contracts.

HALL: How much has the administration spent on the exchanges in total?

Not just healthcare.gov but all of the exchanges?

SEBELIUS: Sir...

HALL: How difficult is that figure to give me or if you can't give it to me...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I would like to get it to you in writing very quickly.

HALL: Madam Secretary, I'd like to talk -- I don't know how much time I have got left but I would like to talk about a couple of businesses in my district who are struggling with how to move forward. One is a manufacturing and one is in the pet boarding and training business. One has 85 employees and the other has 56.

Here's some quotes from some of their recent letters: "The situation we're in is we would have to pay $170,000 in penalties under Obamacare. This is another example of the government picking the winners and losers. We're the losers. There is no way I can be competitive if I have to raise my prices to cover $170,000. Here are my options: do not pay the penalty, raise my prices and go out of business. Eighty-five people lose their jobs, lay off 35 employees who don't have to pay the penalty and move more production to this country, reduce 35 jobs."

And here's a quote from the other: "Since they are high labor low margin, business cannot afford to pay for insurance for our employees we're faced with either closing our business perhaps through bankruptcy, though there are heavy financial obligations that would continue whether we operate or not.

"Fire enough employees to get under 50 employees limits and close some of our business. Even if we close the location we cannot escape many expenses such as rental agreements."

What am I supposed to tell these people?

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, I think that in the employer market, about 95 percent of all American businesses are exempt from any kind of requirement to cover employer -- employee insurance, and they are outside the law. They continue to be outside the law, but they will have some new options for those who want to cover their employees and some new tax credit possibilities.

For large employers, about 96 percent of them already cover their employees. And as you know, the penalty that your constituents referred to is not a penalty that is imposed in 2014. It is being discussed with businesses about what kind of information is exchanged and it will take place in 2015.

UPTON: The gentleman's time...

HALL: He's going to use the gavel on me if you don't hurry.

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

HALL: I yield back my time.

UPTON: At which time the Chair would recognize the gentlelady from California, Ms. Eshoo.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Madam Secretary. You're a distinguished woman, you have distinguished yourself and your state, the offices that you've held, and now working for the American people and I salute you for it. I -- I want to really congratulate my Republican pals for being absolutely 1000 percent consistent. You love what's wrong with the website, and you detest what's working in the Affordable Care Act. And I think that that is on full display here. But let's get back to the website, because that's what the hearing is about.

It's my understanding that November 31st (sic) is a -- is a hard date for having everything up and running. Do you have -- now, HHS did testify in September that they were 100 percent confident that the site would be launched and fully functional on time on October 1st. That didn't work. Do you have full confidence in this new hard date?

SEBELIUS: Congresswoman, I can tell you that the assessment that we have made is that it will take until the end of November for an optimally functioning website. I know that the only way I can restore confidence that we get it right is to get it right, so I -- I -- I have confidence, but I know that it -- it isn't fair to ask the American public to take our word for it. I've got to fix this problem, and we are underway doing just that.

ESHOO: But are you confident that -- I think I said November 31st, which is, which does not exist, but November 30th. You have confidence in November 30th?

SEBELIUS: I do.

ESHOO: Is there any penalty to QSSI or CGI for not delivering on what they promised?

SEBELIUS: Well, I think the, as you can see, we have a -- obligated funds for a contract. We certainly have not expended all those funds, and we expect not only the CMS team, but our contractor partners to fulfill their obligations and have to be...

(CROSSTALK)

ESHOO: But if they fail to fulfill their obligations. I don't know what's in the contract. Is there a penalty?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Well, I understand, but, there isn't a built-in penalty, but I can tell you that paying for work that isn't complete is not something that we will do. QSSI, as you know, has taken on a new role as integrator of the hub that they built and have in operation is -- is working extremely well, not only for the federal exchanges, but all the state-based markets are using the hub, and that's why we had confidence in their ability to actually take this next role on and coordinate the activities moving forward, which have to be driven with a very clear set of outcomes, very accountable timelines and deadlines, and they will be helping to manage that process.

ESHOO: On the issue of security, there was a security breach that arose recently, that I read about at any rate. And what I think is very important here, because the issue of privacy has been raised, and I think that that has been answered. Very importantly, there isn't any health information in these systems. But there is financial information, so my question to you is, has a security wall been built, and are you confident that it is there and that it will actually secure the financial information that applicants have to disclose?

SEBELIUS: Yes, ma'am, I -- I would tell you that there was not a breach, there was a blog by a sort of skilled hacker that if a certain series of incidents occurred, you could possibly get in and obtain somebody's personally identifiable...

(CROSSTALK)

ESHOO: But isn't that telling? Isn't that telling?

SEBELIUS: And we immediately corrected that problem, so there wasn't a -- it was a theoretical problem that was immediately fixed. I would tell you we are storing the minimum amount of data, because we think that's very important. The hub is not a data collector. It is actually using data centers at the IRS, at Homeland Security, at Social Security to verify information, but it stores none of that data, so we don't want to be...

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Gentlelady's time has expired. The Chair would recognize Mr. Shimkus.

SHIMKUS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Madam Secretary. Madam Secretary, before I start my questions, the Washington Post gave the administration, the President, yourself, four Pinocchios on this whole debate of if you like the insurance you have, you can keep it. Would you recommend to the President that he stop using that term? Wouldn't it be helpful in this debate?

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, I think he used the term at the time that the law was passed, and he continues to say...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: And as of September 26th, also, so...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: That's why we wrote...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: So the answer is you don't buy -- you don't believe that the Washington Post, and therefore...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I haven't read the Washington Post, but thank you.

SHIMKUS: Well, we'll hand this down to you so you can see it. Have you ever shopped -- I know you have, but this is for a -- at a grocery store with a coupon? Ever used a coupon?

SEBELIUS: Yes.

SHIMKUS: So, the coupon gives you the terms and conditions of when you go to the checkout to -- to get whatever's off the price of the goods. When you all added the "See Plans Now" option, you in essence gave the searcher in essence a coupon based upon what they're seeing there. And the desire was, let people know what the price is. However, as the -- the news reported, and I followed up in last week's hearing, was that if you are under 50 years old, you get quoted the price of someone who's 27. If you're older than 50, if you're older than 50, could be 64, you get quoted a price of someone who's 50 -- 50 years old. Isn't that misleading?

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, the "Learn" side of the website, which has been up since actually late...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: So that's truthful, then. If you quote a price...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: It is clearly a hypothetical situation...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: Oh, are you -- do you -- wait...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: That for now people that...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: OK, on the "See Plans Now" option, are you saying this is a hypothetical? That's not what it says on the site. It says, "This is the price, when you put in your age," and if your age is 49, it quotes you as if you're 27.

SEBELIUS: Sir, the only way someone can get an accurate information about their price is to get their individual eligibility (inaudible)...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: Let me ask you another -- when did you decide to use this, the low 50 at 27, and above 50 at 50 years old. When did you make that decision?

SEBELIUS: That was decided by the team as...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: By who? Who made the -- the...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I withhold (ph) that information.

SHIMKUS: The problem with the whole debate is y'all won't tell us who made the decisions.

SEBELIUS: Well, I can tell you I did not design the site.

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: So who?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I will get...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: Well, who made the decision on the 27-year-old quote for someone who's 50?

SEBELIUS: I just said I will get you that information.

SHIMKUS: Thank -- thank you. Let me go to, because it's misleading and the White House insists it didn't mislead the public, and (inaudible) we find after you did. But let me -- let me finish on this debate. Another transparency issue. If someone, a constituent of mine or someone in this country has strongly held pro-life views...

(CROSSTALK)

(UNKNOWN): Oh, here we go.

SHIMKUS: Can you commit to us to make sure that the federal exchanges that offer that is clearly identified and so people can understand if they're going to buy a policy that has abortion coverage or not? Because right now, you cannot make that determination.

SEBELIUS: Sir, I -- I don't know. I -- I know exactly the -- the issue you're talking about. I will check and make sure that that is truly identifiable.

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: Here's -- here's -- OK, thank you. Well, here's -- here's our request. Can you provide for the committee the list of insurers in the federal exchange who do not offer, as part of their package, abortion coverage?

SEBELIUS: I think we can do that, sir.

SHIMKUS: Well, you should be able to do it, so...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I just said...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: No, you said "If we can do it."

SEBELIUS: No, I think we can do that is what I said.

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: I think, or I know we can do it?

SEBELIUS: I -- sir, I -- I can't tell you what I don't know firmly right now. I know that is the plan, I will get that information to you.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

The chair would recognize Mr. Engel from New York.

ENGEL: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, I appreciate your coming here today to answer questions about the Affordable Health Care Act (sic).

You know, my Republican colleagues' actions here remind me of a story I read when I was a little boy, and that's the story of Chicken Little, who ran around yelling, "The sky is falling. The sky is falling." But unlike Chicken Little, my Republican colleagues are actually rooting for the sky to fall.

Republicans are holding this hearing today under the auspices of an investigative hearing, as if they want to get to the bottom of what went wrong with the website in order to help fix it. But I don't think, Madam Secretary, there's one person in this room who is naive enough to actually think that the Republicans want to see this law work. They voted over 40 times to repeal the law, they shutdown the government and threatened to force a default in order to stop it. They're rooting for failure.

Madam Secretary, can you tell us what would be the impact on Americans' health insurance if Republicans had been successful in their efforts to de-fund or repeal the Affordable Care Act?

SEBELIUS: Well, I think that the estimates at the Congressional Budget Office is that would have increased the deficit by about $110 billion in the first decade and close to a trillion dollars in the second decade.

We know that we have 42 million or 43 million Americans without health insurance at all, some of them Medicaid eligible and some in the -- over the Medicaid eligibility. Thirty governors so far, Republicans and Democrats, have declared their support for moving ahead with Medicaid expansion, but absent that, the Affordable Care Act, those folks would be without any kind of health security.

And in the private market, what we know is it takes a real toll.

But I'd say the biggest issue is not just the financial toll, not the community toll, not the country toll -- which is significant. I have a good friend who runs the cancer center at the University of Kansas. I was with him and cancer researchers recently, and he said that if you get a cancer diagnosis, you are 60 percent more likely to live five years and beyond if you have insurance than if you don't. I think that's a pretty powerful statement for why we need affordable health care for all of our citizens.

ENGEL: Well, thank you. The -- the Republicans have not been able to de-fund or repeal it, but they have denied requested funding. They've raised specious arguments about death panels and socialized medicine, and they've worked to intimidate groups that could help the implementation effort. There's been a spreading of misinformation about the cost of coverage -- we hear some of that today -- and to actively dissuade the uninsured from seeking coverage.

So Madam Secretary, how are these tactics -- impacted your ability to implement the Affordable Care Act?

SEBELIUS: Well, I don't think there's any question that a lot of people need a lot of information. I think it's one of the reasons we had millions visit the site -- try to visit the site. It's why I am so frustrated and disappointed that the site is not fully functional, and why I'm so committed to getting it functional, because clearly there is a demand. We need to get information to people about the law.

This is the law. This is not any longer a debate. It was a law passed by both houses of Congress, signed by the president of the United States, upheld by the Supreme Court. The president was re-elected. It is the law. And people have benefits and rights under that law, and we've got to get that information so they can make good choices for themselves and their families.

ENGEL: Well, thank you.

It is the law, and, frankly, I find it disconcerting that my Republican colleagues have done nothing but root for this law to fail for the last three and a half years. And now there's a big show here of being upset at problems with the website...

(CROSSTALK)

ENGEL: ... keeping people from signing up for coverage fast enough.

So I would just say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, you're really on the wrong side of history here. The website will be fixed and millions of Americans will be able to get quality, affordable health insurance coverage through the Affordable Care Act.

And again, I thank you for being here today, Madam -- Madam.

UPTON: Mr. Pitts, chairman of the Health Committee.

PITTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Madam Secretary.

Have you personally tried to register or enroll on the website?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I created an early light account so I would see the prompts that were coming to people who were interested. I did work my way to the application feature fairly early on. But, frankly, I -- I have affordable health care, so I...

(CROSSTALK)

PITTS: No, I just wanted to know if you've been through the process that millions of Americans are having to go through.

Madam Secretary, the -- the initial website crashes appear to be largely a result of the decision to prevent browsing of the plans. CGI Federal testified at our hearing last week that they had designed the website to allow users to browse and compare plans before having to create an account.

Ms. Campbell told us that two weeks prior to the October 1st launch, they were told to turn off the browsing feature. Were you aware in September that this decision was made?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I wasn't aware of that particular decision that was made by the CMS team. I was aware that we were paring back some features to not put additional risk on the website, which is ironic at this point.

PITTS: And who made that decision? Who made that decision?

SEBELIUS: Administrator Tavenner made that decision.

PITTS: And do you know why that was made?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir, because we were anxious to get the website up and running and functional -- which we clearly have failed to do to date -- although I would suggest the website has never crashed. It is functional, but at a very slow speed and very low reliability, and has continued to function.

Having said that, they pared down some of the features, feeling that it would be better to load them in later. One was the shop and browse feature. Another was the Spanish version of the website and the Medicaid transfers. All three of those issues were paired down in September...

PITTS: Thank you.

SEBELIUS: ... to not load the system.

PITTS: Thank you.

Last week, CGI Federal and QSSI testified that CMS was responsible for end-to-end testing and that they believe that months of testing would have been preferable to two weeks.

Do you believe that two weeks was enough time to complete testing of the entire system?

SEBELIUS: Clearly, not.

PITTS: And when were you made aware of the result of the test, including the one where the system collapsed with only a few hundred users?

SEBELIUS: Leading up to the October 1st date, we had regular meetings with not only a team at CMS but administrators involved. I was made aware that we were testing, and as we found problems we were fixing those problems. And I think there is a CGI report at mid- August identifying some problems. And between August and October that became the punch list for CGI to fix those problems. That's why you test.

PITTS: Now, in The Washington Post on October 21st there was an article that said about a month before the exchange opened a testing group of 10 insurers urged agency officials not to launch the site because it was riddled with problems. Were you aware in September that insurers recommended a delay in the launch of the exchange?

SEBELIUS: I was not aware that they recommended delay. I know everyone was concerned that there were risks and there were likely to be problems with a brand new integrated insurance system. I don't think anyone ever estimated the degree to which we've had problems in the system, and, certainly, the contracting partners did not.

PITTS: And did HHS respond to the insurers' recommendation to delay the launch?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I can't -- I wasn't in the meeting. I don't know...

PITTS: Can you find out and...

SEBELIUS: ... what occurred at the meeting, and I don't know who they talked to.

PITTS: ... answer that question for us?

SEBELIUS: Sure, I will get back to you.

PITTS: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Mr. Green?

GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Madam Secretary, thank you for taking time to be here today.

I represent parts of east and north Houston, Harris County, and our district has one of the highest uninsured rates in the country. Even worse, we have one of the highest rates of people who have jobs but don't receive their insurance through their employer.

It's for this reason that I believe Houston would be a good place for you to come and spend -- spread the word about the tremendous benefits of the Affordable Care Act. However, we learned (inaudible)

your office that you're unable to attend because of scheduling conflicts. And I -- hopefully, we can have agreement that some time in the future you'll come to the fourth largest city that probably has the highest number of uninsured in a metropolitan area. And, of course, we're in the state of Texas that has the number of highest uninsured in the country.

The -- it's important to me and our constituents to get it right, and that's why I share your and the president's disappointment the website's not working as planned.

November 30th is not soon enough. Many of my constituents have been waiting for years to be able to purchase health insurance, and we owe it to them to get the marketplaces up and running.

The contractors have not served our country well and should fix it or not be paid.

Now we're hearing about the cancellation letters being sent by insurance companies (inaudible) customers notifying them that their plans are no longer offered. Are these Americans losing their health care coverage because of the Affordable Care Act, or is it because these plans were changed after the enactment of the act?

SEBELIUS: I would say it's the latter, sir. If a plan was in place since the enactment of the act, no one would have received a cancellation...

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: So if somebody in America had an insurance plan before the act and -- the president was correct: If you have -- if you like what you have, you could keep it.

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

GREEN: The plans were changed, and so now they have to comply with the new law.

SEBELIUS: They can either choose to be grandfathered and keep the same plan, which meant the same benefits and -- and actually the regulation allows insurance companies to charge medical inflation plus a trend line so they didn't have to charge the same price. They could increase it; they could increase co-pays. They could increase co- insurance. What they couldn't do is cancel benefits that the policy holder relied on. They couldn't disadvantage the policy holder. But if that plan is in effect, absolutely, it is still in effect.

GREEN: OK, but some of these millions of letters we're hearing about are probably because their plans changed?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Absolutely. And again, in the individual market, plans change every year. Insurers design new products...

GREEN: And that's -- even in the small business market that happens. So these plans are not allowed now, because they're completely inadequate. They don't offer the minimum essential benefits, is that correct?

SEBELIUS: That is correct.

GREEN: OK. And having been a state legislator -- and I know as governor in Kansas -- I assume every state has some type of minimum mandated benefits that they have for their health insurance plans.

SEBELIUS: They do, but it applies, again, sir, in the past usually to the group markets, where 90 percent of covered Americans get their policies. This market has always been the wild west.

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: OK. The Americans who received those letters from their companies about cancellations, they're eligible to purchase plans on the exchange?

SEBELIUS: Or out of the exchange. Individuals who don't -- aren't interested in some kind of financial help can go outside the exchange, inside the exchange. Their insurer can offer them plans. They have choices they've never had before.

GREEN: And because of the benefits of the Affordable Care Act, 80 percent of their premium dollar will come back to them?

SEBELIUS: That's correct. That's...

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: OK. And that's not true -- and I don't -- I know it's not true in Texas, but I don't know what -- any states that have that 80 percent requirement.

SEBELIUS: Well, no state had it, I would suggest, in that kind of broad base prior to the Affordable Care Act, so it's...

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: Let me give you an example of one of the plans I found out doing case work a few years ago. A large company provided $25,000 maximum benefit for their employees in the year. Most employees didn't know about it, and -- until this one constituent found out that she had cancer. And the bill ended up being $300,000. And so that's some of those plans that are not being allowed to be sold now, is that correct?

SEBELIUS: Well, not only will (ph) the plan have a limit on out- of-pocket costs per year, it will have a limit on a lifetime out-of- pocket costs and it will have -- it will take away the notion that you would run out of your coverage in the middle of a treatment, which a lot of plans do.

GREEN: I know I'm out of my time, but it's like buying a car...

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: ... look good, but if it doesn't have a motor, it's no good to have that car.

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: So that's why the Affordable Care Act has...

SEBELIUS: Save a lot of gas, but it doesn't get you...

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Gentleman's time has expired.

Gentleman from Oregon, Mr. Walden.

WALDEN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Governor -- Secretary, we're delighted to have you before the committee. You and I both know how important this issue is to all Americans that we get it right.

So I hope you can appreciate, we're trying to understand what we missed along the way. And -- and one of the things that bothered me was the letter that was sent from your agency to the GAO back in -- June 6th. And I'll read in part, it said, "We're in the final stages of finalizing and testing the I.T.

infrastructure that will support the application enrollment process. HHS is extremely confident that on October 1, the marketplace will open on schedule and millions of Americans will have access to affordable, quality health insurance."

I'm just an average guy from a small town in Oregon, but when I read that, it tells me you believed everything was good to go, the testing was in place, and we should have full confidence everything would work. Correct?

SEBELIUS: That's the letter I signed, yes, sir.

WALDEN: Actually, it was signed by your assistant.

SEBELIUS: Or whoever -- yes, yes.

WALDEN: But the same point.

And so I went into this believing in your response -- your agency's response to GAO, things were ready to go, we should have full confidence, because when somebody uses the word "extremely confident," tells me you're extremely confident.

Second piece, then when we had the testimony from the witnesses last week, I asked them about the end-to-end testing and what the industry standard would be, and they said it really should have been months, especially for a project of this magnitude. And yet we heard it was only two weeks.

Now in August, GCI told CMS in their report...

SEBELIUS: CGI.

WALDEN: I'm sorry, CGI, thank you.

That on August 9th that there was not enough time in the schedule to conduct adequate performance testing. Did that make its way all the way to you? And do you think there was adequate time?

SEBELIUS: Sir, clearly, as I've said before, we did not adequately do end-to-end testing. The products were not locked and loaded into the system until the third week in September. Each of the component parts...

WALDEN: Right...

SEBELIUS: ... was tested, validated...

WALDEN: ... they told us that.

SEBELIUS: ... independently validated end-to-end (ph).

WALDEN: I'm sorry.

All those worked, though, right? They told us last week that their individual modules were tested and met specification. Do you concur with that analysis based on what you know?

SEBELIUS: I do concur with the testing that was done, yes.

WALDEN: OK, so it really was the end-to-end -- which is why some of us thought we should delay until it could be done right to avoid this very collapse that now is upon us. And I realize not everybody agreed to (ph) that.

The second piece here gets back to The Washington Post, which I realize you haven't had -- and I understand -- a chance to read this morning, but the four Pinocchios about the president repeatedly saying, 'If you have a plan, you'll keep your plan.' We all heard that to mean, 'I've got a plan with a company. I'll continue to have it even if they make minor changes,' when in fact your own rules as written said, no, that's really isn't what's going to happen. If minor changes are made that means the plan changed; that means you don't get it.

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, that isn't true. They (ph) -- rules did not say what you just suggested, and I think the estimate, given that there would be turnover in the market, was really an outside projection. It wasn't our rules. It's -- it was a snapshot of what happens in the market; that plans change so dramatically...

WALDEN: Sure, every year.

SEBELIUS: ... over time that the estimate was -- they wouldn't be -- not because of our rules, but because of insurance companies' business decisions.

(CROSSTALK)

WALDEN: Well, but you set up what (ph) those market rules looked like they had to comply with, correct?

SEBELIUS: Only if they chose not to grandfather the policy. That's...

WALDEN: But that meant they couldn't make any change (ph)...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Any grandfathered policy stayed in place, still would be in place.

WALDEN: Right, but if they made...

SEBELIUS: ... none of these rules apply.

WALDEN: But if they made any change...

SEBELIUS: No, they could make changes in pricing. They could make changes in benefits. They couldn't dramatically disadvantage the consumer, but they could have trend lines. They -- they had a wide corridor to make sure that -- that a similar plan -- so if a consumer liked the plan, the plan, if it stayed...

(CROSSTALK)

WALDEN: So here's what the practical implication -- I've got letters from constituents all over my district who have gotten letters from their insurers who say because of Obamacare, they're no longer going to be in the individual market, or at least with that plan in the individual market. And the result is this person from Cove, Oregon, said, "I was paying $600 a month for a $3,000 deductible. Now it costs me $800 a month for a $5,000 deductible."

I've got others here, I'll put in the record.

A woman whose job -- she had 40 hours, now down to 29. Neither has health insurance, nor enough income to live on her own because of the way this law is getting implemented.

I realize my time's (ph) expired.

UPTON: Gentlelady from Colorado, Ms. DeGette.

DEGETTE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Secretary, for being with us today.

I want to follow up on a couple of those questions that Mr. Walden was asking you about CGI. As you know, Chairman Issa last night released this document, monthly project status report from CGI last night, and it looks to me as sort of a technical document that has a punch list of outstanding open issues.

And some of them do highlight items that upon first read seem to be alarming. For example, one of the entries said, "Due to the compressed schedule there's not enough time built in to allow for adequate performance testing." And this certainly, in retrospect, sounds bad. But the date of the document that Chairman Issa released is September 6th, and then on September 10th, four days later, CGI came into this committee and testified under oath, quote, "CGI Federal is confident it will develop -- deliver the functionality that CMS has directed."

And -- and we're -- we're trying to figure out, or at least I'm trying to figure out, how CGI is now coming in and saying, you know, 'We warned everybody that this wasn't gonna be ready,' when they came in and directly told me that they would be ready to launch on October 1st.

So it kind of raises a question, how these statements can be reconciled. One explanation is that CGI was lying to this committee. I think that's unlikely. Another is that CGI thought that the items flagged in the report were like a punch list that could be addressed.

So here's my question to you, Madam Secretary: Was CGI telling your department the same thing that they told the committee on September 10th, that the company was confident that its programs would be ready?

SEBELIUS: Congresswoman, all of the contractors testified here in September and again, I think, last week before this committee. And the testimony was fairly similar, that they were ready to go in September. They were asked in -- last week if they had suggested that we should delay the launch date. Each of them said, no. I think the chairman...

(CROSSTALK)

DEGETTE: So they never asked you to delay the launch date?

SEBELIUS: They did not. And, frankly, I -- I think it is not valuable at this point...

DEGETTE: Right.

SEBELIUS: ... to do a lot of pointing blame, fixing the blame. What I want to do is fix the problem.

DEGETTE: And so do I...

SEBELIUS: I think we need the whole team to move ahead, and we will report back regularly.

DEGETTE: Right, but we're relying on these contractors to fix this. And so that goes to my last question, which is Mr. Zients has now come in and he says the site is going to be functional for the vast majority of users by the end of November. Is that right?

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

DEGETTE: And given what CGI told us and the other vendors, do you believe that that is correct? Do you believe it will be pretty much ready to go by the end of November?

SEBELIUS: I do. And I think that we are making improvements each and every day. It is easier to use now than it was two weeks. It is way from where we need it to be.

DEGETTE: So it's not like it's all going to be fine by the end of November. It's beginning to improve already. Is that your testimony?

SEBELIUS: It is a continuous process, as websites are. Patches are made, fixes are made on an ongoing basis. And as we find issues like Congresswoman Eshoo talked about, we are fixing them in real time.

DEGETTE: And you're going to guarantee yes or no that people will have privacy when they go on this site?

SEBELIUS: Absolutely.

DEGETTE: Now I just want to say one last thing. I was on the Washington Journal where callers call in this morning, and I had a man, Max, call in. And he said he got one of those letters from the insurance companies that his insurance was canceled. So what he did is he went on to the website and he -- under the federal exchange and he found a better plan, and now he's going to sign up. So I would hope that that's what everybody would be able to do. And I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Mr. Terry?

TERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I'm pleased to hear that the website will be fully operational by the end of November. And would be able to -- would you come back to our committee so we can see if that's actually accomplished and how it was accomplished?

SEBELIUS: I will make every effort to do that.

TERRY: OK. You were governor and state insurance commissioner in Kansas, and I reached out to our state insurance commissioner and governor and found out that they have absolutely no data about Nebraskans who have either tried to enroll or enrolled.

As you know, Nebraska is one of the states that opted not to do their own exchange and rely on the federal exchange. So it's interesting to me that neither our insurance commissioner nor the governor's office had any data about Nebraskans and this -- this -- and enrolling in these plans.

I also asked our insurance commissioner if any of the navigators, if they knew who the navigators were and whether they had to apply to be certified or licensed in essence like an insurance agent would be. And they told me they have no clue who's been authorized by HHS to be a navigator and work with people in Nebraska.

So this is concerning to me, so I'm going to ask you a few questions along this line. First of all, do you have data on how many people in general in the United States have tried to enroll in a plan through this website?

SEBELIUS: No, sir. We do not have any reliable data around enrollment, which is why we haven't given it to date.

TERRY: Or have any data on how many people have tried to enroll but because of the problems have not been able to accomplish that?

SEBELIUS: No, sir. I can tell you I met with insurers last week. And one of the priority fixes is the so-called 834s, the document that sends an individual's name to a company and verifies it. That is one of the systems that is not working.

TERRY: I appreciate that. And the contractors I asked specifically about the information of how many people have tried to enroll and enrolled, and they say they do have those numbers but can't tell us that because of a contract with HHS saying that they -- they're gagged on that information.

SEBELIUS: I would suggest that the numbers are not reliable according to (inaudible).

TERRY: Well, I'll tell you what. My question is going to be though will you on the record right now authorize them to give us those numbers and let us determine whether those are reliable?

SEBELIUS: No, sir. I want to give you reliable, confirmed data from every state and from the federal marketplace. We have said that we will do that on a monthly basis. By the middle of the month you will have that data, but I don't want to turn over anything that is not confirmed and reliable, and that's what we'll do.

TERRY: Well, but that data out there exists and you will not let us (inaudible)

SEBELIUS: Sir, I would -- I would tell you right now it is not reliable data. According to the insurance companies who are eager to have customers, they are not getting reliable data all the way through the system (inaudible) real problems that we have.

TERRY: The number of people that have clicked on and tried to get or enrolled, I'm not asking about what they enrolled in or whether they came in and said they were 65 and were quoted something that they were 27 years old. That should be a pretty reliable number just on the surface. So would you...

SEBELIUS: The system isn't functioning, so we are not getting that reliable data. Insurers who I met with said that that is the case. We know that there's 700,000 applications that have been (inaudible).

TERRY: The reliability of that data certainly flies in the face of the testimony from the contractors. All right. I yield back.

UPTON: Ms. Capps?

CAPPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Secretary Sebelius, for your presence here today and your testimony. While I too am frustrated with the flawed rollout of healthcare.gov, I do appreciate your longstanding commitment to improving the health care options for all Americans and fixing this website quickly.

I think it's important to note that in my home state of California and other states as well, the new exchange marketplace, we call it Covered California, is working. And rates -- constituents are finding that rates are as much as 29 percent less than those that they found on the marketplace last year.

I'm thankful my constituents now have this option. And as I look around to implementation nationwide, it seems clear to me that political decisions in individual states have really made the difference for consumers.

The governors and legislators -- state legislators that embrace this law are delivering for their communities, but those elected who are trying to ignore the opportunities presented and continue to throw up road blocks both here in Congress and in state legislatures should not now seem surprised that there are significant bumps along the way.

This seems to me to be completely disingenuous. Having embraced the law since open enrollment began October 1, Californians have started nearly 180,000 applications with more beginning every day.

I know my time is limited, but I want to have a second to mention a conversation I had just last night with a (inaudible) town hall to my district on the central coast of California. One of the first callers I heard from was a mother from Santa Barbara. Her name's Meryl, and she wanted to tell me the story of her son.

Her son is 28 years old and he had been paying $425 a month for his insurance before the Affordable Care Act. She was happy to report that he has already applied through Covered California and has found a policy that works better for him. It has all the essential health benefits covered, which his former policy did not, and now will only cost him $109 a month.

This is significant savings for Meryl's son, and this is a story that's being repeated at least in California often. So there are millions of residents in many states who have now set up their own websites and marketplaces. In those states, tens of thousands of people are now as we speak signing up for coverage. And this is demonstrating that the Affordable Care Act is working.

In New York and Washington, over 30,000 people have enrolled. In Oregon, over 50,000 people have been enrolled. Kentucky, 31,000 people have been enrolled. We could go on and on. The success of the state exchanges, which is where this is meant to be implemented, shows how badly this law is wanted and needed, how much it will be of help to so many people who want quality, affordable health care.

So my three quick questions to you are this, Madam Speaker (ph). What is your assessment of how this first month have been gone -- has gone in the states that are running their own marketplaces, which this Congress intended that the Affordable Care Act work?

SEBELIUS: Well everything we hear from the state-based markets is that they are doing well. They have not submitted data yet. We, again, are working with them around a monthly schedule so that they will confirm Medicaid data and enrollment data. And we'll see the real numbers at the end of the month and make sure that the -- they're available to the public.

But everything we hear is that they see the same demand, they are eager to enroll folks and that that is going smoothly.

CAPPS: And what do you think this success shows about the demand and the interest for affordable health insurance on the part of constituents?

SEBELIUS: Well I don't think there's any question that in spite of a series of road blocks and blockades and a lot of misinformation driven by about a $400 million marketing campaign last year, Americans are eager to see what their benefits may be under the law, what their opportunities are, how to get health security for themselves and their families, and we want to make sure that they see those benefits.

The website is one of the ways to do that. The call center, on the ground enrollment, personal outreach, are a variety of ways, and I would tell your colleague, Mr. Congressman, I'd be happy to get you the list of the Nebraska folks who are on the ground. It's available easily. It's public record, so I'd be happy to send it to you, so you could share it with your insurance commissioner and governor.

UPTON: The gentlelady's time has expired.

Gentleman from the great state of Michigan, Mr. Rogers.

ROGERS: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here. Short time, get through some questions here, if I can.

Is it your testimony that the -- that there -- every night to try to increase the functionality of the system you're hot swapping codes?

So my understanding is that between 2:00 and 4:00, write new code, put it into the system, yes or no?

SEBELIUS: Clearly, I am not hot swapping code. There is a technical team...

(CROSSTALK)

ROGERS: No, no. You are in charge of the operation that hot swaps code on functionality. Is that -- you're trying to improve the functionality, yes?

So that happens every night, yes?

SEBELIUS: No, I don't think it does happen every night. It happens periodically during the hours of 1:00 and 5:00, but it is not a nightly feature.

ROGERS: Great.

Has each piece of that code that's been introduced in the system been security tested?

SEBELIUS: That's my understanding, yes, sir. And the testing...

ROGERS: Each piece of that code has been tested? Yes or no?

SEBELIUS: I don't know, but I can tell you that security...

ROGERS: That's a much safer answer, trust me.

SEBELIUS: ... is an ongoing operation that as code is loaded, you need to retest over and over and over again. So whether it's pretested, I can't tell you.

ROGERS: All right. You need to test the code.

Have any end-to-end security tests been conducted since healthcare.gov went live on October 1st, yes or no?

SEBELIUS: My understanding is, there's continuous testing as the -- our temporary authority to operate calls for.

ROGERS: Yes or no, has an end-to-end security test on healthcare.gov went live, yes or no?

SEBELIUS: I will find out exactly what testing they are doing. I know they are doing simultaneous testing as new code is loaded.

ROGERS: Are there any end-to-end security tests run after every new piece of code is put -- I'm not talking about testing the code now, I'm talking about an end-to-end security test.

SEBELIUS: I can tell you how...

ROGERS: Covers the cost of the boundaries...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: ... I can get you that information.

ROGERS: I can tell you they are not, and I'd be interested to hear why not.

Tab -- if you go to tab two quickly in your book, I'm going to read three things...

SEBELIUS: What book, sir?

ROGERS: You have a tab there. If you go to tab two -- right there.

Well, while you're looking, I'll read. It's dated September 27th, and it is to Marilyn Tavenner. Let me just -- a couple of pieces here.

"There are inherent security risks with not having all code tested in a single environment. Finally, the system requires rapid development and release of hot fixes and patches so it is not always available or stable during the duration of the testing."

Secondly, "The security contractor has not been able to test all of the security controls in one complete version of the system."

And if you look in the first part, which is most troubling at all, it says, "Due to system readiness issues, the security control assessment was only partly completed. This constitutes a risk that must be accepted before the marketplace day one operations."

And so let me tell you what you did.

You allowed the system to go forward with no encryption on back- up systems. They had no encryption on certain boundary crossings. You accepted a risk on behalf of every user of this computer that put their personal financial information at risk because you did not even have the most basic end-to-end test on security of this system.

Amazon would never do this. ProFlowers would never do this. Kayak would never do this.

This is completely an unacceptable level of security. And here's the scary part, we found out after the contractors last week that an end-to-end test hadn't been conducted on security, not functionality, because if it's not functioning, you know it's not secure.

Your ongoing hot patches without end-to-end tests: the private contractors told us it would take a very thorough two months just for an integrated end-to-end security test, that I'll tell you has not happened to date.

Why? Because you're constantly adding new code every night to protect the functionality of the system. You have exposed millions of Americans because you all, according to your memo, believed it was an acceptable risk.

Don't you think you had the obligation to tell the American people that we're going to put you in this system, but beware, your information is likely to be vulnerable?

Would you commit today, Secretary, to shut down the system and do an end-to-end security test so that these Americans can have their information...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: No, sir. If you read the memo...

ROGERS: Oh, I have read it.

SEBELIUS: ... say that weekly testing of our berta (ph) devices, including interface testing, daily, weekly scans are going on. This is a temporary authority...

ROGERS: (Inaudible), that's not what the memo says, number one, and number two, the contractors will tell you...

(CROSSTALK)

(UNKNOWN): Mr. Chairman, point of order. I think the witness ought to be allowed to answer what was a speech by the colleague, because he's raised a lot of issues.

UPTON: If the gentlelady will quickly answer.

ROGERS: (Inaudible) here today, that's...

UPTON: Does the secretary wish to respond briefly?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I would just say this document is a document signed by Administrator Tavenner, which discusses mitigation strategies for security that are ongoing and upgraded and a authorization to operate on a permanent basis will not be signed until these mitigation strategies are satisfied. It is under way right now, but daily and weekly monitoring and testing is under way.

ROGERS: Mr. Chairman, there are people using this system today and she's just admitted again the system isn't secure nor has (inaudible).

UPTON: The gentleman...

(UNKNOWN): Mr. Chairman, she didn't admit that. You said it, but she didn't say it.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

Mr. Doyle.

DOYLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, welcome.

Those of us who fought for this law, who voted for this law, have a vested interest in its success, and the concerns that you here expressed on this side of the panel are real, because we want to see Americans get health care.

I think it's somewhat disingenuous for my colleagues on the other side of the podium here to have this faux anger and this faux concern over a bill that they absolutely want to fail and have rooted for its failure and have voted over 40-some times to repeal this bill, never putting an alternative plan on the floor for the American people, but just to simply say they want to make sure this plan doesn't succeed.

And I think the real fear is, that the plan will succeed and the American people will learn of the real benefits of this plan, not the propaganda campaign that's gone on by the Republicans for the last three years.

Madam Secretary, I think one of the keys to success of this plan is that we get young people to enroll in this plan. And I have some questions about some enrollment concerns that I have.

Now I understand that you've said approximately 700,000 people have applied for coverage via the healthcare.gov and the state exchanges, is that -- is that...?

SEBELIUS: They've completed an application.

DOYLE: Right. Which is different from enrollment.

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

DOYLE: So my question is, are you expecting -- I know you don't have exact numbers yet, but are you expecting a large number or a small month number of enrollments during the first month?

What is your thoughts on that?

SEBELIUS: Well, our projections prior to launch were always that there would be a very small number at the beginning. We watch the Massachusetts trend, which started slowly and built. I think there's no question that given our flawed launch of healthcare.gov, it will be a very small number.

DOYLE: Yes, I mean, in the Massachusetts plan, I think the first month it was 123 people signed up, less than 1 percent of the overall first-year enrollment in that first month. And we saw the same kind of numbers in Medicare Part D the first month of open enrollment back in 2006.

Madam Secretary, young Americans are the most likely age group to be uninsured, and a lot of us are concerned because of the problems that we've been having with the website, that a lot of these young folks may not come back on; you know, they have very short attention spans.

I've got four kids that all work on the Internet, and if they can't get something in five minutes, they are on to something else.

What do we do, and what plans are in place by your department to encourage young people to go back and revisit that site and to make sure that we're getting young people looking at that site and accessing it?

SEBELIUS: Well, step number one is fix the site, because we don't want people to be invited back and then have a bad experience a second time around. I think that's absolutely right. The site is particularly important to tech-savvy younger generation folks who we need to enroll.

I think that we have -- so fixing the site is step one.

And step number two is getting information to folks that the law even exists. A lot of young people haven't followed this dialogue for the last three and a half years.

(CROSSTALK)

DOYLE: Yes, I think we need a real marketing campaign, and we really need to reach out to young people, especially at the end of November when you say this site is going to be working a lot better, to make sure they are checking that site out.

SEBELIUS: You bet.

DOYLE: One of my four kids is self-employed. He's 33 years old, paying about $140 a month for a Blue Cross plan. He's eligible for a subsidy. We browsed that site. He's gonna able to get coverage for about half of what he's paying right now, and that's good news for us, because I think my wife is paying his premium, so I think we're going to save the money.

But I think it's important we had to prod him to go on that site and enroll, and I think for a lot of young people, they are not going to do it unless it's easy, so it's important we get that fixed. Thank you.

SEBELIUS: I agree.

UPTON: Dr. Murphy, chairman of the oversight subcommittee.

MURPHY: Thank you, Madam Secretary, and welcome.

You had mentioned that the people who did the technology on the website made a number of mistakes, you mentioned Verizon. When we had them before our committee last week, they said it wasn't their fault they were told within HHS there was some problems there.

SEBELIUS: Sir, Verizon wasn't involved in the website (inaudible)...

(CROSSTALK)

MURPHY: Right, with the data, I understand, I'm sorry.

But they had a role, CGI had a role, other companies, et cetera. I'm just curious in this process, what decisions did you make that affected this for better or worse in terms of the data, the ease, or problems with the implement and being able to track how many people are actually enrolled?

SEBELIUS: My decisions (sic) specifically to design the website, I was not involved. I am prohibited to choose contractors. We go by the federal procurement, and I got regular reports on exactly what was done...

MURPHY: What about the part with regard to getting data in terms of how many people are even enrolled or trying to enroll, did you have any decisions in that process?

SEBELIUS: The application process, at this point, does not work end to end very well.

MURPHY: Right, I understand it doesn't work, that's obvious.

SEBELIUS: We do not have reliable data about the end of...

MURPHY: I'm just trying to find out, if you had asked them, to say look, I'm in charge of this, I'm going to want a regular report, how many people have tried to enroll, how many people have enrolled, have you -- did you ask that question?

SEBELIUS: We have prioritized for our contractors that specific fix, and believe me, the insurance companies are eager for us to get reliable data to make sure their data matches ours, and that is not there yet.

MURPHY: I'm just trying to -- I appreciate that. I'm trying to find out if you told them that was part of the plan and what they're doing.

Let me -- real quick, I'm hearing -- we're hearing from thousands of people who have had their policies canceled. In fact, I heard from one insurer in Pittsburgh that just canceled 30,000 individual policies.

Now, they said they expect 50,000 to 30,000 to enroll in the exchange plans. Just so you know, to date, so far, the number of people who have signed up for their plan is 10, 10.

Now I'm concerned a lot of these individuals and families aren't going to be able to make it by January 1, so I'm wondering, do you know how many families will not have been able to keep their insurance by January 1, do you have any matrix (sic) to help you understand what that is going to be?

SEBELIUS: Sir, by law that has been in place at the state level, insurance companies must give their customers a 90-day notice about a policy change or a plan cancellation.

MURPHY: I'm just wondering if you have a mechanism whereby you will know if something built in this system...

SEBELIUS: Will I know if your constituents signed up for an individual plan, no.

MURPHY: People across America.

And do we know how many policies will be canceled? I mean, is it 1,000, 10,000, 1 million, 5 million, do we know?

SEBELIUS: We know that in the individual market, a number of the plans having sold are not grandfathered and are not currently meeting the law. Those notices have gone out. We know there are about 12 million people in the individual market. A number of them have grandfathered plans. A number of them have plans which meet the essential health benefits. So I can try to...

MURPHY: Let me put a face on that.

Person named Paul wrote to me, and says, "I'm supposedly one of the families this act is supposed to help, but it's, in fact, is hurting more, and would make it harder for my family to live. We'll have less money for food and other essential items. I have a wife and four children to take care of."

Another person wrote, "I received -- I had a 2013 plan which if you include the premiums, and out of pocket total liability was $5,300. For 2014, the same program liability is $9,000.

Single mom writes, "I want to convey, I'm one of the millions of people who's having their health insurance canceled, because it does not meet the standards of Obamacare. I liked my insurance. I especially liked the price. And now I'm being forced to sign up for something that will be way more expensive. As a single mom who is self employed, I'm worried about how I'm going to pay my bills."

I hope you have a mechanism to track who these people are. She's not eligible for other subsidies, but the costs are going to be driving her down.

SEBELIUS: Well sir, again, I would suggest there is no requirement that any of those consumers sign up for a plan suggested by their company at a higher price. They have now options...

MURPHY: But if a plan changes...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: (OFF-MIKE) health underwriting, without preexisting conditions, with some guarantees around...

MURPHY: She's searching around and she can't find a plan she could afford.

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: (OFF-MIKE) they never had before.

MURPHY: She can't find a plan she can afford.

UPTON: Gentleman's time expired.

Gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Butterfield.

BUTTERFIELD: Mr. Chairman, before my time begins, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

UPTON: Yes, go ahead.

BUTTERFIELD: Mr. Chairman, I'm always sensitive to committee decorum and I want to ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to display the Democratic Twitter handle.

UPTON: Go ahead.

BUTTERFIELD: Hear no objection, thank you.

Secretary Sebelius, thank you so very much for coming today. I would like to ask you about the document that my Republican colleagues have just released.

This document is an authority to operate memorandum to operate the federally facilitated marketplace for six months and implement a security mitigation plan.

This document, as I understand it, describes security testing for healthcare.gov. It says that security testing of the marketplace was ongoing since its inception, and into September of this year. In fact, it says that, quote, "Throughout the three rounds of security control assessment testing, all of the security controls have been tested on different versions of the system." that's good news.

But the bad news is, that it goes on to say that, because of system readiness, a complete security assessment of all the security controls in one complete version of the system were not tested.

This document indicates that CMS postponed a final security assessment screening, but in its place, CMS did put in place a number of mitigation measures, and it concluded that these measures would mitigate any security risk.

Question, are you familiar with this document?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

BUTTERFIELD: Is it correct that this document recommends implementing a dedicated security team to monitor, track, and ensure the mitigation plan activities are completed?

SEBELIUS: Yes, it does.

BUTTERFIELD: Now is it correct that this document recommends monitoring and performing weekly testing on all berta (ph) devices, including Internet-facing web servers?

SEBELIUS: More than recommended, it's underway.

BUTTERFIELD: Is it correct this document recommends conducting daily and weekly scans?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

BUTTERFIELD: Does this document recommend conducting a full SEA test on the marketplace in a stable environment?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

BUTTERFIELD: Is it correct that this document recommends migrating the marketplace to CMS's virtual data center environment in the first quarter of next year?

SEBELIUS: Yes, it does.

BUTTERFIELD: My understanding is that an independent security expert, the MITRE Corporation, is performing security testing on the code that powers the website on an ongoing basis, is that correct?

SEBELIUS: That is correct, and MITRE did an assessment of the system, gave us a preliminary report, they are in the process of posting their final report. That did not raise flags about going ahead, and the mitigation strategy was put in place to make sure that we had a temporary authority to operate in place while the mitigation was going on, and then a permanent authority to operate will be signed.

BUTTERFIELD: Finally, do you have confidence in these and other measures you are taking to protect the security of Americans' personal information?

SEBELIUS: I do, sir.

BUTTERFIELD: Thank you.

This is the third time you've said it during the hearing, and we believe you. Thank you.

What you're telling us is that these remedial actions and the ongoing security testing from MITRE are protecting the security of the website. That's a message that it's important for the public to hear.

My Republican colleagues do not want this website to work.

I am convinced of that.

They want to block the ACA at all costs and even shut down the government to stop the law. For the last four years, they have taken every glitch, every simple glitch, and hiccup in the law and tried to exaggerate its significance, and that's happening today and it's so disappointing.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

UPTON: Dr. Burgess.

BURGESS: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I may make a unanimous consent request also?

UPTON: Yes, go ahead.

BURGESS: I would like to request unanimous consent my opening statement, which we were not allowed to be given could be made part of the record to this hearing.

UPTON: No -- no -- without objection.

BURGESS: And further, I do have a number of questions, many have come from constituents, I would also like to submit those as questions for the record...

UPTON: Without objection.

BURGESS: ... and ask the secretary for her attention to those so we can get answers, because they are, after all, important questions.

OK, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It just came to my attention that on CNN -- the -- CNN's website, that the site was hacked just last week, and I will be happy to make this available to you. I don't think...

SEBELIUS: The CNN website?

BURGESS: The -- CNN ran a story that the healthcare.gov website was hacked last week. And again, I will get this to you and would appreciate your response to that.

Mr. Terry had asked a question about -- he wanted to get the information about the number of people who'd signed up. You said you wouldn't provide that because it wasn't accurate.

Would you provide us with the number of people who have been able to enroll on the telephone? The president gave an 800-number during his speech. Could we get a number of people who've enrolled on the telephone?

SEBELIUS: No, sir, we do not have reliable enrollment data. We will have that to you by the middle of November as we committed to. We are collecting state data, we are collection telephone data, we are collecting paper data, we are collecting website data. We want it to be reliable and accountable and that's what you'll have to...

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: OK. Reclaiming my time. Telephone data doesn't seem like it would be that difficult to compile since the number is likely quite low.

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: The telephone goes through the system.

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: You have, or the president designated, I call him a glitch czar, Jeffrey Zients. Your familiar with his appointment to the -- to oversee...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I asked him to serve in this capacity, yes.

BURGESS: OK. Many of us on the Subcommittee of Oversight and Investigations in Energy and Commerce were not as comforted as you by that selection because if you'll recall, Mr. Zients' history with this subcommittee is not great. He was involved with Solyndra, we asked him to come and talk to us about Solyndra in 2011. He refused, requiring a subpoena to be issued by this -- by this subcommittee. Will you commit to making Mr. Zients available to our subcommittee for our questions?

SEBELIUS: Congressman, you are welcome to ask Mr. Zients to come before the committee. He is volunteering his services to us for a period of time. He has been appointed by the President to start in January as the head of the National Economic Council. He was the Deputy Director at OMB for Management and Performance. I am thrilled that he is willing to take on this assignment and help us drive the management, but...

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: Again, his -- his appearance here will be important. Now a lot of people are asking if the president's words leading up to this law, if they matter, and the statement in the Washington Post today edited the President's statement, saying, "If you like your health care plan, you'll be able to keep your health care plan if we deem it adequate," but that seems like a more operational statement, and especially if you go back just a few years into the Federal Register, and I'm quoting here from the Federal Register from July 23rd of 2010, just a few months after the law was signed. The -- the rule, or the interim rule for dealing with the grandfathering written in the Federal Record, "because newly-purchased individual policies are not grandfathered, the department expects that a large population of individual policies will not be grandfathered, covering up to and perhaps exceeding 10 million people."

I hope the president was apprised of that before he made these statements, because clearly his statement wasn't operational.

SEBELIUS: Again, that's an insurance company choice, and that was a snapshot of what the market looks like.

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: Your...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: The President made it clear, and our policy was to put a grandfather clause in both employer-based coverage and in individual coverage.

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: Right, but in the Federal Register, those were the comments that were recorded. Now, I do have to...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: No, this isn't a government takeover of anything. These are private insurance plans making private decisions.

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: I do have to ask you this. I do have to ask you this. You serve at the pleasure of the President, we're all aware of that. But we have had many of your employees here in front of this committee, and you do have to ask yourself, are these being purposely misleading, or are they really not that smart? So I'm going to ask you this morning, for the sake of the future of health care in this country, will you please ask for the resignation of Gary Cohen, because he's repeatedly come to this committee and misled us.

SEBELIUS: I will not, sir.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

(UNKNOWN): Mr. Chairman, point of personal privilege. I just think the record ought to be clear about Jeffrey Zients. He was invited with less than a week's notice to come before this committee. He couldn't make it that day, he asked for some other day, he went to OMB and had nothing to do with the Solyndra contract, and he did come before us and talk about it, but his sole role was to represent OMB and I don't think he ought to have any -- there ought to be any disparagement of Jeffrey Zients. He's a very well-regarded public servant.

UPTON: The gentleman says the statement will stand. Ms. Matsui?

MATSUI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Madam Secretary. Now we all agree the website problems must be resolved. It's this country invented and developed the Internet and the concept of the websites, so there are high expectations. The fact that the hired private contractors could not build a ready website nearly three years is inexcusable, and after it's fixed, I hope the administration will hold those at fault accountable. But we can't lose sight of the big picture, that when this is all said and done, every American will have affordable quality health insurance and health care.

This is the goal, I believe, of all Democrats and Republicans. The ACA's working in California, and it's working in my district in Sacramento, and I just want to tell you about a letter I got from a constituent. "Dear Congresswoman Matsui, as a self-employed contract employee, I've had individually-purchased health insurance for 11 years now. Insurance has gone up every year, sometimes more than once, insurance that wouldn't let me add my daughter when my ex- husband stopped his insurance policy that covered them both, insurance that I have underused for fear they would drop me, insurance that has just dropped me anyway because they decided they would no longer offer individual plans. This could have happened to me at any time. I'm so grateful that the Affordable Care Act provisions make it possible to get health insurance beginning in January for me and my daughter. As all this is happening, I have finished graduate school and started my own business. Slowly but surely things are happening and I expect to be hiring my first employees in the next six months. The provisions of the ACA are helping me in this too. I can clearly see what it will cost me to provide health benefits for my future employees, understand these costs, and build my business plan accordingly." And that is just one of the letters I have received.

Now, I've also heard from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle complain again and again about how health care reform is increasing health care costs. But the empirical evidence shows something quite different. The recent trends in Medicare spending growth are really quite remarkable. Medicare spending growth is at historically low levels, growing by less than one-half of 1 percent in fiscal year 2012, following slow growth in 2010 and 2011. The same is true on the private side of health care. Personal consumption expenditures on health care, everything from health insurance to drugs to hospital care, rose by just over 1 percent in the past year. This is the slowest increase in nearly 50 years.

Madam Secretary, what does this data tell us about what has happened to health care costs since the ACA became law?

SEBELIUS: Well Congresswoman, you're absolutely right. In the last three and a half years since the President signed the Affordable Care Act, we have seen a great slowdown in the extraordinary cost increases year in and year out for health care in the Medicare plan, in the Medicaid plan, in private insurance, and in underlying health care costs, which affect every American. Some of that has to do with some of the features that are currently in place around different care delivery and different payment systems that we are helping to drive, given the tools that we have with the Affordable Care Act, more quality outcomes, trying to prevent hospital readmissions, looking at hospital-acquired infections, medical homes that prevent people in the first place or help them stay healthy in their own homes and in their own places.

MATSUI: So it's true that the private insurance costs are growing at the slowest rate in decades also, is that true?

SEBELIUS: That is true.

MATSUI: So am I also correct that the ACA Act (sic) premiums are coming in even lower than projected by experts like the CBO?

SEBELIUS: Well, they're about, on an average, about 16 percent lower than was estimated, that those premiums would be, and that's the premium, not accounting for the number of uninsured or underinsured Americans who will then qualify for financial help. Since they don't have employer coverage, they get some help from the taxpayers paying for that coverage.

MATSUI: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

UPTON: Dr. Gingrey?

GINGREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Secretary, when you spoke at the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte last September, one of the first statements you made about the Affordable Care Act was, quote, "but for us Democrats, Obamacare is a badge of honor, because no matter who you are, what stage of life you're in, this law is a good thing. First, if you already have insurance you like, you can keep it," and I end the quote. I'd call this a red herring that misled voters, intentional or not. Now perhaps had you known that millions would lose their coverage, families would face financial disaster, as one constituent recently told me, or that the exchange rollout would be plagued by a multitude, multiple delays we've seen, you would not consider such a badge of honor.

GINGREY: The fact is, your words and those of the President as he campaigned last year, that "if you already have insurance you like, you can keep it," seemed to be directly refuted by the millions of cancellation notices already sent to Americans just in the past few weeks. Whether your statement was inaccurate, or as Mr. Hoyer said yesterday, "not precise enough," it does strike me that millions of individuals who, by listening to speeches like yours, voted, believing one thing, now find themselves without coverage and are now scrambling to find coverage in a marketplace that offers more expensive plans with fewer options.

In response to my constituents' calls for help, I created a portal on my website -- no patches or fixes needed -- that allows those who have experienced problems to reach out and tell me about their personal experiences.

In just the last few days, my office has received dozens of complaints regarding increases in their monthly premiums. I received one such notice from a mother in her early 50s who just received a notice that not only will her insurance premiums double, but she will also have to switch insurance -- insurers to keep her doctors due to the effect of the Affordable Care Act.

Can you imagine receiving notices like this? I can tell you that, just in my district, the 11th of Georgia, many more are experiencing this situation. Madam Secretary, this is akin to telling seniors that in a few weeks they're Medicare coverage will be dropped, or their premiums would double.

Now, I know that neither you nor the administration would ever advocate for such a policy. Yet, here you are subjecting those currently in the individual market to such government intervention. And I would hope that you would agree with me in recognizing that these increases are a heavy hardship on my constituents -- on all of our constituents, Republican or Democrat.

Now I'll get to my questions. You know the health care law included a hardship exemption from the individual mandate. Yet, the administration has failed to finalize the application form for the hardship exemption three and one-half years after we passed this law. As of today, can an individual apply for a hardship exemption from the individual mandate on healthcare.gov, yes or no?

SEBELIUS: I don't know.

GINGREY: I do: It's no.

On October 15th, Politico reported that if the online system for getting into Obamacare coverage is rickety, the system for getting out of the mandate doesn't even exist yet. HHS says, it will take another month at least for the administration to finalize the forms for the hardship exemption from the individual mandate.

Why has it taken three and one-half years to finalize a simple application form for an exemption from the individual mandate?

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, as you know, the individual mandate is not in place until next year. We have made it very clear that if somebody is Medicaid eligible in a state that doesn't choose...

(CROSSTALK)

GINGREY: My last question and my last second.

An estimated 16 million people in the individual market have or will receive cancellation notices stating their health insurance coverage does not meet minimum coverage requirements of the Affordable Care Act.

The bill specifically grants you, Madam Secretary, the power to determine the criteria for a hardship exemption. Will you provide all of these individuals a hardship exemption since the Affordable Care Act is taking away their plan? Will do you that?

SEBELIUS: No, sir. And I think those numbers are far from accurate: 95 percent of Americans who have health insurance will be in a continuous plan -- Medicare, Medicaid, employer-based, V.A. -- 95 percent.

Five percent who are in the individual market, a portion of those 5 percent -- a portion of them, about 12 million people -- a fraction of those 12 million will have a plan that doesn't meet the criteria and has not been grandfathered in.

They are indeed receiving notices. Many of those individuals -- half of them -- will be eligible for financial help getting a new plan and they have many more choices in the marketplace. So we will not have a blanket exemption.

GINGREY: Sounds like a hardship to me, Madam Secretary.

UPTON: The gentleman's time expired.

Ms. Christensen.

CHRISTENSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you Madam Secretary for being here and thank you for all that you and your staff at HHS has done in implementing the Affordable Care Act to insure that it would provide the many benefits to children, to women, to Medicare beneficiaries and to ensure security to those who already have insurance as well as lower costs.

Of course, the biggest complaint has been about the application and the enrollment website, but we have heard over and over from you that those are being addressed.

But you would recall and I know my colleagues would recall that Congressman Rush and I have always been concerned about those who do not have Internet access, those who are uncomfortable using the Internet and would not use it.

So I just wanted to just remind everyone that there are other avenues for enrolling either by telephone or by paper, either alone or with the help of a certified, you know, application assistant.

But my question goes to one of the rumors that has been circulating. There many rumors about how the Affordable Care Act has affected part-time workers. And some of my colleagues on the other side claim that the companies are moving workers to part-time jobs, because of the health care reform law and that low wage workers are being detrimentally affected.

And I understand why these claims are being made as just another part of the on going effort to undermine the law. Would you take a few minutes and just set the record straight on the part-time issue?

SEBELIUS: Certainly.

Ninety-five percent of businesses in this country are small businesses; under 50 full-time employees. And there is no responsibility that any of those employers have to provide health coverage for their employees.

On the other hand, there are now tax credits available for some of the smaller employers who want to offer coverage to actually come into the marketplace.

For the other businesses, the businesses hiring 50 or more, there is a standard that says an employee is considered full-time if he or she works 30 hours a week. And that really came from a market snapshot with help from the small business administration of where employee benefits were in the private market based on hours of work.

What was a part-time or a full-time employee?

What we know about the economic data is the high point of part- time workers was in 2008 and 2009 at the height of the last recession. It has been decreasing each and every year. There is no data to support the fact that there is an up tick based on the impending Affordable Care Act. I'm sure that there may be some individual employers making some business decisions about how many workers they want full-time and how many part-time. But I can tell you there is no economic data or employment data that supports the notion that this is an effect of the law.

CHRISTENSEN: True, and in fact, it's my understanding, that part-time workers are at the lowest percentage of workers in many, many years right now.

SEBELIUS: Well, and for the first time, as you know Congresswoman, part-time workers will have options for affordable health care. They never had that before. They've never had options in the marketplace. They never had some health purchasing coverage for themselves and their families.

Their full-time colleagues have, but they have not. So they will have options.

CHRISTENSEN: And just to be clear, I had another really long question, but the last part of it -- it would be fair to say that the every point along the way you expected this website to work based on everything that you have been told by the contractors up until that point.

SEBELIUS: I expected it to work and I desperately want to get it working. I....

CHRISTENSEN: More than anyone else, I am sure.

SEBELIUS: ... can't tell you how frustrated I am, and we are committed to fixing it. The only thing that I think builds back the confidence of the public is fixing it.

CHRISTENSEN: Thank you.

UPTON: Gentlelady's time expired.

Mr. Scalise.

SCALISE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman for holding the hearing and thank you, Secretary Sebelius, for being with us.

Last week when the contractors built the system were here, I asked them all under oath if they had actually delivered the system they were contracted to build. And all four of them answered yes. I want to ask you, did the contractors deliver the system that you contracted them to build?

SEBELIUS: I don't think I can accurately answer that question. What we know is we've a system that doesn't function properly...

SCALISE: We definitely know that.

SEBELIUS: As we fix things, we'll know more about what is broken along the way. And I'll be able to...

SCALISE: So would someone in your office know -- somebody in your office oversaw this implementation and received the product. And they either said, this is the product we contracted and paid hundreds of millions of dollars to build or it wasn't.

Does somebody have the ability to get that information?

SEBELIUS: Well, I think that we can say that products tested individually, verified individually.

SCALISE: But clearly was an integrated system.

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: (OFF-MIKE) don't work well together.

SCALISE: Well, but, you know, I used to write programs for a living. I developed software products for a living.

If you're developing an integrated system, it's irrelevant if one isolated component works by itself. But when you plug it in together it doesn't work, that's a system that doesn't work.

One of the question I had and others had, somebody in your agency made a decision weeks -- literally weeks before the deployment -- to change the system. Instead of going from a browser ability where somebody just like on Kayak or just like on Amazon.com could go shop for products, look at prices before they purchase, which is how consumers are used to doing this. Y'all made the decision to change it around and gather all their information first before you could let them see prices.

Was that you who made that decision?

SEBELIUS: No, sir.

SCALISE: Was that Ms. Tavenner?

SEBELIUS: It was Ms. Tavenner and a team who looked at not imposing additional...

SCALISE: Did that team make the decision because once they knew once people actually saw the prices, and we're getting reports from all of our constituents of dramatically higher prices than what they were expecting.

Did you make the decision because you knew that when they saw the prices they might not want to buy the product so you wanted to gather their information first?

SEBELIUS: Sir, first I did not make the decision. I was informed about the decision.

We didn't...

SCALISE: Do you agree with the decision?

SEBELIUS: ... rolling off a number of features. And clearly they can see the products. No, there is no requirement to buy anything.

SCALISE: Look, I spent two hours trying to get into the system. I never once got to a point where I could see a price. I did get kicked out many times and got some of those blank screens other people got.

I do want to share stories with you from some of my constituents because I -- we started a page on our -- on Facebook and on Twitter. We are collecting what's called Share with Scalise. People are sending us stories. And we're getting lots of stories from my constituents.

I want to read you a few of them.

Randall (ph) from Mandeville (ph) said "My health care premium went up 30 percent to over $350 a month increase."

We had Michelle (ph) from Slidell (ph), "Our insurance premiums are going up $400 a month and our deductible has increased."

And then you have got Shawn (ph) from Covington (ph), who said, "My current plan through United Health Care is no longer being offered in 2014 due to Obamacare. In fact, I received a letter stating that the new health care law was indeed the reason for the removal of my current health care plan."

Madam Secretary, what you would tell Shawn (ph), who liked his plan and now has lost it? And he was promised by you and the president he'd be able to keep that plan.

What would you tell Shawn (ph) now that he has lost his plan?

SEBELIUS: I would tell Shawn (ph) to shop in the marketplace and out of the marketplace.

SCALISE: Do you really think that's acceptable answer to Shawn?

SEBELIUS: If Shawn (ph) -- again if United chose not to keep Shawn's (ph) plan in effect for Shawn (ph)...

SCALISE: Because of the law. This is the (inaudible).

SEBELIUS: Sir, the law said if you keep Shawn's (ph) plan in place, if he liked his plan, if you only...

SCALISE: But Shawn (ph) liked his plan...

SEBELIUS: ... to Shawn (ph), then the plan is still there.

SCALISE: You and I may disagree over who you work for. I work for Shawn (ph). You work for Shawn (ph), Madam Secretary. Shawn (ph) lost his plan that he liked. And there are thousands and millions of Shawns (ph) throughout this country that lost the plan they liked because some bureaucrat in Washington said we think your plan is not good enough even though you like it, even though you were promised can you keep it, you're now not able to keep that plan.

I think you deserve to give Shawn (ph) a better answer than you just have to go shop for something else even though you lost your plan.

UPTON: The gentleman's time -- the gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. McNerney?

MCNERNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Madam Secretary for coming today.

I'm going to follow up on Mr. Doyle's line of questioning. One concern I have with the fallout from the website is that many users who tried to sign up and were discouraged because of problems will now be too discouraged to come back once the site is fixed.

So what do you plan to do to get those folks to come back?

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, we intend to invite them back formally by e-mail, by message. But we don't want to do that until we're confident that they will have a different experience.

So fixing the site is step one. And then inviting people back to the site to make it clear that when our timetable is fulfilled, they have four months to shop for affordable health coverage on a fully functioning site.

We know we're going to have to spend special time on young and healthy Americans who don't start out thinking they need insurance, aren't aware of the law, certainly don't want to use a failed or flawed site. So we're have to spend some particular attention on them.

MCNERNEY: Thank you.

Have the software specifications for the website and its related software elements, including the test specifications, has that changed since the initial rollout?

SEBELIUS: I know that there certainly are some changes because, since October 1st -- I'm sorry.

MCNERNEY: Yes, since the rollout, the specifications.

SEBELIUS: Well, we -- the specifications haven't changed. We are certainly fixing, as I say, speed and reliance is one of the issues we're taking a look at. That's the performance side.

But there also are some functionality sides that things do not work as they can, including the enrollment passed on to insurers. So we are fixing functionality. And I don't think that's a change in the specs. I think it is actually making the system work the way it should.

MCNERNEY: Well, are you -- or is the department doing a prioritization on the problems?

SEBELIUS: Yes.

MCNERNEY: Could you describe that a little bit?

SEBELIUS: Yes, as of last week when Jeff Zients joined us for this short-term project, we asked him to lead a sort of management team. We have pulled in all of our contractors as well as additional talent that they may have available.

We have talked to tech folks in and out of the private sector and insurance, some of their tech experts to get all eyes and ears, made a full assessment, developed a plan for fixes along the way, have a punch list for going after those fixes.

And we are doing a daily tech briefing and blog to tell people what we have found, what we have fixed, what's coming next, what the functionality is and we intend to do that until it's fully functional.

MCNERNEY: Well, thank you.

Madam Secretary, looking past the initial problems with the ACA rollout, do you think that the Affordable Care Act will be successful in bending the health care cost curve and reducing the fraction of our national economy that goes for health care?

SEBELIUS: Well, I think that we have already had some success. I think the goal is to continue to achieve that, a fully insured population arguably with preventative care, with an opportunity to see a primary care doctor and not go through the emergency room will in and of itself reduce costs.

Having people identified earlier who may have serious problems and managing those problems will reduce health costs. But I think the delivery system also needs some considerable help in paying for not a number of procedures, number of tests, number of prescriptions but paying for health outcomes.

MCNERNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Mr. Latta?

LATTA: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And Madam Secretary, thanks very much for being with us today. Appreciate your testimony so far today.

What I'd like to do is I'll get these to you because there are so many we've received. These are questions that we've received from our constituents back home, specifically about what's going on with the website and for them.

And so what I'll do, I'd like to get those to you. But there is a lot of questions here and a lot of thoughts gone into a lot of these questions.

But if I could start with last week's testimony when our -- four of the contractors were here. And in one of the questions that I had posed to Ms. Campbell from CGI, in her testimony she had stated that they delivered the medicare.gov and also the federalreporting.gov.

And I'd asked at that time, were these sites more or less complicated than the site that we were talking about here today?

And she said, of course, the site today was more complicated.

And in the questioning and from her testimony -- and we've been hearing about this end-to-end testing that wasn't happening, that we had individuals out there saying that about two weeks had been done, but I had asked her about was there sufficient enough time when they did medicare.gov?

And the response that she gave me back was on medicare.gov, which was a less complicated site -- and she stated that we had sufficient time to test the system before it went live.

And I asked her in a follow-up then, what was that sufficient time?

And she said we had a number of months before the system went live at that time.

And then -- and I just want to make sure, because again, you know, sometimes things don't get reported accurately.

But in the "U.S. News and World Report" on October the 18th of this year -- and there is some questions going back and forth. And I just want to make sure that, you know, that you were quoted properly.

Said, "'After two weeks of review', the HHS secretary concluded, 'we didn't have enough testing specifically for high volumes for a very complicated project. The online insurance marketplace needed five years of construction and a year of testing,' she said. 'We had two years and almost no testing.'"

Is that correct?

SEBELIUS: I don't know the quote. I'd never suggested that we needed five years. I don't know where that is from.

(CROSSTALK)

LATTA: Well, that's one of the things we're going to check.

SEBELIUS: We clearly did not ever have five years. The law was signed in (inaudible) 2010.

LATTA: Well, let me -- and then last week you were -- when you were down in Texas you were being asked by a reporter about the system and the launch. And one of the parts of the question was that, at what point did you realize the system wasn't going to be working the way that you envisioned before the launch and why didn't we stop it before the launch?

LATTA: And, again, this is what was reported.

"We knew that if we had another six months we would probably test further. But I don't think anyone fully realized both the volume caused such problems but volumes also exposed some of the problems we had."

Now going back, though, to Ms. Campbell's statement that they tested more extensively on a system that was not as complicated, but HHS, CMS decided to go forward with only a very short period of testing. Do you think that was acceptable?

SEBELIUS: Well clearly looking back, it would have been ideal to do it differently. We had a product that frankly people have been waiting for decades to have access to affordable health care.

Medicare existed well before the website. Medicare is a program that started 50 year ago. The website was an additional feature for consumer ease and comfort. And so they were not launching Medicare. They were not delivering health benefits to seniors. They were putting together an additional way to enroll in Medicare.

I would suggest, sir, that we had deadlines in the law that people had benefits starting January 1. We wanted a extensive open enrollment period so that a lot of people who were not familiar with insurance, didn't know how to choose a doctor or choose a plan, had never been in this marketplace, or people who needed to understand fully what the law offered had ample time to do that.

So the date that I was, again, required to select for open enrollment, that's again part of the statute. How long would open enrollment be? We picked that data. All the contractors that began early in this process in the fall of 2010 when we issued -- I'm sorry, 2011 when we issued the initial contracts to CGI and QSSI knew the October 1 date. That was not changed. It wasn't added to.

As we got closer to the system, one of the reasons, again, that we pared down what needed to launch on October 1 was an attempt to minimize the risk to the system, to get people to their ability to see clearly what they were entitled to, what the plans were, and if those chose to, to enroll. Clearly the testing should have been longer, should have been more sufficient.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

LATTA: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Mr. Braley?

BRALEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Secretary people who are watching this hearing might be under the assumption that there's some kind of political debate going on over the Affordable Care Act, but I think people in Iowa don't care anything about who's winning the political debate. They want these problems fixed and they want them fixed now. And I think that's the responsibility of everyone in this room to make sure that that happens.

I tried to go into the marketplace on October 7 and I encountered problems immediately dealing with the security code questions which required you to select dates. One of them was type a significant date in your life. Today is my birthday, so I put that in. I tried three different ways of entering that date and got a message each time, important, this is not a valid answer. Same thing for the third date entry.

And a lot of times when you registering online for anything and you have to put a date in, there will be a little prop there that tells you what the format is you're required to enter. Do you know, have we solved this problem in the security code area?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir. One of the initial issues was just getting people into the site and the ID proofing, which is a two-step process. One is that you give some preliminary information and you set up a password.

But the second to ensure that your personal data can't be hacked, can't be interfered with is the second step where some personalized questions which only can be verified by you are indeed part of that. Again, that was a -- an initial hold up in the system. We focused a lot of attention on that in the first several days.

It was fixed, only to then discover that there were system problems throughout the application. And that piece has been fixed, but I would suggest it also was a function of trying to make sure we had the highest security standards, that we were not cavalier about someone's personal information being able to be addressed and attached. And it -- it was a functionality that didn't perform properly but does now.

BRALEY: One of the things that keeps coming up in this hearing because you are from Kansas is references to "The Wizard of Oz." And people went to see the wizard because of the wonderful things that he did.

The Affordable Care Act is doing a lot of great things in Iowa. The Des Moines Register wrote that Iowans buying health insurance on the government's new online marketplace will face some of the lowest premiums in the country. It's increasing competition in our state. Iowa consumers are able to choose from 40 health plans in the marketplace.

You've mentioned the growth of health care spending is at the slowest rate in 50 years. Fifty thousand Iowa seniors have received prescription drug rebates. Bans on preexisting conditions are

allowing people to get coverage and switch carriers, and now insurance premium increases are subject to review and can be rejected by the -- the people reviewing those plans.

But all of these good things don't mean anything unless we solve these problems. And what I need to know is how confident are you that the problems will be fixed by December 1?

SEBELIUS: Well again, Congressman, I have committed to that date because that is the assessment of both inside and outside experts have analyzed. And I think they kicked all the tires and looked at all the systems. I know that there's no confidence in that date until we deliver on the date. I'm well aware of that, and that's on me.

BRALEY: Since Americans were supposed to have six months to sign up, would you support ensuring they still have six months by extending the open enrollment period for two more months?

SEBELIUS: At this point, Congressman, they will have fully four months of fully functional all ways to sign up. And again, there are ultimate ways and the website right now that people are getting through.

The open enrollment period is extraordinarily long. It's about six times as long as a typical generous open enrollment period. And it's important for the insurance partners to know who is in their pool so again they can stay in the market next year and know who they're insuring.

So we think that the timetable will allow people four months' time to fully use the website. They can use it right now. They can use the call center. They can go to navigators. They can enroll.

UPTON: Gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Harper?

HARPER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here today. I'm sure there are other things you'd rather be doing, but we welcome the opportunity to have this conversation.

I'm going to ask a clerk to bring you a document for you to look at so I can ask you a couple of questions. If you can go to page eight on that, I have highlighted an item there. But this is a copy of a CGI slideshow from October 11 discussing technical issues that must be addressed within the website.

And on page eight of what I've handed you, CGI recommended that CGI and CMS have a review board to agree on which issues can technically be solved and which should politically be solved. Was such a review board convened?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I cannot tell you. I've never seen this document and I'm not aware of this recommendation.

HARPER: But CGI is responsible for the website, correct?

SEBELIUS: CGI is responsible for the application.

HARPER: For the application. Does it surprise you that in the slideshow that they gave October 11 they acknowledged political reasons for (inaudible)?

SEBELIUS: Sir, again, I've never seen this document. I have no idea what that means. Did you ask CGI when they came last week?

HARPER: Can you find out for us if such a review board was done and if any decisions were made on political reasons or any other reasons and find that out for us?

SEBELIUS: Sir, that question needs to go to CGI, but I can -- I can ask them to report to you.

HARPER: Well, if you would do that..

SEBELIUS: This is their document, if I understand it. This is not our document.

HARPER: Yes. Would you turn to page nine of that document please? And it states challenges on page nine in this presentation by CGI. And it says under challenges, unable to determine at this time whether low enrollment counts are attributable to system issues or due to users choosing not to select or enroll in a plan.

So those are two completely different issues obviously. If it is a system issue, that's something you have confidence at some point will be resolved. Correct?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

HARPER: And if it's a user selection issue, that's an entirely different story, is it not?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

HARPER: OK. Now when you used the phrase earlier about a punch list, that's -- that's like having somebody move into a house. Someone's buying a new house and they go through and they've been told this house is going to be ready for you to move in on October 1. They load up the van, they come in, and they get in and it's not finished. Part of the plumbing's not right. The wiring's wrong and -- and they go in.

This creates the situation where, you know, we -- health care shouldn't be a zero-sum game. I mean, we want to be fair to everyone. We want to -- we want to help people who are vulnerable. But at the same time, we shouldn't have to hurt folks.

HARPER: We've got people in my district, in my state who are getting notices of cancellation. They're being told of higher premiums that they're having. And these are great concerns that we have. And how do we work through that?

And I want to say I appreciate you accepting responsibility for these initial rollout failures that we've had. But who is ultimately responsible? It is the president, correct?

SEBELIUS: For the website?

HARPER: The president is ultimately responsible for the rollout, ultimately.

SEBELIUS: No, sir. We are responsible for the rollout.

HARPER: But who do you answer to?

SEBELIUS: I answer to the president.

HARPER: All right. So is the president not ultimately responsible like a company CEO would be?

SEBELIUS: Sir, he's the president of the United States. I have given him regular reports and those -- I am responsible for the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. That's what he asked me to do. That's what I'll continue to do.

HARPER: So you're saying the president is not responsible for HHS?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I didn't say that.

HARPER: OK, so the president ultimately is responsible. While I think it's great that you're a team player and taking responsibility, it is the president's ultimate responsibility, correct?

SEBELIUS: You clearly -- whatever. Yes, he is the president. He is responsible for government programs.

HARPER: My time expired.

UPTON: The gentleman's time expired.

Mr. **Lujan.**

LUJAN: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. Before I begin, I'd like to ask unanimous consent to submit into the record some articles from New Mexico publications, first entitled "Small Business: Owner Health Exchange Will Save Me $1,000 A Month."

UPTON: Without objection.

LUJAN: I see my time did begin there. So I'll try to get through this, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, I was intrigued by a line of questioning by Congressman Green asking about the individual marketplace. How volatile was the individual marketplace before the Affordable Care Act became law?

SEBELIUS: I would say it wasn't a mark marketplace at all. It was unprotected, unregulated, and people were really on their own.

LUJAN: Madam Secretary, the Kaiser Family Foundation reports have over 50 percent churn out of individuals that have coverage and individual market churn out of coverage every year. They either lose coverage, they're priced out or drop it.

Is that consistent with what you're aware of?

SEBELIUS: That's an accurate snapshot. About a third of the people are in for about six months. And over half are in for a year or less.

LUJAN: So individuals that were in the individual marketplace before the passage of the Affordable Care Act did not have the same protections as those in group coverage?

SEBELIUS: That's true.

LUJAN: And would those individuals in the individual marketplace sometimes have higher co-pays?

SEBELIUS: Higher co-pays, unlimited out of pocket costs for often coverage that was medically underwritten or excluded whatever medical condition they had in the first place.

LUJAN: So these were typically one-year contracts. If they used the plan because they got sick nor a car descent or a victim of domestic violence, sometimes they would be thrown off the plans or their rates would go up?

SEBELIUS: Yes.

LUJAN: I think that's important to note, Madam Secretary. And I'm intrigued as well that my understanding is that last month HHS conducted an analysis that found that nearly six out of uninsured Americans getting coverage through the marketplace will pay $100 a month. Is that correct?

SEBELIUS: They'll have a plan available for less than $100 if that is their choice. Yes.

LUJAN: And that number would be even higher -- would be better if more states chose the option of using federal funds to expand Medicaid to cover the low income population?

SEBELIUS: Definitely. That's just a marketplace snapshot. Those are people that will be in the marketplace.

LUJAN: Madam Secretary, I don't think I heard anyone from the other side of the aisle today -- my Republican colleagues, ask you how can Congress work with you and support you in fixing this website and fixing this problem?

I hope that we all agree we want this website fixed.

I would yield to anyone that would disagree.

Seeing no one accepting that. I'm glad to hear that we agree with this.

Now Madam Secretary, what can Congress do to work with you to fix this website?

SEBELIUS: Well, I'm not sure that there is hands on work that you can do. Maybe we have some technical expertise, but I would say getting accurate information to constituents is helpful.

Letting people know that they can check out the facts in the law. That they may be entitled to some financial support.

That cancellation of policies means that the policy that they had may not exist, but they have a lot of choices of new policies and a law that now says they must be insured in a new policy.

That they don't have to be insured by their company at a higher price.

LUJAN: I appreciate that, Madam Secretary.

Going back to the individual marketplace, Madam Secretary, did this Congress in previous years before the Affordable Care Act make it illegal for health insurance companies to raise rates on someone after they submitted a claim for going to the hospital or becoming sick or getting rid of preexisting conditions?

SEBELIUS: No, sir.

LUJAN: Madam secretary, one last note here.

It seems that we've received some horrible news that there are bad actors already taking place of fraudulent web sites that imitate the health care exchange or misleading seniors into disclosing their personal information.

I've signed on to a letter to you led by my colleague Representative Raul Ruiz out of California to request that you prioritize fraud prevention efforts.

What has the administration done to prevent the fraudulent acts and protect personal information?

SEBELIUS: I can tell you, Congressman, the president felt very strongly that, that need to be part of our outreach effort, which is it why the attorney general and I convened representatives of state attorneys general, insurance commissioners, the U.S. attorneys and the Justice Department and the Federal Trade Commission -- which has jurisdiction -- to make sure that we first got out ahead of some of this developing consumer outreach.

No one should ever give personal health information, because personal health information is not needed for the policies any longer. That's a red flag. We want to make sure that people turn over

potential fraudulent acts. We have put training in place for navigators. We have our law enforcement...

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

I would just note that we -- with the indulgence of the secretary, we're hoping that we can have all members ask some questions, but we also know that with four minutes we're going to have a little trouble.

So I'm going to ask unanimous consent that we try to limit our questions and answers to no more than two minutes.

And I talked to Mr. Waxman.

Is that okay?

Because otherwise we will -- there will be a lot of folks who will not be able to ask a question at all.

(UNKNOWN): Three of us.

SEBELIUS: And Mr. Chairman, I would submit that if the questions get submitted we would be happy to provide timely answers also.

UPTON: OK, so can I do that?

So with that we'll try two minutes.

Mr. Lance?

LANCE: I guess I won the Lottery on the two minutes, Madam Secretary.

(LAUGHTER)

UPTON: Time has expired. OK.

(LAUGHTER)

LANCE: 20 seconds, Mr. Chairman.

On the website, Madam Secretary, the contractors testified last week that they needed more than two weeks for end to end testing. Why in your opinion was there not more than two weeks?

SEBELIUS: Again, we have the products, the insurance policies themselves by companies were loaded into the system. So we could test up until then but it wasn't until September -- mid-September that that was done. Again, the contractors said we would have loved more testing time, but we think we're ready to go ahead.

LANCE: I believe that will ultimately be a dispute between CMS and HHS and the contractors and if there is anything question do regarding that because, obviously that, didn't work. And I had thought given this as the signature issue with the president that the website would be ready.

Number two, in my judgment the president's statements were overstatement overstatements. The four Pinnochios is an indication of that. There's a report in the New Jersey newspaper this is morning that 800,000 people in New Jersey who purchased their policies in individual or small employer markets will be affected by this.

Mr. Walden, in a previous question, mentioned the fact that in an individual market you would be able to keep your policy grandfathered. Yet regulations issued by HHS say that grandfathered status would not be a continued for so much as a $5 change in a co-pay.

Is that accurate?

Do you believe that that is a significant change?

SEBELIUS: Sir, we gave, I think in, the grandfather regulations a guide for how pricing could change, medical inflation and I think it was in most cases plus 15 percent.

There were some individual consumer outfacing issues that were more rigid than that, but I would say that in terms of having companies being able to collect a profit margin, that was certainly built into the grandfather status.

LANCE: I think that's too little a change, respectfully.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Tonko?

TONKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

TONKO: And welcome, Honorable Secretary. Thank you for fielding our questions and for responding when you were extended the courtesy to offer a response.

As a strong supporter of the Affordable Care Act, I'm frustrated and I think it's fair to say the American people are frustrated as well. And I heard you here many times this morning say you're frustrated.

I think, by and large, people want this law to work. When I talk to folks back home in the capital region of New York that I represent, even people who opposed the law initially aren't rooting for the failure of the Affordable Care Act. Instead, they want Congress to come together to fix these problems so that we can move on to real issues that matter like creating jobs and growing the economy.

My home state of New York, which also experienced Web site problems at the outset, has now completed enrollment determinations on over 150,000 New Yorkers, with more than 31,000 having already signed up for quality low-cost health insurance.

Given that many states have had success in overcoming these initial Web site issues, has HHS looked at what these state Web sites are doing as it searches for solutions to fix Healthcare.gov?

SEBELIUS: Absolutely. And we shared a lot of the information going in. I think that the hub feature that we have in our Web site that all states are using, including the state of New York, is fully functional. And that's good news for New York and California and others who are running their own state Web sites.

But we are learning from them. We've shared information with them. And we are eager for all the help and assistance moving forward.

TONKO: Thank you. Similarly, many states made the illogical choice of rejecting Medicaid expansion contained in the ACA that would help some of their poorest citizens get access to the health care situation.

This is despite the fact that Medicaid expansion is almost entirely financed by federal dollars. Can you comment broadly on HHS's plan in the future to encourage more states to run their own marketplaces and expand Medicaid so that the law can function as designed?

SEBELIUS: Well, absolutely. Most recently last week the state of Ohio did move into the Medicaid market. And we now have 30 governors, I think 27 states have fully completed the process, another three are in the process.

Republicans and Democrats, who -- some of whom sued us about the constitutionality of the act who are now deciding that for the citizens of their state they want to be part of the expanded Medicaid.

And we will continue to have those conversations. It's not just about the marketplace. It's also about Medicaid.

TONKO: Thank you very much.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

Dr. Cassidy?

CASSIDY: You said that only if -- an individual policy is only canceled if it changes significantly. But to be clear, after May 2010 if co-insurance went up by any amount, even by a dollar, according to your regulations, that would not qualify as a grandfathered clause. Just to add that out there for the record. I gather even by a dollar.

That said, I get a letter from someone in my district, Adrienne (ph). She says that -- oh, she lost her coverage. She lost her coverage because spousal coverage is gone. She has gone on the exchange. She doesn't qualify for a subsidy, but that her premium and out-of-pocket costs under any plan is $10,000 a year.

She feels -- she writes this. She feels betrayed by her government. Now she has to sit there asking herself, is this fair? If you were she, do you think that this would be fair?

SEBELIUS: Dr. Cassidy, I want to start by the amount that you gave is not accurate. I was told $5, not $1.

CASSIDY: Yes, that's for the co-pay, not for the co-insurance. For the co-insurance, it's any amount. But I have limited time. Do you think that it's fair -- if you were she, if you were Adrienne, do you think is fair? Loses her spousal coverage, now it's 10k, no subsidies?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I don't have any idea what she's looking at. I can tell you that, again, based on what we've seen in the market and what we've seen in the plans, people will be getting full insurance for the first time at...

(CROSSTALK)

CASSIDY: Well, again, this is what she reports. Do you think it's fair -- if what she reports is true, do you think it's fair?

SEBELIUS: I can't answer fair or not fair. I don't know what she was paying or what she was paying for.

CASSIDY: That's OK. Let's move on.

SEBELIUS: Did she have full insurance?

CASSIDY: Richard writes that his daughter received a note that his premium is going up because she's being lumped with older, costlier patients. Now it's possible that the only people that sign up will be those who are more costly. Does HHS have plans on what to do if only those who are more costly sign up and premiums rise for everybody?

SEBELIUS: I think, sir, that's what we're trying to do to make sure that...

(CROSSTALK)

CASSIDY: But if only the costly sign up, do you have plans? If you accept that...

SEBELIUS: That's the importance of the individual mandate that you've just outlined. Getting rid of pre-existing conditions, making sure that people can come in...

CASSIDY: But if only the most costly sign up, do you have backup plans?

SEBELIUS: We will encourage others to sign up. It's why there is a penalty in place and why...

CASSIDY: Is this to assume that there are no backup plans? I don't mean to be rude, but...

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Yarmuth.

YARMUTH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, nice to see you. I come to this hearing with a little bit different perspective. Kentucky is doing a great job with our exchange. As of this morning we had 350,000 people who have explored the Web site, 59,000 have started applications, 31,000 are now fully enrolled in new coverage, and 5,000 just in the last week.

And I think very importantly, more than 400 businesses have begun applying for their employees as well. So, yes, the idea that somehow this is going to be bad for businesses is not borne out in Kentucky.

Would it be safe to say that if 36 states had done what Kentucky and New York and California have done instead of 14 that the rollout would have been much smoother and the Web site would have been much easier to construct?

SEBELIUS: Well, I don't think there's any question that the -- you know, in January of 2013 we knew how many states were not running their own Web site, in I think mid-February we learned about partnerships. So it was not until that point that we learned that 36 states would actually be coming through the Web site.

Having said that, we should have anticipated, we should have planned better. We should have tested better. I don't think that's any excuse, but we clearly are running a very different vehicle for enrollment than we thought we were going to run in March of 2010.

YARMUTH: Right. On the subject of cancellation of policies, isn't it true that, first of all, the federal government can't require insurance companies to sell insurance?

SEBELIUS: That they can't...

YARMUTH: The federal government can't require insurance companies to sell insurance?

SEBELIUS: Yes, that's true.

YARMUTH: And in fact, insurance companies all over the country are making very difficult decisions now about where they want to participate and where they don't. And in some markets they're actually trying to get out of the market, canceling people because they want to play in other markets and so forth.

They're all making the decisions now...

SEBELIUS: Well, and we know we have more insurers, 25 percent more insurers in the individual market than we did prior to the law being passed.

YARMUTH: Right. So there a lot of dynamics going on here that are not necessarily an indication that the president misled anybody. They're business decisions being made all over now.

SEBELIUS: Well, in cancellation of policies, again, that one- year contract notice is a routine in the individual market. It has been in place for years. And for a lot of people, their policies now -- they are being canceled because they're being notified you can no longer be medically underwritten.

We can't charge you more because you're a woman. We won't ever have the kind of limitation on what your policy can pay out or charge you exorbitant out of pocket rates. Those policies will cease to be offered in the marketplace.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Guthrie?

GUTHRIE: Thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here. And last week Mr. Lau from Serco was here. I know the president has talked about the alternatives to the Web site as phone-calling or using a paper application.

And what he said, and I think you've said it with the phone, they take the paper applications but they enter them into the same Web portal. So I know you get around the issue of getting on and getting logged off.

But also -- but there's still issues with data within the Web portal. As you said, you can't even get reliable data who is even signed up.

So he also said because of the surge in paper applications, it's like six to eight weeks to process. So if November 30th is when this will be ready, that they can use, and even if you do it now, eight weeks you're getting close to January 1st, and somebody does lose their insurance so they're signing up for this, and they get to January 1st, even though you have a March 31st open enrollment, what happens to these? Is there a contingency plan for these people to continue their insurance?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I think that we have improvements every day on the speed of the site. Serco was giving you early snapshots of difficulty of accessing the site. I think that's greatly improved.

GUTHRIE: Well, they said just processing the paper, actually.

SEBELIUS: Well, I understand. But it is the site for -- they put the application into the site and get a determination. That's part of what the process is. So the site is part of the portal all the way through. This is an integrated insurance vehicle. And so that will improve.

And we -- again, with four months of continuous service, which is far longer than most people had, some of these cancellation numbers, Mr. Garrity (ph), again, pointed this out from Florida Blue Cross, but it's true of everyone else, these are not January 1st numbers. They are year-long numbers.

So over the course of 2014 when an individual's policy is due to expire, that individual...

(CROSSTALK)

GUTHRIE: ... but somebody could expire January 1st and not be able to get coverage if the Web site -- and the vendor said they needed months to test. They would have liked to have months and months to test. That's what they said.

So if we're going to get to November -- even if it works November 30th...

SEBELIUS: Well, I would say we're testing as we go. There is beta testing going on right now. That's why we are fixing and how we can identify things. People are getting through every day and we now know a lot more than we...

(CROSSTALK)

GUTHRIE: ... but the paper process, if it does take even four weeks, then it's November 30th and people's cancel on January 1st, there needs to be a contingency for that person.

SEBELIUS: Well, again, typical insurance is two to four weeks of signup. They will have two full months of signup.

UPTON: Gentleman's time has expired.

Ms. Schakowsky?

SCHAKOWSKY: Thank you, Madam Secretary, for bringing to millions of Americans access to affordable, comprehensive health care coverage that's going to be there when they need it.

I want to thank you especially as a woman. Women can no longer -- being a woman can no longer be considered being a preexisting condition. Women can no longer be charged more than a man for the same coverage. Women have access to comprehensive benefits like prescription drugs and free preventive screenings and free contraceptive coverage and maternity care, which is often left out of coverage. And the days of complicated pregnancy or diabetes or domestic violence being a preexisting condition, those days are over.

You know, I want to say to my colleagues after a three-and-a-half year campaign to repeal, to discredit, to even shut down the government over Obamacare, I want to say, get over it.

We all agree that there are problems but these are problems that I see being fixed. And so I want to ask one -- oh, and I want to say that what we did under Medicare Part D can be an example of how we can work together.

And in fact, Chairman Upton and I both sent a letter asking for more money for community based groups to help implement the program and make it work. We can work together.

So if you could just briefly say how are the navigators -- how important are they in making this system work for the American people?

SEBELIUS: Well, what we know, Congresswoman, is that a lot of people are not web savvy and are not frustrated by the website because they don't have a computer. They don't want to use a computer, they don't trust a computer. They need a live human being to ask questions, get questions answered, talk about the plan, talk about insurance.

So the navigators play a hugely important role. We have about 2,500 trained navigators on the ground right now. We have thousands more community assisters who are trained and ready to go, about 45,000 agents and brokers have gone through specific Affordable Care Act training.

But those individuals, working with their clients, customers and in the case of navigators and community assisters, just the public at large, they are not paid by a company. They are not collecting a fee. They just want to help people get coverage; they are hugely important.

UPTON: Gentlelady's time -- Mr. Olson.

OLSON: I thank the chair.

And welcome, Madam Secretary.

(UNKNOWN): Thank you.

OLSON: I would like to open with a quote from an American icon -- I'll hold up a poster. It says, "If the user is having a problem, it's our problem."

I'm glad to hear you raised this philosophy during your testimony today, ma'am.

Obamacare was signed into law 1,256 days ago. And since then, there's been user problem after user problem after user problem.

Regarding healthcare.gov, your deputy administrator for consumer information, Gary Cohen, testified one month ago, where we are sitting, that -- and this I quote, "CMS has worked hard to test the infrastructure that will allow Americans to enroll in coverage confidently and simply and securely," end quote.

Yet according to "Forbes" and "The Wall Street Journal," you told them that you needed five years of construction and one year of testing. The program has crashed and burned at least three times and the user is still having problems.

(Inaudible) up here, ma'am?

It's been down the whole time you've been testifying. The system is down at this moment. My question, ma'am, is very simple.

When did you know these changes were going down? A month, a day, a quarter?

And did you tell the president what you knew?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I was informed that we were ready to launch on October 1st. The contractors, who we had as our private partners told us and told this committee that they had never suggested the delay, and that is accurate. Our CMS team felt we were ready to go.

I told the president that we were ready to go.

Clearly I was wrong. We were wrong. I -- we knew that in any big, new, complicated system, there would be problems; no one ever imagined the volume of issues and problems that we've had. And we must fix it.

OLSON: Yes, ma'am. But credible journalists said you knew you needed six years to get this program...

SEBELIUS: Sir, I -- that quote has been repeated. I can guarantee you I would have never stated that because the law was passed in March of 2010. I chose the open enrollment date. I don't know where that quote comes from, but that is not from me.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

Mr. Barrow?

BARROW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thanks for attending today, Madam Secretary. I suspect that deep down most people on this committee support the concept of reforming insurance market so that more people have access to better insurance coverage. We have disagreements about the means used to get to those ends which is ultimately why I voted against the Affordable Care Act.

It seems that every day we're hearing of something new going wrong. I'm concerned that these short-term enrollment problems could become long-term insurance market problems. My

constituents already losing confidence the federal government's ability to pull this thing off and I think the only way to begin to restore their trust is to delay the individual mandate penalties until we're sure the system is going to work. It's not fair to penalize consumers when their non-compliance is not their fault. We also need to take the time to make sure additional fits and starts won't cause larger problems. Right now I'm less concerned about who's to blame and more concerned about what went wrong and how to fix it and how we're going to ensure it doesn't happen again.

Nearly all of our constituents want and need health insurance. It would be a huge mistake if we're so blinded by our love or our hatred for Obamacare that we miss the opportunities to address its flaws.

Now to the subject of technical problems becoming market problems, can problems of folks getting into the system snowball into risk pool problems where those who choose not to enroll can actually affect the costs of those who do choose to enroll?

SEBELIUS: Certainly a risk pool needs a balanced market. So you need people who are older and sicker to be balanced with people who are younger and healthier, that's how a pool works.

BARROW: At what point are we going to see a problem having the risk pool if the tech problems cause -- affect the folks who are entering?

What are we going to look for? What are we going to use to decide something needs to be done?

SEBELIUS: Well, again, sir, we will be monitoring during the six months of open enrollment as will our insurance partners who is coming into the pool; that's why we want to give this committee and others reliable, informed data about not only who it is but what the demographics are and where they live. That's part of our...

BARROW: If things aren't better by the end of this next month, at what point are we going to start thinking about further delays in posing penalties?

SEBELIUS: Well, again, I think that having a defined open enrollment period is one of the ways that you then make an assessment if you have a pool that works or not. You cannot have an unlimited open enrollment period with any insurance company because that really doesn't work.

BARROW: Thank you.

UPTON: Mr. McKinley.

MCKINLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Last week -- last week the CGI representative at Campbell said that she had met her contract obligations and met specifications and she said the only problem she had was with pace. But the pace wasn't part of the specification.

Do you -- and we asked her, what you were -- you would testify to, did -- she said you would testify that she did complete her contract in accordance with the specifications.

Would you?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I don't think until the product is working the way it's designed to work that anybody has finished their job. And that's really my interest.

MCKINLEY: I'm so sorry, with time, you know, they've shortened our time with it.

So, if she hasn't met -- she hasn't met their specifications but yet we're still using her, so is the American taxpayer still paying the money to fix the problems that she didn't do -- her company didn't do in the first...

SEBELIUS: None of our contractors have been paid the amount...

MCKINLEY: Will she be paid for this work into the future as we go to correct this problem?

SEBELIUS: We will make that determination as the work goes forward. I would tell you sir that as we learn what needs to be fixed, how long it takes, we'll know more about...

(CROSSTALK)

MCKINLEY: I'm very sorry about the timeframe, but cut it down.

Who owns the software now, that now that we've -- this has been developed with taxpayer money to develop the software to do this...

SEBELIUS: It is owned by the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services.

MCKINLEY: So it's all owned by us? OK.

Will they be able to use it by a license with -- for other clients?

SEBELIUS: Not to my knowledge. I think it is...

MCKINLEY: Maybe (inaudible)...

SEBELIUS: ... specifically designed for the marketplace with these products in mind.

MCKINLEY: Then last questions are trying to...

SEBELIUS: And the clients are the American public.

MCKINLEY: ... that under IV and V, and she testified that she thought that was something we should have done. Under HHS, you recommend or the HHS recommends that for software development, that they should have an independent verification and validation program.

But it wasn't used in this case.

Can you share with us in the time that's gone why we didn't use IV and V on something as crucial...

SEBELIUS: Again, I don't think that's accurate, sir. At every point along the way there is independent testing.

MCKINLEY: Independent?

SEBELIUS: Yes and outside...

MCKINLEY: You recommended verification and validation not someone within your staff?

SEBELIUS: Pardon me? There is a level of company self-attested testing. There is a level of CMS testing and then there is an independent test on each piece of the contracting.

(CROSSTALK)

MCKINLEY: (OFF-MIKE) acknowledged that it wasn't done independently, and that's what the...

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Gentleman's time...

MCKINLEY: It needs to be done independently, people who do not have...

UPTON: ... has expired.

SEBELIUS: No, it -- I'll get you the information, but there are three levels of testing, one of them is independent for every piece of this contracting, yes.

UPTON: Ms. Castor.

CASTOR: Good morning.

When open enrollment began a few weeks ago the people back home in Florida who are helping neighbors sort through the new options for coverage, the navigators, were taken aback by how grateful people are to have new pathway to the doctor's office and the care they need.

Affordable options.

The -- they are no longer being discriminated against because they had cancer, and diabetes or asthma. They are very grateful. They said -- they said to me directly, it's like they found water in the desert.

Right now they are surprisingly -- they said it's taking time, because people want to sort through all of these options before they finally sign up at the end of the 26-week enrollment period. So we must fix the marketplace. We must to meet their expectations and we have high expectations for you and the administration.

But I think it's important to point out the Affordable Care Act is more than just a website. It -- despite all the obstruction by Republicans in my home state of Florida, nationally, the -- even going so far as to shut down the government, millions of Americans are already benefiting and there are benefits that are not tied to healthcare.gov.

Some Madam Secretary, let's clarify what's working despite healthcare.gov.

Is it correct to say many of the improvements that the ACA makes to employer coverage and Medicare were the vast majority of Americans receive their coverage are not dependent on healthcare.gov.

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

CASTOR: And -- so the delays and problems with healthcare.gov do not affect the millions of individuals thanks to the ACA who no longer have to worry about lifetime monetary caps on their coverage that previously sent them to bankruptcy?

SEBELIUS: That's absolutely true. And I think the quote that the president was quoted recently saying, "If you have health care, you can -- you don't have to sign up for the new marketplace," was referring to the large portion -- the 95 percent of insured Americans who plans are solid and stay in place and move forward.

CASTOR: And I understand the frustration with the website. What I don't know why people are not similarly outraged by the lack of Medicaid coverage in many of our states.

Do you find that hypocritical?

(LAUGHTER)

SEBELIUS: Well, I think it's very troubling that millions of low income working Americans will still have no affordable option if states don't take advantage of the expansion program leaving states bearing the cost of uncompensated care, families bearing the cost of parents who can't take care of

their kids, workers not able to go to work and people still accessing care through emergency room doors, the most expensive, least effective kind of care they could get.

UPTON: Gentlelady's time has expired.

Mr. Gardner?

GARDNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Secretary Sebelius, for being here. Here's my letter. This is the letter my family got canceling our insurance. We chose to have our own private policy back in Colorado so we could be in the same boat as everyone of my constituents. And yet my insurance policy has been canceled. The White House website says if you like your health plan you have, you can keep it.

Did I hear it wrong?

SEBELIUS: Again, sir, I don't know how long you've had your policy...

GARDNER: Why aren't you losing your insurance?

SEBELIUS: Pardon me?

GARDNER: Why aren't you losing your health insurance?

SEBELIUS: Because I'm part of the federal employees...

GARDNER: Why aren't you in the exchange? You're in charge of this law, correct, why aren't you in the exchange?

SEBELIUS: Because I'm part of the federal employee health benefit plan.

GARDNER: Why aren't you in the -- why won't you go into the exchange? You're a part of this law. You're literally in charge of this law. Should you be any different than all of the other Americans out there losing their health insurance?

SEBELIUS: I'm part of the 95 percent with affordable available health care coverage.

GARDNER: You're part of a plan that most Americans aren't (sic) available to them. Why will you not agree...

SEBELIUS: I'm not eligible for the exchange, because I have coverage in...

GARDNER: You can decide to drop your coverage of your employer. You have the choice to decide not to choose...

SEBELIUS: That the not true, sir.

GARDNER: I chose not to go...

SEBELIUS: Members of Congress are now part of the exchange thanks to an amendment that was added by Congress, but I'm not eligible.

GARDNER: Madam Secretary, with all due respect...

SEBELIUS: If I have affordable coverage in my workplace, I'm not eligible to go into the marketplace, that's part of the law.

GARDNER: Madam Secretary, I would encourage you to be just like the American people and enter the exchange and agree to find a way...

(APPLAUSE)

SEBELIUS: It's illegal.

GARDNER: .. and I would like to show you an advertisement that's going on in Colorado right now.

This is an advertisement that a board member of the Colorado exchange has put forward, do you agree with this kind of advertising for Obamacare?

SEBELIUS: I can't see it. And again...

GARDNER: It's a college student doing a keg stand.

SEBELIUS: If the Colorado exchange did that...

GARDNER: Do you approve of this kind of advertising?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: ... they are a state based marketplace.

GARDNER: Do you approve of this kind of advertising?

SEBELIUS: I don't see it. I don't know what it is, and I did not approve it. This is a state based marketplace...

GARDNER: That's a pretty big font. That's a pretty big picture of a keg and you can't see it?

SEBELIUS: Do I approve of it? I've...

GARDNER: You have the ability to opt out, by the way, as a federal employee. You could take the insurance. So I just...

SEBELIUS: If I have available employer based coverage...

GARDNER: I would also like to submit a waiver for my district from Obamacare and hope you consider waiving Obamacare for the Fourth Congressional District.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

(UNKNOWN): Does your policy cover -- never mind.

(LAUGHTER)

UPTON: Mr. Matheson?

MATHESON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, Madam Secretary, thanks for your time.

I just want to ask on the issue of the fixes to healthcare.gov, we've had a lot of conversation about that today and we've talked about confidence levels for being ready by a certain time. But, I think one question that a lot of us have is, can you define what the magnitude of the problem is? Is there a scale or metric by which we can understand how bad this is today, and how we're going to get to where we go to have it fixed?

SEBELIUS: Well, again, sir, I've been informed that the problems are in -- the reports I've seen are really in two areas.

They are in the performance area, which is speed and reliability. It's too slow and doesn't have reliable transfers and in functionality, there are parts of the system that don't make accurate transfers.

So we have done an extensive assessment. They are prioritized, as I indicated earlier. One of the priorities is the enrollment features, which pass individual information to the companies where they want to enroll. That is not reliable at this point. The companies are not getting accurate data. So it's an example of the kind of thing we know we need to fix.

MATHESON: And is there a way to -- if you set up metrics figure out if we're making progress in terms of fixing those issues with speed and performance and functionality.

SEBELIUS: Again, with the team and Jeff Zients at the head of it, reporting to Marilyn, there are definitely a comprehensive set of issues going forward that will be measured and accelerated.

MATHESON: Do you have target dates along the way if you want to meet the November 30th time -- assume it's functional of what you want -- do you have target or metrics along the way to make sure you're on the path?

SEBELIUS: My understanding is, yes, there are sort of groups of targets that fixes that can be loaded together. It isn't one at a time. So they don't take days, but they are try being to determine with a specific path, one of the charges that QSSI has, really looking at the umbrella of what needs to be fixed, prioritizing them, figuring out what destabilizes if something else is fixed, how they can be grouped together. And that report will be in later next week.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

Mr. Pompeo?

POMPEO: Great, thank you.

Thank you for coming, Secretary Sebelius.

I would like to talk about Kansas a little bit today.

Much like with some of my colleagues have made references to the "Wizard of Oz", I don't think anybody not from Kansas should be able to do Oz allegories. But, my story -- the way I think about it, is those folks worked awful hard to go down the yellow brick road. At the end of the day, when they got there and pulled back the curtain, they found there was nothing they didn't already have.

And as we pull back the curtain on the Affordable Care Act, I think people are finding it's not exactly what they're gonna have worked so hard to find their way too as well.

I want to talk about two stories. There's this commitment, if you like your plan you can keep it. I have a letter I'll submit for the record, from Mr. Breeto (ph) in Kansas. You might know him. I saw him the other night in Benton.

He got the following letter from Blue Cross Blue Shield that says, "Because your current plan does not offer the benefits standard specified you'll be discontinued on December 31st," and this says good news. And then there's a group of folks, Pizza Hut -- you know the company from Kansas, franchisees founded there -- lots of folks have now taken employees, families who are working there, and they've gone from having full-time jobs to part-time jobs. So they aren't able to keep the health care plan they had either and the one they wanted.

POMPEO: What do you tell -- why -- why were the plans that these folks had good enough when you were the insurance commissioner in Kansas and when you were -- Kansas as governor, but those plans today aren't good enough for those hard-working Kansas families?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I would tell you, in the roles I had the honor of serving of in Kansas, I worked every day to try and eliminate some of the discriminatory features of the insurance industry that finally, with the Affordable Care Act, are gone. My successor and elected insurance Republican commissioner Sandy Praeger and I worked on a whole series of plans to expand coverage.

So I did work on these issues. We were not able to necessarily...

(CROSSTALK)

POMPEO: So you -- you -- to use your words, you say these were -- I think you said "lousy" plans. And Ms. Tavenner said "not true insurance." Do you think that the plans that were offered when you were the insurance commissioner weren't true insurance?

SEBELIUS: In the individual market, the insurance commissioner in Kansas and virtually every place in the country does not have regulatory authority...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: ... over the plan. There's a lot...

(CROSSTALK)

POMPEO: ... a yes-or-no question: Were they true insurance plans when you were the insurance commissioner?

SEBELIUS: A lot of them are not true insurance plans, no.

POMPEO: Thank you. I yield back.

UPTON: Gentleman from Vermont, Mr. Welch.

WELCH: Thank you.

I'm gonna try to just summarize quickly what I've been hearing. Number one, the website must be fixed. You've been very forthright, and you're gonna fix it.

Number two, I'm hearing a tone change. We've had a real battle about health care. We had a battle in this Congress. It was passed. The president signed it. The Supreme Court affirmed it -- a really brutal battle. There was an election where the American people affirmed it. And then the last-gasp effort was the shutdown and the threat of debt default.

But what I'm hearing today is that there are problems and people want to fix 'em because all of us represent people who are gonna win or lose depending on how effectively this is rolled out.

Third, there's some significant question about existing insurance policies, what the president said and so on. But let's acknowledge something: A lot of insurance companies were ripping off innocent American people by promising them insurance until they got sick, and then it got canceled because they, quote, "had a pre-existing condition," that wasn't, quote, "disclosed." That's gotta end.

The challenge for us going forward is to make health care affordable.

So Madam Secretary, my question is, is there any indication that there's been a slowing of premium increases as a result of the Affordable Care Act? Because unless we can keep those premium

increases down -- they can't rise faster than the rate of inflation, wages and profits -- all of us are gonna lose.

SEBELIUS: Well, I would say, the trends in the private market over the last three and a half years are that cost increases have slowed down, are rising at a lower rate than the decades before. And in fact, in this individual market, the old individual market, the typical increase was 16 percent year in and year out rate increase. And often that came with additional medical underwriting. So it gives a sense of how the costs were.

We know that Medicare costs are down. We know that Medicaid costs actually had a decrease per capita last year, not an increase per capita, and underlying health care costs are down.

These rates in the new marketplace have come in about 16 percent lower on average than was projected -- not by us but by the Congressional Budget Office.

And we know that in many of these markets, they're much more competitive. I believe in market competitiveness. That actually drives down rates. The states where the most companies are participating have the lowest rates. And new companies have come in significantly below the old monopoly companies that often dominated this individual marketplace.

So we're on a pathway. Are we there? No. But you're absolutely right, affordable coverage, at the end of the day, for everybody is the goal.

WELCH: OK. I yield back.

Thank you, Madam Secretary.

UPTON: Madam Secretary, I'm trying to make sure that you're out of here by 12:30 before we start the second round of questions.

(LAUGHTER)

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Mr. Kinzinger?

SEBELIUS: That was a joke, right?

(LAUGHTER)

KINZINGER: I see -- I see sheer panic.

Madam Secretary, thank you for being here.

You stated earlier to Mr. Harper that you give the president regular updates on the marketplace. The president stated that he knew nothing about the status and functionality of the marketplace. How often, and what were the subjects of those updates?

SEBELIUS: Well, I think there were a series of regular meetings with the president, with some of our federal partners, with offices of the White House from the OMB to others on a monthly basis giving reports on policy and where we were going. None of those, I would say, involved (ph) detailed operational discussions. That wasn't the level. It was, are we coming together, do we have companies...

KINZINGER: Sure.

SEBELIUS: ... do we have plans.

KINZINGER: And I understand that. I mean, obviously, when it comes to the president of the United States, certain level of details you have to see at kind of a 10,000 foot, 20,000 foot overview. But in terms of the actual functionality, whether it's the website or the marketplace, he was legitimately caught off guard on October...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Well, I assured him, and -- that we were ready to go. Everyone knew with a big plan that there were likely to be some problems. No one...

KINZINGER: OK.

SEBELIUS: ... anticipated this level of problem (ph).

KINZINGER: And just second -- a quick question. Where is HHS getting the money to pay for these fixes? Is it coming from other HHS accounts? Have you used your transfer authority to move money from non-ACA programs to pay for the cost of implementing the president's health care program? And if so, from which programs have you drawn money to help with the fix that's not ACA-related?

SEBELIUS: Well, as you know, Congressman, it's been two years since we've had a budget at HHS. And we also have not had at the president's requested implementation budget authorized by the Congress. Each of those years we have used not only resources internally but I do have legal transfer authority that I've used and a non-recurring expense fund. We will get you all the details of that...

(CROSSTALK)

KINZINGER: Great. Thank you. So the answer is yes, though, there is some non-ACA money being transferred and used for the implementation of...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: There is money that is specifically designed for either outreach and education, so the health centers have hired education and outreach people as part of their outreach for health personnel. I would say it's -- it's definitely a related cause to get expanded health care.

KINZINGER: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Mr. Sarbanes?

SARBANES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here.

My understanding is that a lot of the -- the companies, insurers that have been offering plans in the individual market, the ones who are sending out these notices, are actually repositioning themselves in the health insurance exchange to offer alternative plans. Is that correct?

SEBELIUS: Yes.

SARBANES: And in addition to -- to those insurers who've been in the individual market (inaudible) have a lot of other companies and insurers providing plans in the health insurance market?

SEBELIUS: That is true.

SARBANES: So the way I look at this is -- you know, I went to buy Oriole tickets awhile back when the season was still under way, and I was standing in line. And I got up to the ticket window and they

closed the window. But I didn't have to go home because they opened another window a few feet away.

So essentially what's happening is people are coming up on the renewal period. They're getting up to the window of the individual market. They're being told, well, that window's closed but if you go right down the line here there's another window that's open. And by the way, when you get there, you'll get better coverage potentially at reduced premiums. And if you go down to window 3 there's some subsidies that may also be available to you.

So this notion that people are being turned away from an affordable product that provides good, quality care is preposterous. And in fact they're being steered to a place where they can get good, quality coverage, in many instances much better than the coverage that they had before, at an affordable rate that is supported by the subsidies that can be available to many, many people. This is -- this is what's so promising about the Affordable Care Act.

And so I think it's important for people to understand that that window's not being shut. They're just being steered someplace else where they can get a good opportunity.

SEBELIUS: And I think the first option for those companies is to say, 'We'd like to keep you here, and here are the plans we're offering.' But to be fair, customers will now have an opportunity to look across a landscape, which they couldn't before. They will have entry into those other windows, which many of them didn't have before with a pre-existing condition.

And as you say, about 50 percent of this market will have financial help in purchasing health insurance, which none of them had before.

UPTON: Gentleman's time expired.

Mr. Griffith?

GRIFFITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Earlier in your testimony here today you said a couple times, "plans we enjoy but then," as you noticed with Mr. Gardner's eloquent testimony, that we're not going to be in the same plan that you're in after January 1.

I was one of those who thought it was a good idea as a part of a proposal that was floating around the halls here in Congress that the president and Cabinet secretaries ought to also be in the marketplace and not have a special federal plan that -- that you will have after January 1, but we will not. The president, while that was being discussed, issued a veto threat.

Did you discuss the veto threat with the president before he made it? And have you discussed it with him since then? Yes or no on the first?

SEBELIUS: No, sir.

GRIFFITH: No.

And then I would have to ask you, relating back to the contractors involved in this, CGI told us that the Spanish Web site was ready to go, that they thought everything was ready, just as they did with the regular site. And, obviously, that didn't prove out. But that they were told not to implement it.

Likewise, the shop-and-browse section was ready to go.

Do you think that they were misleading this committee when they made those comments?

SEBELIUS: I think what they believed is that that product independent of the entire operational site was ready and tested. What -- a determination was made -- I was involved with the Spanish Web site and the Medicaid transfers to say, let's minimize the risk for the whole site, let's load a week later.

GRIFFITH: But that raises the next question up, because one of the -- of the other contractors, QSSI, I believe it was, indicated to us that -- that part of the problem was that, once you took away the ability to browse, everybody had to go through the business of setting up an account, and you stopped -- or CMS stopped one of the browsing options as well, and that that actually contributed to the logjam and contributed to the problems.

So, isn't it -- is he correct on that, that not allowing people just to look without having to sign up, wouldn't that have made it easier for the American people?

SEBELIUS: In hindsight, I think that probably would have been advantageous, I can tell you that the reason the decision was made going forward was to minimize risk, that didn't work so well.

But adding additional features that didn't involve people actually wanting to get to what they would independently pay and what they would qualify for and what the plans were, seemed to be things that could be added down the road. It was wrong.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Bilirakis?

BILIRAKIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it very much,

Thank you, Madam Secretary, for testifying today.

Madam Secretary, over the weekend, the New York Times wrote the following, "Project managers at the Department of Health and Human Services assured the White House that any remaining problems could be worked out once the Web site went live. But other senior officials predicted serious trouble and advised delaying the rollout."

Can you confirm if this is true? Did any senior department official predict serious problems? And did any senior department officials advise delaying the rollout of the exchanges or parts of the exchanges on October 1st? Could you...

SEBELIUS: I can tell you that no senior official reporting to me ever advised me that we should delay. You heard from the contractors on the 24th that none of them advised a delay. We have testing that did not advise a delay. So not -- not to my knowledge.

BILIRAKIS: Did they indicate to you that there were serious problems?

SEBELIUS: They indicated to me that we would always have risks, because this system is brand-new and no one has operated a system like this before to any degree.

So, we always knew that there would be the possibility that some things would go wrong. No one indicated that this could possibly go this wrong.

BILIRAKIS: Can you name some of these officials that gave you the advice, that there were serious problems?

SEBELIUS: Again, I -- we had series of meetings with teams from CMS. I was always advised that there is always a risk with a new product and a new site, but never suggested that we delay the launch of October 1st, nor did our contracting partners ever suggest that to us.

BILIRAKIS: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Appreciate it. I yield back.

UPTON: Mr. Johnson?

JOHNSON: Madam Secretary, thank you for being here with us today. CMS was the integrator of the Web site prior to and leading up to the 1 October rollout...

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

JOHNSON: Correct?

You've testified you've now hired an outside company to serve as the integrator...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: One of the contractors has taken on an additional role...

JOHNSON: Who is that company?

SEBELIUS: QSSI.

JOHNSON: QSSI.

SEBELIUS: Who built the hub.

JOHNSON: OK.

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

JOHNSON: This is the same company that told our committee last week that they were not only the developer of the hub and the pipeline, but also an independent tester of the system.

SEBELIUS: Yes.

JOHNSON: You've acknowledged in your testimony today that inadequate testing played a significant role in this failed launch, so aren't you concerned that QSSI has lost its ability to be an objective independent arbitrator in addressing the problems that plague the system now? Because they're part of the tester, part of the developer, part of the problem.

SEBELIUS: No, I haven't lost my -- my confidence in them. I think the testing that they did is validating the pieces of the equipment. What we've said since the launch is that we did not do adequate end-to-end testing.

JOHNSON: OK.

SEBELIUS: That was not the QSSI responsibility.

JOHNSON: All right. And in this new role as integrator, are you going to be paying QSSI more than they were to be paid under their original contract? I -- I would expect with this expanded role they're going to get paid more, right?

SEBELIUS: That discussion is under way in terms of what the role will entail, what the outlines are, yes, sir.

JOHNSON: OK. Well, hard-working American taxpayers have already paid for this implementation once. Do you think it's fair to ask taxpayers to pay more so that QSSI can now attempt to do something that Administrator Tavenner and her CMS team were unable to do right the first time?

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, I think the American taxpayers expect us to get the site up and running. As I told you earlier...

JOHNSON: Oh, I'm certain that they did. They expected it the first time.

SEBELIUS: I understand, and so did I. We have not expended the funds that have been encumbered for the contracts. We have not -- and we will monitor every dime we spend from here on in, and re-audit things that are going forward.

JOHNSON: Well, with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

UPTON: The gentleman yields back.

Mr. Long?

LONG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Secretary, for being here today and giving your testimony.

Earlier today, you said that "I'm responsible for the implementation of the Affordable Care Act." I've heard you referred to, and maybe yourself, as the point person for the rollout, the architect of implementing Affordable Care Act. So you are kind of the president's point person, are you not, for this rollout?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

LONG: I -- earlier, you were asked, and there's a lot of things striking about the rollout of this and about the Affordable Care Act altogether. But the thing that's most striking to me is that when we have the point person for the rollout here, and you're not going in to the exchange.

Now, I've heard you say that, and you got some advice from the folks behind you, but I'm asking you today: Can you tell the American public, if your advisers behind you, that if they happen to have given you some wrong information, if it is possible for you to go into the exchange like all these millions of Americans that are going with the exchanges, will you commit to forego your government insurance plan that you're on now and join us in the pool? Come on in. The water's fine. All the congressmen, all of our staff have to go into the exchanges.

We have to go into the D.C. exchanges. And I will say that I tried to get on the website. I was successful during the hearing earlier, and I got to the D.C. exchange, which is where I have to buy from, I got part way through. And then when it got to the point to enter my Social Security number, I could not bring myself to do that, from what I've heard from people like John McAfee and folks about the security.

Will you tell, if your advisers are wrong, and it is possible for you -- I'm not saying it is -- but if it is, if it's possible for you to forego your government program you have now? Will you tell the American public that, "Yes, I will go into the exchanges next year like everyone else"?

SEBELIUS: Sir, the way the law is written...

LONG: It's a yes or no -- I'm -- let's say that you're wrong on that. Yes or no, if -- if you're wrong, will you? Yes or no?

SEBELIUS: But I don't want to give misinformation to the American public...

LONG: You what?

SEBELIUS: ... who may be -- I don't want to give misinformation. If you have affordable coverage...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: I want you to go home and research it. If -- if you're wrong...

SEBELIUS: ... if you have affordable coverage...

LONG: ... will you go into the exchanges?

SEBELIUS: I -- if I'm...

LONG: If you can, will you? That's a yes or no. If you can, will you?

SEBELIUS: I will take a look at it. I don't have any idea...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: That's not an answer. That's not a yes or no.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

LONG: You're the architect of the whole program and you won't go into it with the rest of the American public.

SEBELIUS: I did not say that, sir. I think it's illegal for me to...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: If it's not illegal. If it's legal, will you go in?

(CROSSTALK)

WAXMAN: Mr. Chairman? Mr. Chairman?

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: Come on in, the water's fine.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

WAXMAN: I have a unanimous consent request. I'd like to -- Madam Secretary, I'd like you to answer for the record. If you were able to do what the gentleman just suggested or follow the recommendation of Cory Gardner, our colleague from Colorado, and went into the bought -- to buy an individual policy, would you be able to find one that would protect you from cheap shots? Or do you think that has to be mandated for coverage?

(LAUGHTER)

I'll leave the record open for your response.

UPTON: Yeah, we'll wait for that response to come back.

SEBELIUS: I would gladly join the exchange if I didn't have affordable coverage in my workplace. I would gladly join it. And the D.C. market is an independent state-based market, even though D.C. is not a state. We do not run the D.C. market in the federal marketplace.

UPTON: The gentlelady from North Carolina, Ms. Ellmers?

ELLMERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I have a couple of questions. Thank you for being with us today, Madam Secretary.

I'd like to go to the issue that has been raised by my colleagues on the left here about accurate information. Number one, I've heard the issue of Medicare Part D brought up many, many times. Although my colleagues all voted no against it initially, now they're extolling the virtues of Medicare Part D.

Is Medicare Part D a mandate or is it voluntary?

SEBELIUS: It is voluntary.

ELLMERS: It is a voluntary program.

SEBELIUS: Yes.

ELLMERS: That's the first accurate -- piece of accurate information I would like to get.

You know, we're asking or we're actually forcing millions of Americans to go to find a health care premium in some way, whether it's to go to the exchange or whether they are to be insured.

ELLMERS: Many of my constituents are reaching out to me, those with individual policies, and they are saying to me that my -- my rates are going up 400 percent; my rates are going up 127 percent. These are my constituents.

Now, you know, we're talking about open enrollment, but it's forcing the issue, is it not, that if an American does not have health care coverage, they are essentially breaking the law. Is that not correct?

SEBELIUS: If someone can afford coverage and has that option and chooses not to buy coverage, they will pay a fee on their (inaudible) next year's tax.

(CROSSTALK)

ELLMERS: And it is a law, so therefore they are breaking the law.

(CROSSTALK)

ELLMERS: OK. You also brought up the issue when you were in Kansas, that you fought against discriminatory -- discriminatory issues. Now, I, you know, as far as the essential health benefits, correct me if I'm wrong, do men not have to buy maternity coverage?

SEBELIUS: Policies will cover maternity coverage for the young and healthy.

ELLMERS: Including men.

SEBELIUS: Under 30-year-olds will have a choice also of a catastrophic plan which has no maternity coverage.

ELLMERS: The catastrophic, but the men are required to purchase maternity...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Well, an insurance policy has a series of benefits whether you use them or not. And one of the benefits will be maternity coverage, mental health coverage...

(CROSSTALK)

ELLMERS: And that is why the health care premiums are increasing because we're forcing them to buy things that they will never need.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

SEBELIUS: The individual policies cover families. Men often do need maternity coverage for their spouses and for their families. Yes.

ELLMERS: Single male, age 32, does not need maternity coverage. To the best of your knowledge...

(CROSSTALK)

ELLMERS: ... has a man ever delivered a baby?

UPTON: The gentlelady's time has expired.

(LAUGHTER)

The gentlelady, Ms. Cathy McMorris Rodgers?

MCMORRIS RODGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And Madam Secretary, you know, although we were told repeatedly that if you liked your health insurance plan, you'd be able to keep it. We're now being told by the government that they have determined many existing plans to be lousy, sub-par.

In reality, this law is becoming quickly less about helping Americans purchase affordable coverage and more about compelling millions of Americans into a struggling Medicaid program.

In my home state of Washington, 90 percent of enrollees will be in Medicaid; 16,000 of them coming into a program that they were already eligible for; Colorado, 89 percent; Kentucky, two-thirds; Maryland, 97 percent. And this is -- these are states that are already struggling with their budgets, wondering how they're going to cover Medicaid, which is, as we all know, for the most vulnerable population.

So isn't it true that in states like Washington, they're going to have new, unexpected costs associated with a dramatic influx into Medicaid?

SEBELIUS: Well, Congresswoman, the Medicaid expansion provision of the Affordable Care Act is...

MCMORRIS RODGERS: Could you -- are states going to face new costs...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Federal government pays 100 percent of the costs of newly insured for the first three years, and gradually reduces...

(CROSSTALK)

MCMORRIS RODGERS: These are existing -- these were people that were already eligible. And we know that two out of three doctors don't accept new Medicaid patients. We know that current provider rates are going to drop at the end of 2014. So isn't it true that existing Medicare -- Medicaid enrollees are going to further compete for scarce resources in these states?

SEBELIUS: If the citizens of Washington who are signing up were eligible for Medicaid, they certainly will be entitled to enroll in Medicaid now. The newly insured will be fully paid for. The doctors have additional...

(CROSSTALK)

MCMORRIS RODGERS: I'm concerned that the most vulnerable in this country are going to lack access to the care that they think they're going to receive. And I know time is short...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Well, I think that's absolutely true. And in states that are choosing not to expand Medicaid, it's particularly dire. So I would love to work with you on that...

(CROSSTALK)

MCMORRIS: It's existing Medicaid. Finally, I just wanted to inform the secretary, you told us several hours ago when the hearing started, that the website was down. If you look at the screen several hours later, healthcare.gov is still down. You promised the system would be ready on October 1st. You're clearly wrong.

So before I leave you today, I would just impress upon you this is more than a broken website. This is a broken law. Millions of Americans are getting notices their plans are being canceled.

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: The gentlelady's time is expired.

I just -- I would do a couple of things here. First, I'm going to ask unanimous consent that the written opening statements for any member on the committee be introduced into the record. And without objection, the documents will be there.

I also would ask unanimous consent to put the document binder and other documents presented to the secretary during questioning into the record. Without objection, so ordered.

Let me just say in conclusion, we do look forward to having you back in December to get an update on where we are. And we'll work with your schedule to find a right time and date early that -- that week.

I want you to know we're going to want real numbers. You'll have them by then. Is that right, in terms of the signup? You'll have them in the next couple of weeks.

SEBELIUS: That's correct. We'll have them by mid-November.

UPTON: We look forward to getting those done.

We appreciate -- we really do appreciate your time this morning to take questions. I apologize to all the members who we had to shorten the time, but those things happen when we have this much interest. And we look forward to continuing to get an update and look for your continued work.

WAXMAN: Mr. Chairman?

UPTON: Yes?

WAXMAN: From our side of the aisle, we want to work with you. And I would hope on the other side of the aisle, they would take that same approach. Let's do something constructive, not just negative attacks against a bill that I think is going to be a God-send for millions of Americans.

Thank you for being here.

SEBELIUS: Thank you.

UPTON: Thank you.

The hearing is adjourned.

END

LOAD-DATE: October 30, 2013

428 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Copyright 2013 CQ Transcriptions, LLC
All Rights Reserved
Financial Markets Regulatory Wire

All materials herein are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of CQ Transcriptions. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.

REP. FRED UPTON HOLDS A HEARING ON AFFORDABLE CARE ACT AND HEALTH CARE ENROLLMENT

October 30, 2013 Wednesday

EVENT DATE: October 30, 2013

TYPE: COMMITTEE HEARING

LOCATION: WASHINGTON, D.C.

COMMITTEE: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

SPEAKER: REP. FRED UPTON, CHAIRMAN

WITNESSES:
REP. FRED UPTON, R-MICH. CHAIRMAN
REP. HENRY A. WAXMAN, D-CALIF. RANKING MEMBER
WITNESSES: KATHLEEN SEBELIUS, SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
REP. MARSHA BLACKBURN, R-TENN.
REP. JOHN D. DINGELL, D-MICH.
REP. JOE L. BARTON, R-TEXAS
REP. FRANK PALLONE JR., D-N.J.
REP. RALPH M. HALL, R-TEXAS
REP. ANNA G. ESHOO, D-CALIF.
REP. JOHN SHIMKUS, R-ILL.
REP. ELIOT L. ENGEL, D-N.Y.
REP. JOE PITTS, R-PA.
REP. GENE GREEN, D-TEXAS
REP. GREG WALDEN, R-ORE.
REP. DIANA DEGETTE, D-COLO.
REP. LEE TERRY, R-NEB.
REP. LOIS CAPPS, D-CALIF.
REP. MIKE ROGERS, R-MICH.
REP. MIKE DOYLE, D-PA.
REP. TIM MURPHY, R-PA.
REP. G.K. BUTTERFIELD, D-N.C.

REP. MICHAEL C. BURGESS, R-TEXAS
REP. DORIS MATSUI, D-CALIF.
REP. PHIL GINGREY, R-GA.
REP. KATHY CASTOR, D-FLA. DEL. DONNA M.C. CHRISTENSEN, D-VIRGIN IS.
REP. STEVE SCALISE, R-LA.
REP. JERRY MCNERNEY, D-CALIF.
REP. BOB LATTA, R-OHIO
REP. BRUCE BRALEY, D-IOWA
REP. GREGG HARPER, R-MISS.
REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M.
REP. LEONARD LANCE, R-N.J.
REP. PAUL TONKO, D-N.Y.
REP. BILL CASSIDY, R-LA.
REP. JOHN YARMUTH, D-KY.
REP. BRETT GUTHRIE, R-KY.
REP. JAN SCHAKOWSKY, D-ILL.
REP. PETE OLSON, R-TEXAS
REP. JOHN BARROW, D-GA.
REP. DAVID B. MCKINLEY, R-W.VA.
REP. KATHY CASTOR, D-FLA. DEL. DONNA M.C. CHRISTENSEN, D-VIRGIN IS.
REP. CORY GARDNER, R-COLO.
REP. JIM MATHESON, D-UTAH
REP. MIKE POMPEO, R-KAN.
REP. PETER WELCH, D-VT.
REP. ADAM KINZINGER, R-ILL.
REP. JOHN SARBANES, D-MD.
REP. MORGAN GRIFFITH, R-VA.
REP. GUS BILIRAKIS, R-FLA.
REP. BILL JOHNSON, R-OHIO
REP. BILLY LONG, R-MO.
REP. RENEE ELLMERS, R-N.C.
REP. CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS, R-WASH.
REP. CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS, R-WASH.

TEXT:

UPTON: Good morning.

The Energy and Commerce Committee welcomes the president's point person on health care, Secretary Sebelius, as part of our continuing oversight of the health care law.

And we look forward to a thoughtful conversation on a number of issues including transparency and fairness. Over the months leading up to October 1 launch, the secretary and her colleagues at HHS repeatedly looked us in the eye and testified that everything was on track. And despite the numerous red flags and lack of testing, they assured us that all systems were a go.

But something happened along the way. Either those officials did not know how bad the situation was, or they did not disclose it.

And, sadly, here we are now, five weeks into enrollment and the news seems to get worse by the day. Healthcare.gov was down last night at 5:00 p.m. It was also down on Monday, and it crashed last weekend.

And even this morning when we attempted to view the site before the hearing, we were hit with an error message.

But this is more than just a Web site problem. That was supposed to be the easy part, remember? Americans were assured that their experience would be similar to other online transactions, like purchasing a flight or ordering a pizza, and that their sensitive personal information would always be secure.

But, after more than three years to prepare, malfunctions have become the norm, and the administration has pivoted from saying they're on track to setting a new target date of November 30th.

And for those few Americans who have successfully applied, will the Web site glitches become provider glitches come January 1st?

Americans are scared and frustrated, and this situation should rise above politics. Many folks at home watching us today have spent hours or even days trying to sign up. They continue to take time away from work or loved ones, but have made little progress.

And soon they may worry about being on the wrong side of their government, facing potential penalties.

I recently spoke to a woman from Buchanan (ph), Michigan, who was excited to sign up, but has since become very disillusioned after spending hours on the phone and Web site with little success.

There are also millions of Americans coast to coast who no doubt believe that the president's repeated promises that if they liked their plan that they would be able to keep it, no matter what.

They are now receiving termination notices. And for those who lose their coverage, they, like -- they may be losing their faith in their government.

Today's hearing is about fairness for the American people who are losing their coverage or seeing their premiums skyrocket as high as 400 percent.

This hearing is also about transparency. While the administration continues to boast the number of Americans that have applied, they intentionally withhold precise enrollment numbers.

Why? These numbers are critical to fully understand the status and gauging the progress of implementation.

Lead contractor, CGI, testified only last week that they had the data, but needed the administration's permission to release it.

We asked the secretary on October 8th for those figures, but we still have not received a response. We hope to get one today. The American people deserve answers as well as the peace of mind that promises will be kept. The secretary has an opportunity today to embrace transparency and start restoring the public's faith in the administration and the government.

I yield to my colleague, ranking member of the committee, Mr. Waxman.

WAXMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm pleased Secretary Sebelius is here today. She's here to discuss the Affordable Care Act. Just like with Medicare Part D, the launch of the new Web site has not gone well. But, just like Medicare Part D, the early glitches in this rollout will soon be forgotten.

A lot of the discussion today will focus on that Web site. This is an important issue, and I want to learn what the secretary can tell us about the problems being experienced and how they will be fixed.

But we should keep this issue in perspective. The Affordable Care Act is working. It has been improving the health security of millions of Americans for the past three years.

Because of the Affordable Care Act, more than 7 million people on Medicare have saved more than $8 billion on their prescription drugs. More than 100 million Americans have access to free preventive coverage and no longer face lifetime limits on their coverage. Over 10 million Americans have received rebates from insurance companies.

And, finally, this January, the worst abuses of insurance industry will be halted. Never again will a family be denied coverage because their child has a chronic health condition. Never again will individuals see their premiums shoot up because they got sick or faced an unexpected medical expense. Never again will a woman have to pay twice as much as a man for the same insurance.

That is why allowing insurers to continue offering deficient plans next year is such a bad policy. The law says that all plans except those that were grandfathered in 2010 must meet the new consumer protection standards.

If we don't enforce this policy, insurance companies can continue offering flimsy coverage that disappears when people actually need it, and no one should want that.

It is understandable that there will be a focus today on what isn't working, but we must also remember what is working. The health insurance plans that are being offered in the exchanges are good plans. Their premiums are much lower than expected. Sixty percent of the uninsured individuals shopping in the new marketplaces will be able to get coverage for less than $100 per month. Half of the young adults will be able to get coverage for less than $50 per month.

And since Congress adopted the Affordable Care Act, health care costs across the whole economy have grown at their lowest level in decades.

The success of the Affordable Care Act is due to the efforts of many people, but one individual more than any other is responsible for all the good that has been accomplished, and that is our witness today, Secretary Sebelius.

WAXMAN: So I would urge my colleagues to stop hyperventilating. The problems with healthcare.gov are unfortunate and we should investigate them, but they will be fixed. And then every American will have -- finally have access to affordable health insurance.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Thank you.

Before we swear in Secretary Sebelius, I want to clarify Energy and Commerce Committee practice for the swearing in of witnesses.

The committee typically has two types of hearings, oversight hearings and hearings that focus on legislation and policy.

Secretary Sebelius, for example, has testified previously before our committee to discuss issues related to the HHS budget or other policy matters. As is the case with all policy witnesses, Secretary Sebelius was not required to take an oath prior to testifying.

Today's hearing is different. It is an oversight hearing. It is a long standing committee practice to swear in all witnesses at oversight hearings whether they be private citizens or cabinet secretaries.

WAXMAN: Mr. Chairman, I thank you for your comments. And I just want to join you in simply explaining that it -- swearing in of the witness before an oversight committee hearing has always been under oath.

That is a standard procedure in this committee when we're conducting an oversight hearing, so it may seem strange to have the secretary of Health and Human Services have to be sworn in, but all witnesses in an oversight hearing are sworn in and that is our procedure.

UPTON: Thank you.

So I would now like to introduce our witness for today's hearing. The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius is the secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. She was appointed to this position in April of 2009 and was sworn in as the 21st secretary on April 28th, 2009.

So I will now swear you in if you would rise.

As Ranking Waxman and I just discussed, the committee is holding an investigative hearing and when doing so have had the practice of taking testimony under oath.

Do you have any objection to testifying under oath?

SEBELIUS: (Inaudible).

UPTON: And the chair now advises you that you are -- see -- I would now read you -- do you swear that the testimony you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

SEBELIUS: (Inaudible).

UPTON: You are now under oath and subject to penalties set forth in Title 18, Section 1001 of the U.S. Code. You may now give a five- minute summary of your written statement.

Welcome again and thank you for being here.

You got to use that mike. You don't know how many people want to hear you this morning.

(LAUGHTER)

SEBELIUS: Thank you, Chairman Upton, Ranking Member Waxman, members of the committee.

I left my position as governor of Kansas 41/2 years ago for the opportunity to continue work I've been doing for most of my over 35 years of public service, to expand the opportunities for all Americans regardless of geography or gender or income to have affordable health coverage.

During my years as the state legislator, as an elected insurance commissioner, as head of the National Association of Insurance Commissioners and as a two-term governor and now as HHS secretary, I have worked on that effort that I care deeply about.

There are still millions of Americans who are uninsured as well as underinsured, people who have some coverage at some price for some illness but have no real protection from financial ruin and no real confidence they'll be able to take care of themselves and their families if they have an accident or an illness. And for them a new day has finally come.

In these early weeks, access to healthcare.gov has been a miserably frustrating experience for way too many Americans including many who have waited years, in some cases their entire lives for the security of health insurance. I am as frustrated and angry as anyone with the flawed launch of healthcare.gov.

So let me say directly to these Americans, you deserve better. I apologize. I'm accountable to you for fixing these problems. And I'm committed to earning your confidence back by fixing the site. We're working day and night and will continue until it's fixed.

We've recently added new management talent, additional technical expertise and a new general contractor to identify, prioritize and manage fixes across the system in two broad categories: performance, which deals with speed and reliability and function, which deals with bugs and problems in the system.

Our extensive assessment has determined that healthcare.gov is fixable. And I want to just outline a couple of the improvements we've made to date.

We now have more users successfully creating accounts. We can process up to 17,000 account registrations per hour or nearly five per second.

Instead of some of the users seeing a blank screen at the end of the application process, they can now see whether they're eligible for financial assistance and make more informed decisions.

Because we've improved performance, customers can now shop for plans quickly; filtering plans takes seconds and not minutes. Users are getting fewer errors and time-out messages as they move through the application process and the system has been strengthened with double the size of servers, software that's better optimized and a high-capacity physical database which replaces a virtual system.

The chairman referred to outages this weekend and again yesterday. And I would suggest to the committee that if you read the statement of Verizon who hosts the cloud service, it is the Verizon server that failed, not healthcare.gov, and it affected not only HHS but other customers.

We still have a lot of work to do. We have a plan in place to address key outstanding issues. It includes fixing bugs in software that prevented it from working the way it's supposed to and refreshing the user experience so folks can navigate the site without encountering error messages, time out and slow response times.

And by the end of November, we're committed that the vast majority of users will be able to review their options, shop for plans and enroll in coverage without the problems way too many have being experiencing.

But consumers are using the site every day and continue to do so. And problems are being solved. But we know that we don't have a fully functioning system that consumers need and deserve. We are still at the beginning of a six-month open enrollment which extends through the end of March and there's plenty of time to sign up.

And just to put it in perspective, the average open enrollment for an insurance plan is two to four weeks. The new marketplace has a 26-week open enrollment and those who enroll by December 15th will be able to access their benefits on day one.

Even with the unacceptable problems with healthcare.gov, which we are committed to fixing, the Affordable Care Act by any fair measure is working for millions of Americans who are benefiting from new health security, young adults, Americans living with pre-existing health conditions, seniors on Medicare.

Eighty-five percent of Americans who already have health coverage are protected with new rights and benefits.

The 15 percent of our neighbors and friends who are uninsured have affordable new options in a competitive market and cost growth for health care is lower than it's been in years. Millions of Americans are clearly eager to learn about their options and to finally achieve health security made possible by the Affordable Care Act.

And my commitment is to deliver on that promise.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Well, thank you very much.

Yes, if you -- the mike got pulled a little bit from you.

Yes, let's start this clock. Can you fix that? (Inaudible).

I appreciate you being here this morning and we've worked with our leadership to see that we don't have votes on the House floor this morning so we won't be interrupted.

I appreciate your time for sure and in an effort to allow every member to ask a question, we're going to be reducing the time for questions to be just four minutes, so hopefully we can get through all the members that are here. And I'm going to be pretty fast with the gavel, let me just say.

So we have got plenty of questions. So let's try and get through them.

(Inaudible).

You know, I think everyone in America remembers the president's words. If you like your health care plan, you can keep it, period. Under the Affordable Care Act insurance policies that were in effect on March 23rd, 2010, when the law was enacted, would be grandfathered.

Then a few months later, despite the president's word, HHS helped promulgate a new reg that in your own review showed that it effectively could deny perhaps as many as more than 50 percent, maybe even higher, of those holding individual policies the right to renew their own insurance plan.

UPTON: And I would guess that there are a lot of us on this panel today that are hearing from angry and confused constituents who are now being forced to go onto an inept website, whether they like it or not, to shop for a new replacement policy. They're finding premiums often more than 100 percent what they were paying before, some even as high as 400 percent, as I've heard from, and rising deductibles as well.

So when was the president specifically informed of the regulation change? And if so, was it pointed out that this totally undermines his biggest selling point? And I would note, that on the screen, in a statement that he made more than three years after the regulation change was promulgated, the President said again, "So the first thing you need to know is this. If you already have health care, you don't have to do anything." So he's been on the same page from the very start, yet the regulations changed months after the bill was enacted that are now causing perhaps millions of Americans to be denied the ability to renew their individual coverage.

Why was that change made, and did the President know it?

SEBELIUS: Well Mr. Chairman, there was no change. The regulation involving grandfathered plans, which applied to both the employer market and the individual market indicated that if a plan that was in effect in March of 2010 stayed in effect without unduly burdening the consumer with reducing benefits and adding on huge costs, that plan would stay in effect and never have to comply with any of the regulations of the Affordable Care Act. That's what the grandfather clause said. The individual market which affects about 12 million Americans, about 5 percent of the market, people move in and out, they often have coverage for less than a year. A third of them have coverage for about six months, and if a plan was in place of March of 2010 and again, did not impose additional burdens on the consumer, they still have it. It's grandfathered in.

UPTON: But why not let the consumer decide whether they want to renew it or not? Why was -- why were regulations promulgated in the summer of 2010 that then undermined the ability for those folks to re- sign up, which is one of the reasons for the large number of cancellation notes?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: And there were no regulations changed We outlined the grandfather policy so people could keep their own plan. We then began to implement the other features of the Affordable Care Act, so if someone is buying a brand new policy in the individual market today, or last week, they will have consumer protections for the first time. Many people in the under -- individual market are medically underwritten. That will be illegal. Many women are charged 50 percent more than men. That will be illegal. You cannot, again, eliminate someone because of a pre-existing health condition. You cannot dump someone out or lock someone out, so those provisions. But if again, a plan is in place, and was in place at the time that the President signed the bill and the consumer wants to keep the plan, those individuals are grandfathered in and that's happening across the country in the individual market.

UPTON: We're learning in fact that folks who did have a plan who liked it in fact are being told that it's canceled in the -- in the last -- my time is expired. Let me yield to the Ranking Member, Mr. Waxman for four minutes.

WAXMAN: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I have to smile at your line of questioning because everybody expected this hearing was about the website. That's all we've been hearing about is the website. But that's not the only complaint we've been hearing about since the Affordable Care Act was adopted. We were told by our Republican friends that millions of jobs would be lost and in fact, there have been a gain of 7 million jobs. They said that they -- the -- the cost for health care would skyrocket, and in fact, the opposite is true. They said there would be a massive shift to part-time jobs, and the evidence doesn't support that. They said tens of millions will lose their insurance, but in fact, everybody in this country has got to have access to health insurance because they won't be discriminated against. They said that it would explode the deficit, and yet all the reputable organizations like the Congressional Budget Office have told us that it's going to save us $100 billion over 10 years, so we've had a litany of objections for the Republicans about the Affordable Care Act which have driven them to such a frenzy they even closed the government.

So now we have you before the committee. And you're being asked, I suppose later you'll be asked about the website. But let me pursue this question about individuals who have gotten notices, that they're going to have their individual insurance policies canceled. They'll be able to get another plan, won't they?

SEBELIUS: Actually, it's the law that they must get another plan. Continuous coverage is part of the law.

WAXMAN: So the ...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: That wasn't the case in the past.

WAXMAN: So the Affordable Care Act said we're going to end the worst abuses of insurance companies. We're going to create consumer protections in the marketplace that they will be able to buy a policy even if they've been sick in the past. That women won't be charged more than me. That we're not going to let insurance companies deny coverage because of pre-existing conditions, and we're not going to let them put these lifetime caps. And there'll be an essential benefit package, so you're not just buying some things and not having other things covered. You're going to have the minimum that everybody should have, prescription drugs, mental health coverage, doctors and hospitals. Are these important consumer protections?

SEBELIUS: Well I would say, Mr. Waxman, they're very important. As a former insurance commissioner, I can tell you that the individual market in Kansas and anywhere in the country has never had consumer protections. People are on their own. They could be locked out, priced out, dumped out, and that happens each and every day. So this will finally provide the kind of protections that we all enjoy in our health care plans, as part of a group, as part of a plan that has pre-negotiated benefits, we enjoy that kind of health security, and individuals in the buying insurance on their own, farm families, young adults have never had that kind of health security.

WAXMAN: Well now they're going to have this health security, and most of the plans, as I understand it, that -- that they're no longer going to be able to keep, don't meet all the standards of the law.

SEBELIUS: Again, I think you may have heard Pat Geraghty from Florida Blues who was on some of the Sunday shows and he talks about the fact that the Florida plans want to keep their customers. They have new plans to offer, they feel that a lot of people, and these are Mr. Geraghty's words, "will have a much better plan at a similar or lower cost. Fifty percent of these 11 to 12 million people qualify for a subsidy, quality for financial help purchasing insurance for the first time ever."

WAXMAN: The bottom line is that people with good coverage like Medicare, Medicaid, employer coverage, can keep that. People with grandfathered plans in the individual market will be able to keep it. But if an insurance company sold you a new modified health insurance policy after the date of the enactment that does not meet the law's standards, then those people will be able to go into the exchange and buy a real solid health insurance plan that won't discriminate against them or anybody else. I think that's a good result. I'm pleased with it, and I think most people will be as well.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired. The Chair would recognize the Vice Chair of the committee, Ms. Blackburn.

BLACKBURN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Secretary, during -- before, during and after the law was passed, the President kept saying, "if you like your health care plan, you can keep it," so is he keeping his promise?

SEBELIUS: Yes, he is.

BLACKBURN: OK. What do you say to the 300,000 people in Florida you just mentioned, or to the 28,000 in Tennessee that cannot get health insurance? Their plans are terminated. Is he keeping his promise to them?

SEBELIUS: Well first of all, Congresswoman, they can get health insurance. They must be offered new plans, new options either inside the marketplace, or if they don't qualify for a financial subsidy, they can shop in or out of the marketplace.

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: But would you say to ...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: They absolutely will have new coverage.

BLACKBURN: What would you say to NBC news who says, "Millions are going to lose their coverage?"

SEBELIUS: Well, in all deference to the press corps, many of whom are here today, I think it's -- it's important to be accurate about what is going on, and I would defer, again, to the President of the (inaudible) plan.

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: Reclaiming ...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: (inaudible) ongoing coverage, they will be offered new plans.

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: Madam Secretary, let me tell you something.

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Fifty percent of them in the market right now will -- will qualify for ...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: What do you say to Mark and Lucinda in my district who had a plan, they liked it, it was affordable, but it is being terminated and now they do not have health insurance?

SEBELIUS: Insurance companies cancel individual policies year in and year out. They're a one-year contract with individuals. They are not lifetime plans, they are not an employer plan. Your constituents will have lots of options.

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: Let me -- let me move -- let me move on. It's what they wanted, and I will remind you, some people like to drive a Ford, not a Ferrari, and some people like to drink out of a red Solo cup and not a crystal stem. Your taking away their choice. Let's put the screen shot up. I want to go to the cost of the website and talk about the website. This is what is happening right now with this website. We've had somebody in the back trying to sign on. It is down. It is not working. Last week I asked for the cost from each of the contractors that were with us last week. So can you give me a ballpark on what you have spent on this website that does not work, that individuals cannot get to? What is your cost estimate?

SEBELIUS: So far, Congresswoman, we have spent about $118 million on the website itself, and about $56 million has been expended on other IT to support the web.

BLACKBURN: OK. Would you submit a detailed accounting of exactly what has been spent? And when do you expect constituents to stop getting these kind of error messages?

SEBELIUS: Again, I was with the -- I talked to the president of Verizon over the weekend on two occasions. Verizon hosts the cloud, which is not part of the website. It is a host for a number of websites. The Verizon system was taken down Saturday night into Sunday. It was down almost all day Sunday. They had an additional problem that they notified us about yesterday and it continues on. So I'd be happy to talk to the president of Verizon and get him to give you...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: OK, let me -- let me come back to that, because I want to get to this issue of exactly who is in charge of this project. Because you're now blaming it on the contractors and saying it's Verizon's fault.

So let me ask you this: Did you ever look at outsourcing the role of the system integrator -- and obviously you did not from the contractors that we had last week -- you all -- they had several different people, whether it was you or Gary Cohen or Michelle Snyder or Henry Chao, that they thought were in charge. So who is responsible for overseeing this project? Is it you or your designee?

SEBELIUS: Let me be clear, I'm not pointing fingers at Verizon. I'm trying to explain the way the site operates. We are -- we own the site. The site has had serious problems. I...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: Who is in charge, Madam Secretary?

SEBELIUS: The person now in charge as an integrator is QSSI, one of our...

BLACKBURN: Who was in charge as it was being built?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: ... CMS was in charge up...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: At that team, who is the individual...

SEBELIUS: Michelle Snyder is...

BLACKBURN: Michelle Snyder is the one responsible for this debacle?

SEBELIUS: Well, excuse me, Congresswoman. Michelle Snyder is not responsible for the debacle. Hold me accountable for the debacle. I'm responsible.

BLACKBURN: Thank you. I yield back.

UPTON: Chair would recognize Mr. Dingell from the great state of Michigan.

DINGELL: Thank you for your courtesy.

I have a few questions I'll be asking you on behalf of Congresswoman Shea-Porter, but I'll do that by writing. I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to revise and extend my remarks.

UPTON: Without objection.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, I would like to begin by thanking you; welcoming the secretary to a room in which her distinguished father, former governor of Ohio, served for so many years.

I begin my questions by quoting from an expert for whom I have enormous respect. He said as follows: "As I mentioned earlier, the new benefits and its implementation are hardly perfect. Rather than trying to scare and confuse seniors, I would hope that we could work together as we go through the implementation phase to find out what is wrong with the program, and if we can make some changes to fix it.

"Let us do it, and let us do it in a bipartisan fashion. It is too big a program and is too important to too many people to do that. But having said that, it does appear that it is working. Let us admit it, you know, and not keep beating a dead horse."

My beloved friend, Mr. Barton -- who I think gave us the beginning of our efforts today.

Madam Secretary, I've seen reports that consumers receiving plan cancellation notices from their insurance companies saying that plans are no longer available. Does the ACA require insurance companies to discontinue the plans that people had when the law was passed, yes or no?

SEBELIUS: Not when the law was passed if the plans have not changed, no, sir.

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: That's the grandfather clause.

DINGELL: Now, that's because the plans existed prior to the passage of the law are grandfathered in, as you have said?

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

DINGELL: So if an insurance company is no longer offering a certain plan, that's because that insurance company made a decision to change their policies, and that caused them to take away the grandfather status from their insurance purchasers, is that right?

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

DINGELL: Now, Madam Secretary, I want you to submit for the record a statement of what it is we can do about insurance companies that run around canceling the policies of their people. And I don't have time to get -- get the answer, but I want to get a very clear statement from you as to what you can do so we can take some skin off some folks that have it coming.

(LAUGHTER)

Now, Madam Secretary, it's my understanding that these decisions of a business character are most common in the individual insurance market, and that much turnover already exists and existed prior to the enactment of the legislation.

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

DINGELL: Is that correct?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Is it correct that 35 percent to 67 percent (ph) of the enrollees in the individual market leave their plan after one year for different reasons?

SEBELIUS: A third are in about less than six months in the individual market and over 50 percent are in for less than a year, yes, sir.

DINGELL: Now, in the cancellation letters, which move around from the insurance companies, some insurance companies are suggesting an alternative plan at a higher price. Do they have the right to do that?

SEBELIUS: Well, they have a right to do that, sir, but consumers have a right to shop anywhere to compare plans and they have choices now that they've never had before -- and some financial assistance...

DINGELL: And they have no right...

SEBELIUS: ... coming their way for about 50 percent of those people.

DINGELL: ... to enforce that demand on the insurance company?

SEBELIUS: Oh, absolutely not. No one is rolled over into a plan. And in fact, individuals for the first time ever will have the ability to compare plans, to shop, and to make a choice inside or outside the marketplace.

DINGELL: Looks to me like the insurance companies are trying to inflict on their -- on their customers the view that this is their right and that this is the only option available to them, is that correct?

SEBELIUS: Well, I -- I think that insurance companies would like to keep their customers. Having said that, customers for the first time have a lot of choices, because they can't be locked out...

(CROSSTALK)

DINGELL: But the insurance companies have no right to enforce that view on the customer?

SEBELIUS: There is no rule that says you have to stay with your company or you have to be rolled over...

(CROSSTALK)

DINGELL: And you don't...

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

(CROSSTALK)

DINGELL: ... when they come forward and tell you that you've got to buy a particular policy, is that right?

SEBELIUS: Absolutely.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

Chair would recognize the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Barton.

BARTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Before I ask my questions, we have a former member of the committee on the Democrat side from the great state of Kansas in the audience, Mr. Slattery. And we are -- we're glad to have you.

And Madam Secretary, we're glad to have you too.

SEBELIUS: Thank you, sir.

BARTON: There is a famous movie called the "Wizard of Oz," and in the "Wizard of Oz" there is a great line. Dorothy at some point in the movie turns to her little dog Toto and says, "Toto, we're not in Kansas anymore."

Well, Madam Secretary, while you're from Kansas, we're not in Kansas anymore. Some might say that we are actually in the "Wizard of Oz" land given the parallel universes we appear to be habitating.

Mr. Waxman and most of those on the Democrat side think things are great. You apparently, although you did apologize and you have said it's a debacle, you also seem to think that the Affordable Care Act is great. Well, myself and others have a different view. Ultimately the American people will decide.

Now, last week when the contractors were here, I focused my attention on the apparent lack of privacy in the website. If we'll put up the first slide that I had last week -- if we can.

This -- this is what's public, Madam Secretary. And it's -- it's basically a disclaimer that says that any unauthorized attempt to upload information or change information on the website is prohibited. It really doesn't say anything about privacy. But you do have to accept that in order to go forward with the application.

The next slide shows what's not public. And this is in the source code. We tried to determine this morning if it was still in the source code, but it's (ph) been pointed out, the website's down.

This is much more what I would say -- frightening to me. It says, "You have no reasonable expectation of privacy regarding any communication or data transiting or stored (ph) on the information system. At any time and for any lawful government purpose, the government may monitor, intercept, search and seize any communication or data transiting or stored (ph) on the

information system. Any communication or data transiting or stored (ph) on this information system may be disclosed or used for any lawful government purpose."

Cheryl Campbell of CGI Federal said she was aware of it, but said that it wasn't her responsibility to put that in the source code. Were you a aware of it? And was it your responsibility to put this in the source code?

SEBELIUS: Mr. Barton, I did not put things in the source code. I can tell you, it's my understanding that that is boiler plate language that should not have been in this particular contract, because there are -- the highest security standards are in place, and people have every right to expect privacy.

BARTON: All right.

Now, the last time we could check, this was still there. You are given almost unlimited authority under the Affordable Care Act to administer it. Will you commit to the committee and to the American people that, one, you do want to protect their privacy and, two, you will take this out, fix it, make sure that it -- it doesn't have bearing on people that try to apply through the website?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir. And we have had those discussions with CGI, and it is under way. I do absolutely commit to protecting the privacy of the American public, and we have asked them to remove that statement. It is there in error. It needs to be taken down, and we should be held accountable for protecting privacy...

(CROSSTALK)

BARTON: Well, thank you, Madam Secretary. I -- I sincerely appreciate that, and I'm sure the American people do too.

My last question -- or it's really a comment. I've introduced H.R. 3348, which says, let's make this system voluntary for the first year since we're having so many problems and let the American people decide. What that means is, if people choose not to participate they will not be charged the penalty for non-participation. Would you support such a reasonable approach to this while we work out the problems in the system?

SEBELIUS: No, sir.

BARTON: OK. Well, that's an honest answer.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

BARTON: Thank you, Madam...

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Chair would recognize the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Pallone.

PALLONE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I know we're not in Kansas, but I do believe increasingly we're in Oz because of what I see here.

(LAUGHTER)

So this "Wizard of Oz" comment by my colleague from Texas I think is particularly apropos, given what we hear (ph) on the other side of the aisle. I don't know how you keep your cool, Madam Secretary, you know, with this continuous effort on the part of the GOP to sabotage the ACA, to scare people and bring up red herrings. And I think that this privacy issue is another red herring. And I'm gonna ask you a question about that.

But before that, I just wanted to say, this whole idea that's being brought up today that somehow, you know, policies are being canceled and people don't have alternatives is just another red herring. You know, what I think my colleagues on the other side forget is that this is not socialized medicine. This is in fact private insurance in a competitive market.

And if I'm an insurance company and all of a sudden everyone else is selling a better policy with better benefits at a lower price, I can't continue to sell a lousy skeletal policy that doesn't provide benefits and cost more because I'll be out of the market. And so that's what's happening here. Insurance companies are canceling lousy policies with high prices because they can't compete. And that's what's gonna happen when you have a private insurance market, which is what we have here. We don't have a government-controlled system. We have private markets.

So I just wanted to make that point.

But I have to drill down on what Mr. Barton said here. You know, before reform, the individual insurance market was dysfunctional, premiums would shoot up if people got sick, their coverage could be canceled if they had a pre-existing condition, and they did not have secure, quality coverage.

Now, I've heard my Republican colleagues say that patient health information will be at risk in this application process, and this is flat out false. In fact, the ACA makes a giant leap forward for protecting health insurance by taking it completely out of the insurance application process by banning discrimination based on pre- existing conditions.

Mr. Barton, again, is, you know, raising this red herring just like the cancellation of insurance by talking about privacy. But Madam Secretary, prior to the ACA when people applied for insurance coverage, did insurers make them provide a long, detailed, invasive medical history, but now because the law bans discrimination based on pre-existing conditions, individuals will not have to provide this information in their applications?

So regardless of this clause, please comment on the privacy issue and why it's irrelevant.

SEBELIUS: Well, Mr. Pallone, in the past, any individual American who was in an employer-based coverage, in government coverage like the ones we enjoy in Medicare, in Medicaid, the V.A., a whole variety of plans, that's about 95 percent of insured Americans had no medical underwriting, had group protections, had consumer protections.

The people who were outside that consumer-protected space were individuals buying their own coverage in an individual market. Medical underwriting demanding health records and often going through extensive doctor interviews and getting health records was a standard for that market. Pricing could vary widely depending on gender, depending on health condition. People could be denied coverage and were frequently. That's the market that is currently being reformed with consumer protections.

If a person had a policy in place in March of 2010 like that policy and the insurance company made no changes to disadvantage the consumer, those policies are in place, you keep your plan, you like it, and that goes on.

For the people who, though, had a medically underwritten policy, were paying more than their neighbor because they happened to be female, could not get their health condition for a fixed hip written into their insurance plan, they will have a new day in a very competitive market; 25 percent of the insurers are brand new to the market and they are offering competitive plans.

PALLONE: Mr. Chairman, could I just ask that this document...

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Sure. Put it into the record without objection.

PALLONE: Thank you.

UPTON: Chair would recognize Mr. Hall.

HALL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, I think Congresswoman Blackburn asked you about the federal government and how much they'd spent today and they're spending some money as we speak, aren't they?

It's down right now, isn't it?

Is that -- are you had -- you projected ongoing problems?

SEBELIUS: I'm sorry, sir. I'm having a hard time...

HALL: OK.

SEBELIUS: ... hearing.

What was the...

HALL: She asked you how much it had spent today and I'm asking what you expect to pay in addition to that on the repairs that the website is going to require and they're requiring them as we speak here.

So those are things you projected; you knew they would happen and they will happen. But you surely looked ahead and you have some estimate of what is going to happen.

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

HALL: And going to cost.

SEBELIUS: For our two major contractors who are USSI, a subsidiary of United and for CGI, there are obligated amounts. For CGI, who is in charge of the entire application, there has been $197 million obligated and that is to last through March of 2014.

And as I said before about $104 million has been expended in that obligated amount.

HALL: I'm going to try to be here on 2014 to be sure that your testimony is correct, OK?

(LAUGHTER)

I'm just joking with you.

(LAUGHTER)

SEBELIUS: OK.

HALL: And if -- were you born in Kansas, Meade (ph) -- Kansas?

SEBELIUS: I was not. I was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. I married a Kansan and went to Kansas.

HALL: All right. I was in the third grade there. And I thought I saw you on a tricycle there one day.

(LAUGHTER)

SEBELIUS: Well, it was an illusion.

HALL: Let me ask you a question, have you ever rejected a financial bill from one of the contractors?

Have you ever?

SEBELIUS: Have I ever...

HALL: Rejected a financial bill from one of them?

SEBELIUS: Sir, again, I -- our...

HALL: Well, I guess you can say yes or no.

SEBELIUS: ... our accounting office does a routine audit and review of every bill that comes in before they do it. I do not personally. I want to be very accurate about -- I don't personally pay contracts, negotiate contracts. By law and by precedent that's really illegal for someone who isn't a warranted contract officer to engage in the debate or discussion around federal contracts.

HALL: How much has the administration spent on the exchanges in total?

Not just healthcare.gov but all of the exchanges?

SEBELIUS: Sir...

HALL: How difficult is that figure to give me or if you can't give it to me...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I would like to get it to you in writing very quickly.

HALL: Madam Secretary, I'd like to talk -- I don't know how much time I have got left but I would like to talk about a couple of businesses in my district who are struggling with how to move forward. One is a manufacturing and one is in the pet boarding and training business. One has 85 employees and the other has 56.

Here's some quotes from some of their recent letters: "The situation we're in is we would have to pay $170,000 in penalties under Obamacare. This is another example of the government picking the winners and losers. We're the losers. There is no way I can be competitive if I have to raise my prices to cover $170,000. Here are my options: do not pay the penalty, raise my prices and go out of business. Eighty-five people lose their jobs, lay off 35 employees who don't have to pay the penalty and move more production to this country, reduce 35 jobs."

And here's a quote from the other: "Since they are high labor low margin, business cannot afford to pay for insurance for our employees we're faced with either closing our business perhaps through bankruptcy, though there are heavy financial obligations that would continue whether we operate or not.

"Fire enough employees to get under 50 employees limits and close some of our business. Even if we close the location we cannot escape many expenses such as rental agreements."

What am I supposed to tell these people?

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, I think that in the employer market, about 95 percent of all American businesses are exempt from any kind of requirement to cover employer -- employee insurance, and they are outside the law. They continue to be outside the law, but they will have some new options for those who want to cover their employees and some new tax credit possibilities.

For large employers, about 96 percent of them already cover their employees. And as you know, the penalty that your constituents referred to is not a penalty that is imposed in 2014. It is being discussed with businesses about what kind of information is exchanged and it will take place in 2015.

UPTON: The gentleman's time...

HALL: He's going to use the gavel on me if you don't hurry.

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

HALL: I yield back my time.

UPTON: At which time the Chair would recognize the gentlelady from California, Ms. Eshoo.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Madam Secretary. You're a distinguished woman, you have distinguished yourself and your state, the offices that you've held, and now working for the American people and I salute you for it. I -- I want to really congratulate my Republican pals for being absolutely 1000 percent consistent. You love what's wrong with the website, and you detest what's working in the Affordable Care Act. And I think that that is on full display here. But let's get back to the website, because that's what the hearing is about.

It's my understanding that November 31st (sic) is a -- is a hard date for having everything up and running. Do you have -- now, HHS did testify in September that they were 100 percent confident that the site would be launched and fully functional on time on October 1st. That didn't work. Do you have full confidence in this new hard date?

SEBELIUS: Congresswoman, I can tell you that the assessment that we have made is that it will take until the end of November for an optimally functioning website. I know that the only way I can restore confidence that we get it right is to get it right, so I -- I -- I have confidence, but I know that it -- it isn't fair to ask the American public to take our word for it. I've got to fix this problem, and we are underway doing just that.

ESHOO: But are you confident that -- I think I said November 31st, which is, which does not exist, but November 30th. You have confidence in November 30th?

SEBELIUS: I do.

ESHOO: Is there any penalty to QSSI or CGI for not delivering on what they promised?

SEBELIUS: Well, I think the, as you can see, we have a -- obligated funds for a contract. We certainly have not expended all those funds, and we expect not only the CMS team, but our contractor partners to fulfill their obligations and have to be...

(CROSSTALK)

ESHOO: But if they fail to fulfill their obligations. I don't know what's in the contract. Is there a penalty?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Well, I understand, but, there isn't a built-in penalty, but I can tell you that paying for work that isn't complete is not something that we will do. QSSI, as you know, has taken on a new role as integrator of the hub that they built and have in operation is -- is working extremely well, not only for the federal exchanges, but all the state-based markets are using the hub, and that's why we had confidence in their ability to actually take this next role on and coordinate the activities moving

forward, which have to be driven with a very clear set of outcomes, very accountable timelines and deadlines, and they will be helping to manage that process.

ESHOO: On the issue of security, there was a security breach that arose recently, that I read about at any rate. And what I think is very important here, because the issue of privacy has been raised, and I think that that has been answered. Very importantly, there isn't any health information in these systems. But there is financial information, so my question to you is, has a security wall been built, and are you confident that it is there and that it will actually secure the financial information that applicants have to disclose?

SEBELIUS: Yes, ma'am, I -- I would tell you that there was not a breach, there was a blog by a sort of skilled hacker that if a certain series of incidents occurred, you could possibly get in and obtain somebody's personally identifiable...

(CROSSTALK)

ESHOO: But isn't that telling? Isn't that telling?

SEBELIUS: And we immediately corrected that problem, so there wasn't a -- it was a theoretical problem that was immediately fixed. I would tell you we are storing the minimum amount of data, because we think that's very important. The hub is not a data collector. It is actually using data centers at the IRS, at Homeland Security, at Social Security to verify information, but it stores none of that data, so we don't want to be...

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Gentlelady's time has expired. The Chair would recognize Mr. Shimkus.

SHIMKUS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Madam Secretary. Madam Secretary, before I start my questions, the Washington Post gave the administration, the President, yourself, four Pinocchios on this whole debate of if you like the insurance you have, you can keep it. Would you recommend to the President that he stop using that term? Wouldn't it be helpful in this debate?

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, I think he used the term at the time that the law was passed, and he continues to say...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: And as of September 26th, also, so...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: That's why we wrote...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: So the answer is you don't buy -- you don't believe that the Washington Post, and therefore...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I haven't read the Washington Post, but thank you.

SHIMKUS: Well, we'll hand this down to you so you can see it. Have you ever shopped -- I know you have, but this is for a -- at a grocery store with a coupon? Ever used a coupon?

SEBELIUS: Yes.

SHIMKUS: So, the coupon gives you the terms and conditions of when you go to the checkout to -- to get whatever's off the price of the goods. When you all added the "See Plans Now" option, you in essence gave the searcher in essence a coupon based upon what they're seeing there. And the desire was, let people know what the price is. However, as the -- the news reported, and I followed up in last week's hearing, was that if you are under 50 years old, you get quoted the price of someone who's 27. If you're older than 50, if you're older than 50, could be 64, you get quoted a price of someone who's 50 -- 50 years old. Isn't that misleading?

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, the "Learn" side of the website, which has been up since actually late...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: So that's truthful, then. If you quote a price...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: It is clearly a hypothetical situation...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: Oh, are you -- do you -- wait...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: That for now people that...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: OK, on the "See Plans Now" option, are you saying this is a hypothetical? That's not what it says on the site. It says, "This is the price, when you put in your age," and if your age is 49, it quotes you as if you're 27.

SEBELIUS: Sir, the only way someone can get an accurate information about their price is to get their individual eligibility (inaudible)...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: Let me ask you another -- when did you decide to use this, the low 50 at 27, and above 50 at 50 years old. When did you make that decision?

SEBELIUS: That was decided by the team as...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: By who? Who made the -- the...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I withhold (ph) that information.

SHIMKUS: The problem with the whole debate is y'all won't tell us who made the decisions.

SEBELIUS: Well, I can tell you I did not design the site.

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: So who?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I will get...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: Well, who made the decision on the 27-year-old quote for someone who's 50?

SEBELIUS: I just said I will get you that information.

SHIMKUS: Thank -- thank you. Let me go to, because it's misleading and the White House insists it didn't mislead the public, and (inaudible) we find after you did. But let me -- let me finish on this debate. Another transparency issue. If someone, a constituent of mine or someone in this country has strongly held pro-life views...

(CROSSTALK)

(UNKNOWN): Oh, here we go.

SHIMKUS: Can you commit to us to make sure that the federal exchanges that offer that is clearly identified and so people can understand if they're going to buy a policy that has abortion coverage or not? Because right now, you cannot make that determination.

SEBELIUS: Sir, I -- I don't know. I -- I know exactly the -- the issue you're talking about. I will check and make sure that that is truly identifiable.

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: Here's -- here's -- OK, thank you. Well, here's -- here's our request. Can you provide for the committee the list of insurers in the federal exchange who do not offer, as part of their package, abortion coverage?

SEBELIUS: I think we can do that, sir.

SHIMKUS: Well, you should be able to do it, so...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I just said...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: No, you said "If we can do it."

SEBELIUS: No, I think we can do that is what I said.

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: I think, or I know we can do it?

SEBELIUS: I -- sir, I -- I can't tell you what I don't know firmly right now. I know that is the plan, I will get that information to you.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

The chair would recognize Mr. Engel from New York.

ENGEL: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, I appreciate your coming here today to answer questions about the Affordable Health Care Act (sic).

You know, my Republican colleagues' actions here remind me of a story I read when I was a little boy, and that's the story of Chicken Little, who ran around yelling, "The sky is falling. The sky is falling." But unlike Chicken Little, my Republican colleagues are actually rooting for the sky to fall.

Republicans are holding this hearing today under the auspices of an investigative hearing, as if they want to get to the bottom of what went wrong with the website in order to help fix it. But I don't think, Madam Secretary, there's one person in this room who is naive enough to actually think that the Republicans want to see this law work. They voted over 40 times to repeal the law, they shutdown the government and threatened to force a default in order to stop it. They're rooting for failure.

Madam Secretary, can you tell us what would be the impact on Americans' health insurance if Republicans had been successful in their efforts to de-fund or repeal the Affordable Care Act?

SEBELIUS: Well, I think that the estimates at the Congressional Budget Office is that would have increased the deficit by about $110 billion in the first decade and close to a trillion dollars in the second decade.

We know that we have 42 million or 43 million Americans without health insurance at all, some of them Medicaid eligible and some in the -- over the Medicaid eligibility. Thirty governors so far, Republicans and Democrats, have declared their support for moving ahead with Medicaid expansion, but absent that, the Affordable Care Act, those folks would be without any kind of health security.

And in the private market, what we know is it takes a real toll.

But I'd say the biggest issue is not just the financial toll, not the community toll, not the country toll -- which is significant. I have a good friend who runs the cancer center at the University of Kansas. I was with him and cancer researchers recently, and he said that if you get a cancer diagnosis, you are 60 percent more likely to live five years and beyond if you have insurance than if you don't. I think that's a pretty powerful statement for why we need affordable health care for all of our citizens.

ENGEL: Well, thank you. The -- the Republicans have not been able to de-fund or repeal it, but they have denied requested funding. They've raised specious arguments about death panels and socialized medicine, and they've worked to intimidate groups that could help the implementation effort. There's been a spreading of misinformation about the cost of coverage -- we hear some of that today -- and to actively dissuade the uninsured from seeking coverage.

So Madam Secretary, how are these tactics -- impacted your ability to implement the Affordable Care Act?

SEBELIUS: Well, I don't think there's any question that a lot of people need a lot of information. I think it's one of the reasons we had millions visit the site -- try to visit the site. It's why I am so frustrated and disappointed that the site is not fully functional, and why I'm so committed to getting it functional, because clearly there is a demand. We need to get information to people about the law.

This is the law. This is not any longer a debate. It was a law passed by both houses of Congress, signed by the president of the United States, upheld by the Supreme Court. The president was re-elected. It is the law. And people have benefits and rights under that law, and we've got to get that information so they can make good choices for themselves and their families.

ENGEL: Well, thank you.

It is the law, and, frankly, I find it disconcerting that my Republican colleagues have done nothing but root for this law to fail for the last three and a half years. And now there's a big show here of being upset at problems with the website...

(CROSSTALK)

ENGEL: ... keeping people from signing up for coverage fast enough.

So I would just say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, you're really on the wrong side of history here. The website will be fixed and millions of Americans will be able to get quality, affordable health insurance coverage through the Affordable Care Act.

And again, I thank you for being here today, Madam -- Madam.

UPTON: Mr. Pitts, chairman of the Health Committee.

PITTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Madam Secretary.

Have you personally tried to register or enroll on the website?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I created an early light account so I would see the prompts that were coming to people who were interested. I did work my way to the application feature fairly early on. But, frankly, I -- I have affordable health care, so I...

(CROSSTALK)

PITTS: No, I just wanted to know if you've been through the process that millions of Americans are having to go through.

Madam Secretary, the -- the initial website crashes appear to be largely a result of the decision to prevent browsing of the plans. CGI Federal testified at our hearing last week that they had designed the website to allow users to browse and compare plans before having to create an account.

Ms. Campbell told us that two weeks prior to the October 1st launch, they were told to turn off the browsing feature. Were you aware in September that this decision was made?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I wasn't aware of that particular decision that was made by the CMS team. I was aware that we were paring back some features to not put additional risk on the website, which is ironic at this point.

PITTS: And who made that decision? Who made that decision?

SEBELIUS: Administrator Tavenner made that decision.

PITTS: And do you know why that was made?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir, because we were anxious to get the website up and running and functional -- which we clearly have failed to do to date -- although I would suggest the website has never crashed. It is functional, but at a very slow speed and very low reliability, and has continued to function.

Having said that, they pared down some of the features, feeling that it would be better to load them in later. One was the shop and browse feature. Another was the Spanish version of the website and the Medicaid transfers. All three of those issues were paired down in September...

PITTS: Thank you.

SEBELIUS: ... to not load the system.

PITTS: Thank you.

Last week, CGI Federal and QSSI testified that CMS was responsible for end-to-end testing and that they believe that months of testing would have been preferable to two weeks.

Do you believe that two weeks was enough time to complete testing of the entire system?

SEBELIUS: Clearly, not.

PITTS: And when were you made aware of the result of the test, including the one where the system collapsed with only a few hundred users?

SEBELIUS: Leading up to the October 1st date, we had regular meetings with not only a team at CMS but administrators involved. I was made aware that we were testing, and as we found problems we were fixing those problems. And I think there is a CGI report at mid- August identifying some problems. And between August and October that became the punch list for CGI to fix those problems. That's why you test.

PITTS: Now, in The Washington Post on October 21st there was an article that said about a month before the exchange opened a testing group of 10 insurers urged agency officials not to launch the site because it was riddled with problems. Were you aware in September that insurers recommended a delay in the launch of the exchange?

SEBELIUS: I was not aware that they recommended delay. I know everyone was concerned that there were risks and there were likely to be problems with a brand new integrated insurance system. I don't think anyone ever estimated the degree to which we've had problems in the system, and, certainly, the contracting partners did not.

PITTS: And did HHS respond to the insurers' recommendation to delay the launch?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I can't -- I wasn't in the meeting. I don't know...

PITTS: Can you find out and...

SEBELIUS: ... what occurred at the meeting, and I don't know who they talked to.

PITTS: ... answer that question for us?

SEBELIUS: Sure, I will get back to you.

PITTS: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Mr. Green?

GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Madam Secretary, thank you for taking time to be here today.

I represent parts of east and north Houston, Harris County, and our district has one of the highest uninsured rates in the country. Even worse, we have one of the highest rates of people who have jobs but don't receive their insurance through their employer.

It's for this reason that I believe Houston would be a good place for you to come and spend -- spread the word about the tremendous benefits of the Affordable Care Act. However, we learned (inaudible) your office that you're unable to attend because of scheduling conflicts. And I -- hopefully, we can have agreement that some time in the future you'll come to the fourth largest city that probably has the highest number of uninsured in a metropolitan area. And, of course, we're in the state of Texas that has the number of highest uninsured in the country.

The -- it's important to me and our constituents to get it right, and that's why I share your and the president's disappointment the website's not working as planned.

November 30th is not soon enough. Many of my constituents have been waiting for years to be able to purchase health insurance, and we owe it to them to get the marketplaces up and running.

The contractors have not served our country well and should fix it or not be paid.

Now we're hearing about the cancellation letters being sent by insurance companies (inaudible) customers notifying them that their plans are no longer offered. Are these Americans losing their health care coverage because of the Affordable Care Act, or is it because these plans were changed after the enactment of the act?

SEBELIUS: I would say it's the latter, sir. If a plan was in place since the enactment of the act, no one would have received a cancellation...

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: So if somebody in America had an insurance plan before the act and -- the president was correct: If you have -- if you like what you have, you could keep it.

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

GREEN: The plans were changed, and so now they have to comply with the new law.

SEBELIUS: They can either choose to be grandfathered and keep the same plan, which meant the same benefits and -- and actually the regulation allows insurance companies to charge medical inflation plus a trend line so they didn't have to charge the same price. They could increase it; they could increase co-pays. They could increase co- insurance. What they couldn't do is cancel benefits that the policy holder relied on. They couldn't disadvantage the policy holder. But if that plan is in effect, absolutely, it is still in effect.

GREEN: OK, but some of these millions of letters we're hearing about are probably because their plans changed?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Absolutely. And again, in the individual market, plans change every year. Insurers design new products...

GREEN: And that's -- even in the small business market that happens. So these plans are not allowed now, because they're completely inadequate. They don't offer the minimum essential benefits, is that correct?

SEBELIUS: That is correct.

GREEN: OK. And having been a state legislator -- and I know as governor in Kansas -- I assume every state has some type of minimum mandated benefits that they have for their health insurance plans.

SEBELIUS: They do, but it applies, again, sir, in the past usually to the group markets, where 90 percent of covered Americans get their policies. This market has always been the wild west.

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: OK. The Americans who received those letters from their companies about cancellations, they're eligible to purchase plans on the exchange?

SEBELIUS: Or out of the exchange. Individuals who don't -- aren't interested in some kind of financial help can go outside the exchange, inside the exchange. Their insurer can offer them plans. They have choices they've never had before.

GREEN: And because of the benefits of the Affordable Care Act, 80 percent of their premium dollar will come back to them?

SEBELIUS: That's correct. That's...

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: OK. And that's not true -- and I don't -- I know it's not true in Texas, but I don't know what -- any states that have that 80 percent requirement.

SEBELIUS: Well, no state had it, I would suggest, in that kind of broad base prior to the Affordable Care Act, so it's...

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: Let me give you an example of one of the plans I found out doing case work a few years ago. A large company provided $25,000 maximum benefit for their employees in the year. Most employees didn't know about it, and -- until this one constituent found out that she had cancer. And the bill ended up being $300,000. And so that's some of those plans that are not being allowed to be sold now, is that correct?

SEBELIUS: Well, not only will (ph) the plan have a limit on out- of-pocket costs per year, it will have a limit on a lifetime out-of- pocket costs and it will have -- it will take away the notion that you would run out of your coverage in the middle of a treatment, which a lot of plans do.

GREEN: I know I'm out of my time, but it's like buying a car...

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: ... look good, but if it doesn't have a motor, it's no good to have that car.

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: So that's why the Affordable Care Act has...

SEBELIUS: Save a lot of gas, but it doesn't get you...

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Gentleman's time has expired.

Gentleman from Oregon, Mr. Walden.

WALDEN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Governor -- Secretary, we're delighted to have you before the committee. You and I both know how important this issue is to all Americans that we get it right.

So I hope you can appreciate, we're trying to understand what we missed along the way. And -- and one of the things that bothered me was the letter that was sent from your agency to the GAO back in -- June 6th. And I'll read in part, it said, "We're in the final stages of finalizing and testing the I.T. infrastructure that will support the application enrollment process. HHS is extremely confident that on October 1, the marketplace will open on schedule and millions of Americans will have access to affordable, quality health insurance."

I'm just an average guy from a small town in Oregon, but when I read that, it tells me you believed everything was good to go, the testing was in place, and we should have full confidence everything would work. Correct?

SEBELIUS: That's the letter I signed, yes, sir.

WALDEN: Actually, it was signed by your assistant.

SEBELIUS: Or whoever -- yes, yes.

WALDEN: But the same point.

And so I went into this believing in your response -- your agency's response to GAO, things were ready to go, we should have full confidence, because when somebody uses the word "extremely confident," tells me you're extremely confident.

Second piece, then when we had the testimony from the witnesses last week, I asked them about the end-to-end testing and what the industry standard would be, and they said it really should have been months, especially for a project of this magnitude. And yet we heard it was only two weeks.

Now in August, GCI told CMS in their report...

SEBELIUS: CGI.

WALDEN: I'm sorry, CGI, thank you.

That on August 9th that there was not enough time in the schedule to conduct adequate performance testing. Did that make its way all the way to you? And do you think there was adequate time?

SEBELIUS: Sir, clearly, as I've said before, we did not adequately do end-to-end testing. The products were not locked and loaded into the system until the third week in September. Each of the component parts...

WALDEN: Right...

SEBELIUS: ... was tested, validated...

WALDEN: ... they told us that.

SEBELIUS: ... independently validated end-to-end (ph).

WALDEN: I'm sorry.

All those worked, though, right? They told us last week that their individual modules were tested and met specification. Do you concur with that analysis based on what you know?

SEBELIUS: I do concur with the testing that was done, yes.

WALDEN: OK, so it really was the end-to-end -- which is why some of us thought we should delay until it could be done right to avoid this very collapse that now is upon us. And I realize not everybody agreed to (ph) that.

The second piece here gets back to The Washington Post, which I realize you haven't had -- and I understand -- a chance to read this morning, but the four Pinocchios about the president repeatedly saying, 'If you have a plan, you'll keep your plan.' We all heard that to mean, 'I've got a plan with a company. I'll continue to have it even if they make minor changes,' when in fact your own rules as

written said, no, that's really isn't what's going to happen. If minor changes are made that means the plan changed; that means you don't get it.

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, that isn't true. They (ph) -- rules did not say what you just suggested, and I think the estimate, given that there would be turnover in the market, was really an outside projection. It wasn't our rules. It's -- it was a snapshot of what happens in the market; that plans change so dramatically...

WALDEN: Sure, every year.

SEBELIUS: ... over time that the estimate was -- they wouldn't be -- not because of our rules, but because of insurance companies' business decisions.

(CROSSTALK)

WALDEN: Well, but you set up what (ph) those market rules looked like they had to comply with, correct?

SEBELIUS: Only if they chose not to grandfather the policy. That's...

WALDEN: But that meant they couldn't make any change (ph)...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Any grandfathered policy stayed in place, still would be in place.

WALDEN: Right, but if they made...

SEBELIUS: ... none of these rules apply.

WALDEN: But if they made any change...

SEBELIUS: No, they could make changes in pricing. They could make changes in benefits. They couldn't dramatically disadvantage the consumer, but they could have trend lines. They -- they had a wide corridor to make sure that -- that a similar plan -- so if a consumer liked the plan, the plan, if it stayed...

(CROSSTALK)

WALDEN: So here's what the practical implication -- I've got letters from constituents all over my district who have gotten letters from their insurers who say because of Obamacare, they're no longer going to be in the individual market, or at least with that plan in the individual market. And the result is this person from Cove, Oregon, said, "I was paying $600 a month for a $3,000 deductible. Now it costs me $800 a month for a $5,000 deductible."

I've got others here, I'll put in the record.

A woman whose job -- she had 40 hours, now down to 29. Neither has health insurance, nor enough income to live on her own because of the way this law is getting implemented.

I realize my time's (ph) expired.

UPTON: Gentlelady from Colorado, Ms. DeGette.

DEGETTE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Secretary, for being with us today.

I want to follow up on a couple of those questions that Mr. Walden was asking you about CGI. As you know, Chairman Issa last night released this document, monthly project status report from CGI last night, and it looks to me as sort of a technical document that has a punch list of outstanding open issues.

And some of them do highlight items that upon first read seem to be alarming. For example, one of the entries said, "Due to the compressed schedule there's not enough time built in to allow for adequate performance testing." And this certainly, in retrospect, sounds bad. But the date of the document that Chairman Issa released is September 6th, and then on September 10th, four days later, CGI came into this committee and testified under oath, quote, "CGI Federal is confident it will develop -- deliver the functionality that CMS has directed."

And -- and we're -- we're trying to figure out, or at least I'm trying to figure out, how CGI is now coming in and saying, you know, 'We warned everybody that this wasn't gonna be ready,' when they came in and directly told me that they would be ready to launch on October 1st.

So it kind of raises a question, how these statements can be reconciled. One explanation is that CGI was lying to this committee. I think that's unlikely. Another is that CGI thought that the items flagged in the report were like a punch list that could be addressed.

So here's my question to you, Madam Secretary: Was CGI telling your department the same thing that they told the committee on September 10th, that the company was confident that its programs would be ready?

SEBELIUS: Congresswoman, all of the contractors testified here in September and again, I think, last week before this committee. And the testimony was fairly similar, that they were ready to go in September. They were asked in -- last week if they had suggested that we should delay the launch date. Each of them said, no. I think the chairman...

(CROSSTALK)

DEGETTE: So they never asked you to delay the launch date?

SEBELIUS: They did not. And, frankly, I -- I think it is not valuable at this point...

DEGETTE: Right.

SEBELIUS: ... to do a lot of pointing blame, fixing the blame. What I want to do is fix the problem.

DEGETTE: And so do I...

SEBELIUS: I think we need the whole team to move ahead, and we will report back regularly.

DEGETTE: Right, but we're relying on these contractors to fix this. And so that goes to my last question, which is Mr. Zients has now come in and he says the site is going to be functional for the vast majority of users by the end of November. Is that right?

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

DEGETTE: And given what CGI told us and the other vendors, do you believe that that is correct? Do you believe it will be pretty much ready to go by the end of November?

SEBELIUS: I do. And I think that we are making improvements each and every day. It is easier to use now than it was two weeks. It is way from where we need it to be.

DEGETTE: So it's not like it's all going to be fine by the end of November. It's beginning to improve already. Is that your testimony?

SEBELIUS: It is a continuous process, as websites are. Patches are made, fixes are made on an ongoing basis. And as we find issues like Congresswoman Eshoo talked about, we are fixing them in real time.

DEGETTE: And you're going to guarantee yes or no that people will have privacy when they go on this site?

SEBELIUS: Absolutely.

DEGETTE: Now I just want to say one last thing. I was on the Washington Journal where callers call in this morning, and I had a man, Max, call in. And he said he got one of those letters from the insurance companies that his insurance was canceled. So what he did is he went on to the website and he -- under the federal exchange and he found a better plan, and now he's going to sign up. So I would hope that that's what everybody would be able to do. And I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Mr. Terry?

TERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I'm pleased to hear that the website will be fully operational by the end of November. And would be able to -- would you come back to our committee so we can see if that's actually accomplished and how it was accomplished?

SEBELIUS: I will make every effort to do that.

TERRY: OK. You were governor and state insurance commissioner in Kansas, and I reached out to our state insurance commissioner and governor and found out that they have absolutely no data about Nebraskans who have either tried to enroll or enrolled.

As you know, Nebraska is one of the states that opted not to do their own exchange and rely on the federal exchange. So it's interesting to me that neither our insurance commissioner nor the governor's office had any data about Nebraskans and this -- this -- and enrolling in these plans.

I also asked our insurance commissioner if any of the navigators, if they knew who the navigators were and whether they had to apply to be certified or licensed in essence like an insurance agent would be. And they told me they have no clue who's been authorized by HHS to be a navigator and work with people in Nebraska.

So this is concerning to me, so I'm going to ask you a few questions along this line. First of all, do you have data on how many people in general in the United States have tried to enroll in a plan through this website?

SEBELIUS: No, sir. We do not have any reliable data around enrollment, which is why we haven't given it to date.

TERRY: Or have any data on how many people have tried to enroll but because of the problems have not been able to accomplish that?

SEBELIUS: No, sir. I can tell you I met with insurers last week. And one of the priority fixes is the so-called 834s, the document that sends an individual's name to a company and verifies it. That is one of the systems that is not working.

TERRY: I appreciate that. And the contractors I asked specifically about the information of how many people have tried to enroll and enrolled, and they say they do have those numbers but can't tell us that because of a contract with HHS saying that they -- they're gagged on that information.

SEBELIUS: I would suggest that the numbers are not reliable according to (inaudible).

TERRY: Well, I'll tell you what. My question is going to be though will you on the record right now authorize them to give us those numbers and let us determine whether those are reliable?

SEBELIUS: No, sir. I want to give you reliable, confirmed data from every state and from the federal marketplace. We have said that we will do that on a monthly basis. By the middle of the month you will have that data, but I don't want to turn over anything that is not confirmed and reliable, and that's what we'll do.

TERRY: Well, but that data out there exists and you will not let us (inaudible)

SEBELIUS: Sir, I would -- I would tell you right now it is not reliable data. According to the insurance companies who are eager to have customers, they are not getting reliable data all the way through the system (inaudible) real problems that we have.

TERRY: The number of people that have clicked on and tried to get or enrolled, I'm not asking about what they enrolled in or whether they came in and said they were 65 and were quoted something that they were 27 years old. That should be a pretty reliable number just on the surface. So would you...

SEBELIUS: The system isn't functioning, so we are not getting that reliable data. Insurers who I met with said that that is the case. We know that there's 700,000 applications that have been (inaudible).

TERRY: The reliability of that data certainly flies in the face of the testimony from the contractors. All right. I yield back.

UPTON: Ms. Capps?

CAPPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Secretary Sebelius, for your presence here today and your testimony. While I too am frustrated with the flawed rollout of healthcare.gov, I do appreciate your longstanding commitment to improving the health care options for all Americans and fixing this website quickly.

I think it's important to note that in my home state of California and other states as well, the new exchange marketplace, we call it Covered California, is working. And rates -- constituents are finding that rates are as much as 29 percent less than those that they found on the marketplace last year.

I'm thankful my constituents now have this option. And as I look around to implementation nationwide, it seems clear to me that political decisions in individual states have really made the difference for consumers.

The governors and legislators -- state legislators that embrace this law are delivering for their communities, but those elected who are trying to ignore the opportunities presented and continue to throw up road blocks both here in Congress and in state legislatures should not now seem surprised that there are significant bumps along the way.

This seems to me to be completely disingenuous. Having embraced the law since open enrollment began October 1, Californians have started nearly 180,000 applications with more beginning every day.

I know my time is limited, but I want to have a second to mention a conversation I had just last night with a (inaudible) town hall to my district on the central coast of California. One of the first callers I heard from was a mother from Santa Barbara. Her name's Meryl, and she wanted to tell me the story of her son.

Her son is 28 years old and he had been paying $425 a month for his insurance before the Affordable Care Act. She was happy to report that he has already applied through Covered California and has found a policy that works better for him. It has all the essential health benefits covered, which his former policy did not, and now will only cost him $109 a month.

This is significant savings for Meryl's son, and this is a story that's being repeated at least in California often. So there are millions of residents in many states who have now set up their own

websites and marketplaces. In those states, tens of thousands of people are now as we speak signing up for coverage. And this is demonstrating that the Affordable Care Act is working.

In New York and Washington, over 30,000 people have enrolled. In Oregon, over 50,000 people have been enrolled. Kentucky, 31,000 people have been enrolled. We could go on and on. The success of the state exchanges, which is where this is meant to be implemented, shows how badly this law is wanted and needed, how much it will be of help to so many people who want quality, affordable health care.

So my three quick questions to you are this, Madam Speaker (ph). What is your assessment of how this first month have been gone -- has gone in the states that are running their own marketplaces, which this Congress intended that the Affordable Care Act work?

SEBELIUS: Well everything we hear from the state-based markets is that they are doing well. They have not submitted data yet. We, again, are working with them around a monthly schedule so that they will confirm Medicaid data and enrollment data. And we'll see the real numbers at the end of the month and make sure that the -- they're available to the public.

But everything we hear is that they see the same demand, they are eager to enroll folks and that that is going smoothly.

CAPPS: And what do you think this success shows about the demand and the interest for affordable health insurance on the part of constituents?

SEBELIUS: Well I don't think there's any question that in spite of a series of road blocks and blockades and a lot of misinformation driven by about a $400 million marketing campaign last year, Americans are eager to see what their benefits may be under the law, what their opportunities are, how to get health security for themselves and their families, and we want to make sure that they see those benefits.

The website is one of the ways to do that. The call center, on the ground enrollment, personal outreach, are a variety of ways, and I would tell your colleague, Mr. Congressman, I'd be happy to get you the list of the Nebraska folks who are on the ground. It's available easily. It's public record, so I'd be happy to send it to you, so you could share it with your insurance commissioner and governor.

UPTON: The gentlelady's time has expired.

Gentleman from the great state of Michigan, Mr. Rogers.

ROGERS: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here. Short time, get through some questions here, if I can.

Is it your testimony that the -- that there -- every night to try to increase the functionality of the system you're hot swapping codes?

So my understanding is that between 2:00 and 4:00, write new code, put it into the system, yes or no?

SEBELIUS: Clearly, I am not hot swapping code. There is a technical team...

(CROSSTALK)

ROGERS: No, no. You are in charge of the operation that hot swaps code on functionality. Is that -- you're trying to improve the functionality, yes?

So that happens every night, yes?

SEBELIUS: No, I don't think it does happen every night. It happens periodically during the hours of 1:00 and 5:00, but it is not a nightly feature.

ROGERS: Great.

Has each piece of that code that's been introduced in the system been security tested?

SEBELIUS: That's my understanding, yes, sir. And the testing...

ROGERS: Each piece of that code has been tested? Yes or no?

SEBELIUS: I don't know, but I can tell you that security...

ROGERS: That's a much safer answer, trust me.

SEBELIUS: ... is an ongoing operation that as code is loaded, you need to retest over and over and over again. So whether it's pretested, I can't tell you.

ROGERS: All right. You need to test the code.

Have any end-to-end security tests been conducted since healthcare.gov went live on October 1st, yes or no?

SEBELIUS: My understanding is, there's continuous testing as the -- our temporary authority to operate calls for.

ROGERS: Yes or no, has an end-to-end security test on healthcare.gov went live, yes or no?

SEBELIUS: I will find out exactly what testing they are doing. I know they are doing simultaneous testing as new code is loaded.

ROGERS: Are there any end-to-end security tests run after every new piece of code is put -- I'm not talking about testing the code now, I'm talking about an end-to-end security test.

SEBELIUS: I can tell you how...

ROGERS: Covers the cost of the boundaries...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: ... I can get you that information.

ROGERS: I can tell you they are not, and I'd be interested to hear why not.

Tab -- if you go to tab two quickly in your book, I'm going to read three things...

SEBELIUS: What book, sir?

ROGERS: You have a tab there. If you go to tab two -- right there.

Well, while you're looking, I'll read. It's dated September 27th, and it is to Marilyn Tavenner. Let me just -- a couple of pieces here.

"There are inherent security risks with not having all code tested in a single environment. Finally, the system requires rapid development and release of hot fixes and patches so it is not always available or stable during the duration of the testing."

Secondly, "The security contractor has not been able to test all of the security controls in one complete version of the system."

And if you look in the first part, which is most troubling at all, it says, "Due to system readiness issues, the security control assessment was only partly completed. This constitutes a risk that must be accepted before the marketplace day one operations."

And so let me tell you what you did.

You allowed the system to go forward with no encryption on back- up systems. They had no encryption on certain boundary crossings. You accepted a risk on behalf of every user of this computer that put their personal financial information at risk because you did not even have the most basic end-to-end test on security of this system.

Amazon would never do this. ProFlowers would never do this. Kayak would never do this.

This is completely an unacceptable level of security. And here's the scary part, we found out after the contractors last week that an end-to-end test hadn't been conducted on security, not functionality, because if it's not functioning, you know it's not secure.

Your ongoing hot patches without end-to-end tests: the private contractors told us it would take a very thorough two months just for an integrated end-to-end security test, that I'll tell you has not happened to date.

Why? Because you're constantly adding new code every night to protect the functionality of the system. You have exposed millions of Americans because you all, according to your memo, believed it was an acceptable risk.

Don't you think you had the obligation to tell the American people that we're going to put you in this system, but beware, your information is likely to be vulnerable?

Would you commit today, Secretary, to shut down the system and do an end-to-end security test so that these Americans can have their information...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: No, sir. If you read the memo...

ROGERS: Oh, I have read it.

SEBELIUS: ... say that weekly testing of our berta (ph) devices, including interface testing, daily, weekly scans are going on. This is a temporary authority...

ROGERS: (Inaudible), that's not what the memo says, number one, and number two, the contractors will tell you...

(CROSSTALK)

(UNKNOWN): Mr. Chairman, point of order. I think the witness ought to be allowed to answer what was a speech by the colleague, because he's raised a lot of issues.

UPTON: If the gentlelady will quickly answer.

ROGERS: (Inaudible) here today, that's...

UPTON: Does the secretary wish to respond briefly?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I would just say this document is a document signed by Administrator Tavenner, which discusses mitigation strategies for security that are ongoing and upgraded and a authorization to operate on a permanent basis will not be signed until these mitigation strategies are satisfied. It is under way right now, but daily and weekly monitoring and testing is under way.

ROGERS: Mr. Chairman, there are people using this system today and she's just admitted again the system isn't secure nor has (inaudible).

UPTON: The gentleman...

(UNKNOWN): Mr. Chairman, she didn't admit that. You said it, but she didn't say it.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

Mr. Doyle.

DOYLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, welcome.

Those of us who fought for this law, who voted for this law, have a vested interest in its success, and the concerns that you here expressed on this side of the panel are real, because we want to see Americans get health care.

I think it's somewhat disingenuous for my colleagues on the other side of the podium here to have this faux anger and this faux concern over a bill that they absolutely want to fail and have rooted for its failure and have voted over 40-some times to repeal this bill, never putting an alternative plan on the floor for the American people, but just to simply say they want to make sure this plan doesn't succeed.

And I think the real fear is, that the plan will succeed and the American people will learn of the real benefits of this plan, not the propaganda campaign that's gone on by the Republicans for the last three years.

Madam Secretary, I think one of the keys to success of this plan is that we get young people to enroll in this plan. And I have some questions about some enrollment concerns that I have.

Now I understand that you've said approximately 700,000 people have applied for coverage via the healthcare.gov and the state exchanges, is that -- is that...?

SEBELIUS: They've completed an application.

DOYLE: Right. Which is different from enrollment.

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

DOYLE: So my question is, are you expecting -- I know you don't have exact numbers yet, but are you expecting a large number or a small month number of enrollments during the first month?

What is your thoughts on that?

SEBELIUS: Well, our projections prior to launch were always that there would be a very small number at the beginning. We watch the Massachusetts trend, which started slowly and built. I think there's no question that given our flawed launch of healthcare.gov, it will be a very small number.

DOYLE: Yes, I mean, in the Massachusetts plan, I think the first month it was 123 people signed up, less than 1 percent of the overall first-year enrollment in that first month. And we saw the same kind of numbers in Medicare Part D the first month of open enrollment back in 2006.

Madam Secretary, young Americans are the most likely age group to be uninsured, and a lot of us are concerned because of the problems that we've been having with the website, that a lot of these young folks may not come back on; you know, they have very short attention spans.

I've got four kids that all work on the Internet, and if they can't get something in five minutes, they are on to something else.

What do we do, and what plans are in place by your department to encourage young people to go back and revisit that site and to make sure that we're getting young people looking at that site and accessing it?

SEBELIUS: Well, step number one is fix the site, because we don't want people to be invited back and then have a bad experience a second time around. I think that's absolutely right. The site is particularly important to tech-savvy younger generation folks who we need to enroll.

I think that we have -- so fixing the site is step one.

And step number two is getting information to folks that the law even exists. A lot of young people haven't followed this dialogue for the last three and a half years.

(CROSSTALK)

DOYLE: Yes, I think we need a real marketing campaign, and we really need to reach out to young people, especially at the end of November when you say this site is going to be working a lot better, to make sure they are checking that site out.

SEBELIUS: You bet.

DOYLE: One of my four kids is self-employed. He's 33 years old, paying about $140 a month for a Blue Cross plan. He's eligible for a subsidy. We browsed that site. He's gonna able to get coverage for about half of what he's paying right now, and that's good news for us, because I think my wife is paying his premium, so I think we're going to save the money.

But I think it's important we had to prod him to go on that site and enroll, and I think for a lot of young people, they are not going to do it unless it's easy, so it's important we get that fixed. Thank you.

SEBELIUS: I agree.

UPTON: Dr. Murphy, chairman of the oversight subcommittee.

MURPHY: Thank you, Madam Secretary, and welcome.

You had mentioned that the people who did the technology on the website made a number of mistakes, you mentioned Verizon. When we had them before our committee last week, they said it wasn't their fault they were told within HHS there was some problems there.

SEBELIUS: Sir, Verizon wasn't involved in the website (inaudible)...

(CROSSTALK)

MURPHY: Right, with the data, I understand, I'm sorry.

But they had a role, CGI had a role, other companies, et cetera. I'm just curious in this process, what decisions did you make that affected this for better or worse in terms of the data, the ease, or problems with the implement and being able to track how many people are actually enrolled?

SEBELIUS: My decisions (sic) specifically to design the website, I was not involved. I am prohibited to choose contractors. We go by the federal procurement, and I got regular reports on exactly what was done...

MURPHY: What about the part with regard to getting data in terms of how many people are even enrolled or trying to enroll, did you have any decisions in that process?

SEBELIUS: The application process, at this point, does not work end to end very well.

MURPHY: Right, I understand it doesn't work, that's obvious.

SEBELIUS: We do not have reliable data about the end of...

MURPHY: I'm just trying to find out, if you had asked them, to say look, I'm in charge of this, I'm going to want a regular report, how many people have tried to enroll, how many people have enrolled, have you -- did you ask that question?

SEBELIUS: We have prioritized for our contractors that specific fix, and believe me, the insurance companies are eager for us to get reliable data to make sure their data matches ours, and that is not there yet.

MURPHY: I'm just trying to -- I appreciate that. I'm trying to find out if you told them that was part of the plan and what they're doing.

Let me -- real quick, I'm hearing -- we're hearing from thousands of people who have had their policies canceled. In fact, I heard from one insurer in Pittsburgh that just canceled 30,000 individual policies.

Now, they said they expect 50,000 to 30,000 to enroll in the exchange plans. Just so you know, to date, so far, the number of people who have signed up for their plan is 10, 10.

Now I'm concerned a lot of these individuals and families aren't going to be able to make it by January 1, so I'm wondering, do you know how many families will not have been able to keep their insurance by January 1, do you have any matrix (sic) to help you understand what that is going to be?

SEBELIUS: Sir, by law that has been in place at the state level, insurance companies must give their customers a 90-day notice about a policy change or a plan cancellation.

MURPHY: I'm just wondering if you have a mechanism whereby you will know if something built in this system...

SEBELIUS: Will I know if your constituents signed up for an individual plan, no.

MURPHY: People across America.

And do we know how many policies will be canceled? I mean, is it 1,000, 10,000, 1 million, 5 million, do we know?

SEBELIUS: We know that in the individual market, a number of the plans having sold are not grandfathered and are not currently meeting the law. Those notices have gone out. We know there are about 12 million people in the individual market. A number of them have grandfathered plans. A number of them have plans which meet the essential health benefits. So I can try to...

MURPHY: Let me put a face on that.

Person named Paul wrote to me, and says, "I'm supposedly one of the families this act is supposed to help, but it's, in fact, is hurting more, and would make it harder for my family to live. We'll have less money for food and other essential items. I have a wife and four children to take care of."

Another person wrote, "I received -- I had a 2013 plan which if you include the premiums, and out of pocket total liability was $5,300. For 2014, the same program liability is $9,000.

Single mom writes, "I want to convey, I'm one of the millions of people who's having their health insurance canceled, because it does not meet the standards of Obamacare. I liked my insurance. I especially liked the price. And now I'm being forced to sign up for something that will be way more expensive. As a single mom who is self employed, I'm worried about how I'm going to pay my bills."

I hope you have a mechanism to track who these people are. She's not eligible for other subsidies, but the costs are going to be driving her down.

SEBELIUS: Well sir, again, I would suggest there is no requirement that any of those consumers sign up for a plan suggested by their company at a higher price. They have now options...

MURPHY: But if a plan changes...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: (OFF-MIKE) health underwriting, without preexisting conditions, with some guarantees around...

MURPHY: She's searching around and she can't find a plan she could afford.

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: (OFF-MIKE) they never had before.

MURPHY: She can't find a plan she can afford.

UPTON: Gentleman's time expired.

Gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Butterfield.

BUTTERFIELD: Mr. Chairman, before my time begins, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

UPTON: Yes, go ahead.

BUTTERFIELD: Mr. Chairman, I'm always sensitive to committee decorum and I want to ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to display the Democratic Twitter handle.

UPTON: Go ahead.

BUTTERFIELD: Hear no objection, thank you.

Secretary Sebelius, thank you so very much for coming today. I would like to ask you about the document that my Republican colleagues have just released.

This document is an authority to operate memorandum to operate the federally facilitated marketplace for six months and implement a security mitigation plan.

This document, as I understand it, describes security testing for healthcare.gov. It says that security testing of the marketplace was ongoing since its inception, and into September of this year. In fact, it says that, quote, "Throughout the three rounds of security control assessment testing, all of the security controls have been tested on different versions of the system." that's good news.

But the bad news is, that it goes on to say that, because of system readiness, a complete security assessment of all the security controls in one complete version of the system were not tested.

This document indicates that CMS postponed a final security assessment screening, but in its place, CMS did put in place a number of mitigation measures, and it concluded that these measures would mitigate any security risk.

Question, are you familiar with this document?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

BUTTERFIELD: Is it correct that this document recommends implementing a dedicated security team to monitor, track, and ensure the mitigation plan activities are completed?

SEBELIUS: Yes, it does.

BUTTERFIELD: Now is it correct that this document recommends monitoring and performing weekly testing on all berta (ph) devices, including Internet-facing web servers?

SEBELIUS: More than recommended, it's underway.

BUTTERFIELD: Is it correct this document recommends conducting daily and weekly scans?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

BUTTERFIELD: Does this document recommend conducting a full SEA test on the marketplace in a stable environment?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

BUTTERFIELD: Is it correct that this document recommends migrating the marketplace to CMS's virtual data center environment in the first quarter of next year?

SEBELIUS: Yes, it does.

BUTTERFIELD: My understanding is that an independent security expert, the MITRE Corporation, is performing security testing on the code that powers the website on an ongoing basis, is that correct?

SEBELIUS: That is correct, and MITRE did an assessment of the system, gave us a preliminary report, they are in the process of posting their final report. That did not raise flags about going ahead, and the mitigation strategy was put in place to make sure that we had a temporary authority to operate in place while the mitigation was going on, and then a permanent authority to operate will be signed.

BUTTERFIELD: Finally, do you have confidence in these and other measures you are taking to protect the security of Americans' personal information?

SEBELIUS: I do, sir.

BUTTERFIELD: Thank you.

This is the third time you've said it during the hearing, and we believe you. Thank you.

What you're telling us is that these remedial actions and the ongoing security testing from MITRE are protecting the security of the website. That's a message that it's important for the public to hear.

My Republican colleagues do not want this website to work.

I am convinced of that.

They want to block the ACA at all costs and even shut down the government to stop the law. For the last four years, they have taken every glitch, every simple glitch, and hiccup in the law and tried to exaggerate its significance, and that's happening today and it's so disappointing.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

UPTON: Dr. Burgess.

BURGESS: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I may make a unanimous consent request also?

UPTON: Yes, go ahead.

BURGESS: I would like to request unanimous consent my opening statement, which we were not allowed to be given could be made part of the record to this hearing.

UPTON: No -- no -- without objection.

BURGESS: And further, I do have a number of questions, many have come from constituents, I would also like to submit those as questions for the record...

UPTON: Without objection.

BURGESS: ... and ask the secretary for her attention to those so we can get answers, because they are, after all, important questions.

OK, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It just came to my attention that on CNN -- the -- CNN's website, that the site was hacked just last week, and I will be happy to make this available to you. I don't think...

SEBELIUS: The CNN website?

BURGESS: The -- CNN ran a story that the healthcare.gov website was hacked last week. And again, I will get this to you and would appreciate your response to that.

Mr. Terry had asked a question about -- he wanted to get the information about the number of people who'd signed up. You said you wouldn't provide that because it wasn't accurate.

Would you provide us with the number of people who have been able to enroll on the telephone? The president gave an 800-number during his speech. Could we get a number of people who've enrolled on the telephone?

SEBELIUS: No, sir, we do not have reliable enrollment data. We will have that to you by the middle of November as we committed to. We are collecting state data, we are collection telephone data, we are collecting paper data, we are collecting website data. We want it to be reliable and accountable and that's what you'll have to...

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: OK. Reclaiming my time. Telephone data doesn't seem like it would be that difficult to compile since the number is likely quite low.

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: The telephone goes through the system.

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: You have, or the president designated, I call him a glitch czar, Jeffrey Zients. Your familiar with his appointment to the -- to oversee...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I asked him to serve in this capacity, yes.

BURGESS: OK. Many of us on the Subcommittee of Oversight and Investigations in Energy and Commerce were not as comforted as you by that selection because if you'll recall, Mr. Zients' history with this subcommittee is not great. He was involved with Solyndra, we asked him to come and talk to us about Solyndra in 2011. He refused, requiring a subpoena to be issued by this -- by this subcommittee. Will you commit to making Mr. Zients available to our subcommittee for our questions?

SEBELIUS: Congressman, you are welcome to ask Mr. Zients to come before the committee. He is volunteering his services to us for a period of time. He has been appointed by the President to start in January as the head of the National Economic Council. He was the Deputy Director at OMB for Management and Performance. I am thrilled that he is willing to take on this assignment and help us drive the management, but...

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: Again, his -- his appearance here will be important. Now a lot of people are asking if the president's words leading up to this law, if they matter, and the statement in the Washington Post today edited the President's statement, saying, "If you like your health care plan, you'll be able to keep your health care plan if we deem it adequate," but that seems like a more operational statement, and especially if you go back just a few years into the Federal Register, and I'm quoting here from the Federal Register from July 23rd of 2010, just a few months after the law was signed. The -- the rule, or the interim rule for dealing with the grandfathering written in the Federal Record, "because newly-purchased individual policies are not grandfathered, the department expects that a large population of individual policies will not be grandfathered, covering up to and perhaps exceeding 10 million people."

I hope the president was apprised of that before he made these statements, because clearly his statement wasn't operational.

SEBELIUS: Again, that's an insurance company choice, and that was a snapshot of what the market looks like.

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: Your...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: The President made it clear, and our policy was to put a grandfather clause in both employer-based coverage and in individual coverage.

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: Right, but in the Federal Register, those were the comments that were recorded. Now, I do have to...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: No, this isn't a government takeover of anything. These are private insurance plans making private decisions.

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: I do have to ask you this. I do have to ask you this. You serve at the pleasure of the President, we're all aware of that. But we have had many of your employees here in front of this committee, and you do have to ask yourself, are these being purposely misleading, or are they really not that smart? So I'm going to ask you this morning, for the sake of the future of health care in this country, will you please ask for the resignation of Gary Cohen, because he's repeatedly come to this committee and misled us.

SEBELIUS: I will not, sir.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

(UNKNOWN): Mr. Chairman, point of personal privilege. I just think the record ought to be clear about Jeffrey Zients. He was invited with less than a week's notice to come before this committee. He couldn't make it that day, he asked for some other day, he went to OMB and had nothing to do with the Solyndra contract, and he did come before us and talk about it, but his sole role was to represent OMB and I don't think he ought to have any -- there ought to be any disparagement of Jeffrey Zients. He's a very well-regarded public servant.

UPTON: The gentleman says the statement will stand. Ms. Matsui?

MATSUI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Madam Secretary. Now we all agree the website problems must be resolved. It's this country invented and developed the Internet and the concept of the websites, so there are high expectations. The fact that the hired private contractors could not build a ready website nearly three years is inexcusable, and after it's fixed, I hope the administration will hold those at fault accountable. But we can't lose sight of the big picture, that when this is all said and done, every American will have affordable quality health insurance and health care.

This is the goal, I believe, of all Democrats and Republicans. The ACA's working in California, and it's working in my district in Sacramento, and I just want to tell you about a letter I got from a constituent. "Dear Congresswoman Matsui, as a self-employed contract employee, I've had individually-purchased health insurance for 11 years now. Insurance has gone up every year, sometimes more than once, insurance that wouldn't let me add my daughter when my ex- husband stopped his insurance policy that covered them both, insurance that I have underused for fear they would drop me, insurance that has just dropped me anyway because they decided they would no longer offer individual plans. This could have happened to me at any time. I'm so grateful that the Affordable Care Act provisions make it possible to get health insurance beginning in January for me and my daughter. As all this is happening, I have finished graduate school and started my own business. Slowly but surely things are happening and I expect to be hiring my first employees in the next six months. The provisions of the ACA are helping me in this too. I can clearly see what it will cost me to provide health benefits for my future employees, understand these costs, and build my business plan accordingly." And that is just one of the letters I have received.

Now, I've also heard from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle complain again and again about how health care reform is increasing health care costs. But the empirical evidence shows something quite different. The recent trends in Medicare spending growth are really quite remarkable. Medicare spending growth is at historically low levels, growing by less than one-half of 1 percent in fiscal year 2012, following slow growth in 2010 and 2011. The same is true on the private side of health care. Personal consumption expenditures on health care, everything from health insurance to drugs to hospital care, rose by just over 1 percent in the past year. This is the slowest increase in nearly 50 years.

Madam Secretary, what does this data tell us about what has happened to health care costs since the ACA became law?

SEBELIUS: Well Congresswoman, you're absolutely right. In the last three and a half years since the President signed the Affordable Care Act, we have seen a great slowdown in the extraordinary cost increases year in and year out for health care in the Medicare plan, in the Medicaid plan, in private insurance, and in underlying health care costs, which affect every American. Some of that has to do with some of the features that are currently in place around different care delivery and different payment systems that we are helping to drive, given the tools that we have with the Affordable Care Act, more quality outcomes, trying to prevent hospital readmissions, looking at hospital-acquired infections, medical homes that prevent people in the first place or help them stay healthy in their own homes and in their own places.

MATSUI: So it's true that the private insurance costs are growing at the slowest rate in decades also, is that true?

SEBELIUS: That is true.

MATSUI: So am I also correct that the ACA Act (sic) premiums are coming in even lower than projected by experts like the CBO?

SEBELIUS: Well, they're about, on an average, about 16 percent lower than was estimated, that those premiums would be, and that's the premium, not accounting for the number of uninsured or underinsured Americans who will then qualify for financial help. Since they don't have employer coverage, they get some help from the taxpayers paying for that coverage.

MATSUI: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

UPTON: Dr. Gingrey?

GINGREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Secretary, when you spoke at the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte last September, one of the first statements you made about the Affordable Care Act was, quote, "but for us Democrats, Obamacare is a badge of honor, because no matter who you are, what stage of life you're in, this law is a good thing. First, if you already have insurance you like, you can keep it," and I end the quote. I'd call this a red herring that misled voters, intentional or not. Now perhaps had you known that millions would lose their coverage, families would face financial disaster, as one constituent recently told me, or that the exchange rollout would be plagued by a multitude, multiple delays we've seen, you would not consider such a badge of honor.

GINGREY: The fact is, your words and those of the President as he campaigned last year, that "if you already have insurance you like, you can keep it," seemed to be directly refuted by the millions of cancellation notices already sent to Americans just in the past few weeks. Whether your statement was inaccurate, or as Mr. Hoyer said yesterday, "not precise enough," it does strike me that millions of individuals who, by listening to speeches like yours, voted, believing one thing, now find themselves without coverage and are now scrambling to find coverage in a marketplace that offers more expensive plans with fewer options.

In response to my constituents' calls for help, I created a portal on my website -- no patches or fixes needed -- that allows those who have experienced problems to reach out and tell me about their personal experiences.

In just the last few days, my office has received dozens of complaints regarding increases in their monthly premiums. I received one such notice from a mother in her early 50s who just received a notice that not only will her insurance premiums double, but she will also have to switch insurance -- insurers to keep her doctors due to the effect of the Affordable Care Act.

Can you imagine receiving notices like this? I can tell you that, just in my district, the 11th of Georgia, many more are experiencing this situation. Madam Secretary, this is akin to telling seniors that in a few weeks they're Medicare coverage will be dropped, or their premiums would double.

Now, I know that neither you nor the administration would ever advocate for such a policy. Yet, here you are subjecting those currently in the individual market to such government intervention. And I would hope that you would agree with me in recognizing that these increases are a heavy hardship on my constituents -- on all of our constituents, Republican or Democrat.

Now I'll get to my questions. You know the health care law included a hardship exemption from the individual mandate. Yet, the administration has failed to finalize the application form for the hardship exemption three and one-half years after we passed this law. As of today, can an individual apply for a hardship exemption from the individual mandate on healthcare.gov, yes or no?

SEBELIUS: I don't know.

GINGREY: I do: It's no.

On October 15th, Politico reported that if the online system for getting into Obamacare coverage is rickety, the system for getting out of the mandate doesn't even exist yet. HHS says, it will take another month at least for the administration to finalize the forms for the hardship exemption from the individual mandate.

Why has it taken three and one-half years to finalize a simple application form for an exemption from the individual mandate?

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, as you know, the individual mandate is not in place until next year. We have made it very clear that if somebody is Medicaid eligible in a state that doesn't choose...

(CROSSTALK)

GINGREY: My last question and my last second.

An estimated 16 million people in the individual market have or will receive cancellation notices stating their health insurance coverage does not meet minimum coverage requirements of the Affordable Care Act.

The bill specifically grants you, Madam Secretary, the power to determine the criteria for a hardship exemption. Will you provide all of these individuals a hardship exemption since the Affordable Care Act is taking away their plan? Will do you that?

SEBELIUS: No, sir. And I think those numbers are far from accurate: 95 percent of Americans who have health insurance will be in a continuous plan -- Medicare, Medicaid, employer-based, V.A. -- 95 percent.

Five percent who are in the individual market, a portion of those 5 percent -- a portion of them, about 12 million people -- a fraction of those 12 million will have a plan that doesn't meet the criteria and has not been grandfathered in.

They are indeed receiving notices. Many of those individuals -- half of them -- will be eligible for financial help getting a new plan and they have many more choices in the marketplace. So we will not have a blanket exemption.

GINGREY: Sounds like a hardship to me, Madam Secretary.

UPTON: The gentleman's time expired.

Ms. Christensen.

CHRISTENSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you Madam Secretary for being here and thank you for all that you and your staff at HHS has done in implementing the Affordable Care Act to insure that it would provide the many benefits to children, to women, to Medicare beneficiaries and to ensure security to those who already have insurance as well as lower costs.

Of course, the biggest complaint has been about the application and the enrollment website, but we have heard over and over from you that those are being addressed.

But you would recall and I know my colleagues would recall that Congressman Rush and I have always been concerned about those who do not have Internet access, those who are uncomfortable using the Internet and would not use it.

So I just wanted to just remind everyone that there are other avenues for enrolling either by telephone or by paper, either alone or with the help of a certified, you know, application assistant.

But my question goes to one of the rumors that has been circulating. There many rumors about how the Affordable Care Act has affected part-time workers. And some of my colleagues on the other side claim that the companies are moving workers to part-time jobs, because of the health care reform law and that low wage workers are being detrimentally affected.

And I understand why these claims are being made as just another part of the on going effort to undermine the law. Would you take a few minutes and just set the record straight on the part-time issue?

SEBELIUS: Certainly.

Ninety-five percent of businesses in this country are small businesses; under 50 full-time employees. And there is no responsibility that any of those employers have to provide health coverage for their employees.

On the other hand, there are now tax credits available for some of the smaller employers who want to offer coverage to actually come into the marketplace.

For the other businesses, the businesses hiring 50 or more, there is a standard that says an employee is considered full-time if he or she works 30 hours a week. And that really came from a market snapshot with help from the small business administration of where employee benefits were in the private market based on hours of work.

What was a part-time or a full-time employee?

What we know about the economic data is the high point of part- time workers was in 2008 and 2009 at the height of the last recession. It has been decreasing each and every year. There is no data to support the fact that there is an up tick based on the impending Affordable Care Act. I'm sure that there may be some individual employers making some business decisions about how many workers they want full-time and how many part-time. But I can tell you there is no economic data or employment data that supports the notion that this is an effect of the law.

CHRISTENSEN: True, and in fact, it's my understanding, that part-time workers are at the lowest percentage of workers in many, many years right now.

SEBELIUS: Well, and for the first time, as you know Congresswoman, part-time workers will have options for affordable health care. They never had that before. They've never had options in the marketplace. They never had some health purchasing coverage for themselves and their families.

Their full-time colleagues have, but they have not. So they will have options.

CHRISTENSEN: And just to be clear, I had another really long question, but the last part of it -- it would be fair to say that the every point along the way you expected this website to work based on everything that you have been told by the contractors up until that point.

SEBELIUS: I expected it to work and I desperately want to get it working. I....

CHRISTENSEN: More than anyone else, I am sure.

SEBELIUS: ... can't tell you how frustrated I am, and we are committed to fixing it. The only thing that I think builds back the confidence of the public is fixing it.

CHRISTENSEN: Thank you.

UPTON: Gentlelady's time expired.

Mr. Scalise.

SCALISE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman for holding the hearing and thank you, Secretary Sebelius, for being with us.

Last week when the contractors built the system were here, I asked them all under oath if they had actually delivered the system they were contracted to build. And all four of them answered yes. I want to ask you, did the contractors deliver the system that you contracted them to build?

SEBELIUS: I don't think I can accurately answer that question. What we know is we've a system that doesn't function properly...

SCALISE: We definitely know that.

SEBELIUS: As we fix things, we'll know more about what is broken along the way. And I'll be able to...

SCALISE: So would someone in your office know -- somebody in your office oversaw this implementation and received the product. And they either said, this is the product we contracted and paid hundreds of millions of dollars to build or it wasn't.

Does somebody have the ability to get that information?

SEBELIUS: Well, I think that we can say that products tested individually, verified individually.

SCALISE: But clearly was an integrated system.

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: (OFF-MIKE) don't work well together.

SCALISE: Well, but, you know, I used to write programs for a living. I developed software products for a living.

If you're developing an integrated system, it's irrelevant if one isolated component works by itself. But when you plug it in together it doesn't work, that's a system that doesn't work.

One of the question I had and others had, somebody in your agency made a decision weeks -- literally weeks before the deployment -- to change the system. Instead of going from a browser ability where somebody just like on Kayak or just like on Amazon.com could go shop for products, look at prices before they purchase, which is how consumers are used to doing this. Y'all made the decision to change it around and gather all their information first before you could let them see prices.

Was that you who made that decision?

SEBELIUS: No, sir.

SCALISE: Was that Ms. Tavenner?

SEBELIUS: It was Ms. Tavenner and a team who looked at not imposing additional...

SCALISE: Did that team make the decision because once they knew once people actually saw the prices, and we're getting reports from all of our constituents of dramatically higher prices than what they were expecting.

Did you make the decision because you knew that when they saw the prices they might not want to buy the product so you wanted to gather their information first?

SEBELIUS: Sir, first I did not make the decision. I was informed about the decision.

We didn't...

SCALISE: Do you agree with the decision?

SEBELIUS: ... rolling off a number of features. And clearly they can see the products. No, there is no requirement to buy anything.

SCALISE: Look, I spent two hours trying to get into the system. I never once got to a point where I could see a price. I did get kicked out many times and got some of those blank screens other people got.

I do want to share stories with you from some of my constituents because I -- we started a page on our -- on Facebook and on Twitter. We are collecting what's called Share with Scalise. People are sending us stories. And we're getting lots of stories from my constituents.

I want to read you a few of them.

Randall (ph) from Mandeville (ph) said "My health care premium went up 30 percent to over $350 a month increase."

We had Michelle (ph) from Slidell (ph), "Our insurance premiums are going up $400 a month and our deductible has increased."

And then you have got Shawn (ph) from Covington (ph), who said, "My current plan through United Health Care is no longer being offered in 2014 due to Obamacare. In fact, I received a letter stating that the new health care law was indeed the reason for the removal of my current health care plan."

Madam Secretary, what you would tell Shawn (ph), who liked his plan and now has lost it? And he was promised by you and the president he'd be able to keep that plan.

What would you tell Shawn (ph) now that he has lost his plan?

SEBELIUS: I would tell Shawn (ph) to shop in the marketplace and out of the marketplace.

SCALISE: Do you really think that's acceptable answer to Shawn?

SEBELIUS: If Shawn (ph) -- again if United chose not to keep Shawn's (ph) plan in effect for Shawn (ph)...

SCALISE: Because of the law. This is the (inaudible).

SEBELIUS: Sir, the law said if you keep Shawn's (ph) plan in place, if he liked his plan, if you only...

SCALISE: But Shawn (ph) liked his plan...

SEBELIUS: ... to Shawn (ph), then the plan is still there.

SCALISE: You and I may disagree over who you work for. I work for Shawn (ph). You work for Shawn (ph), Madam Secretary. Shawn (ph) lost his plan that he liked. And there are thousands and millions of Shawns (ph) throughout this country that lost the plan they liked because some bureaucrat in Washington said we think your plan is not good enough even though you like it, even though you were promised can you keep it, you're now not able to keep that plan.

I think you deserve to give Shawn (ph) a better answer than you just have to go shop for something else even though you lost your plan.

UPTON: The gentleman's time -- the gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. McNerney?

MCNERNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Madam Secretary for coming today.

I'm going to follow up on Mr. Doyle's line of questioning. One concern I have with the fallout from the website is that many users who tried to sign up and were discouraged because of problems will now be too discouraged to come back once the site is fixed.

So what do you plan to do to get those folks to come back?

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, we intend to invite them back formally by e-mail, by message. But we don't want to do that until we're confident that they will have a different experience.

So fixing the site is step one. And then inviting people back to the site to make it clear that when our timetable is fulfilled, they have four months to shop for affordable health coverage on a fully functioning site.

We know we're going to have to spend special time on young and healthy Americans who don't start out thinking they need insurance, aren't aware of the law, certainly don't want to use a failed or flawed site. So we're have to spend some particular attention on them.

MCNERNEY: Thank you.

Have the software specifications for the website and its related software elements, including the test specifications, has that changed since the initial rollout?

SEBELIUS: I know that there certainly are some changes because, since October 1st -- I'm sorry.

MCNERNEY: Yes, since the rollout, the specifications.

SEBELIUS: Well, we -- the specifications haven't changed. We are certainly fixing, as I say, speed and reliance is one of the issues we're taking a look at. That's the performance side.

But there also are some functionality sides that things do not work as they can, including the enrollment passed on to insurers. So we are fixing functionality. And I don't think that's a change in the specs. I think it is actually making the system work the way it should.

MCNERNEY: Well, are you -- or is the department doing a prioritization on the problems?

SEBELIUS: Yes.

MCNERNEY: Could you describe that a little bit?

SEBELIUS: Yes, as of last week when Jeff Zients joined us for this short-term project, we asked him to lead a sort of management team. We have pulled in all of our contractors as well as additional talent that they may have available.

We have talked to tech folks in and out of the private sector and insurance, some of their tech experts to get all eyes and ears, made a full assessment, developed a plan for fixes along the way, have a punch list for going after those fixes.

And we are doing a daily tech briefing and blog to tell people what we have found, what we have fixed, what's coming next, what the functionality is and we intend to do that until it's fully functional.

MCNERNEY: Well, thank you.

Madam Secretary, looking past the initial problems with the ACA rollout, do you think that the Affordable Care Act will be successful in bending the health care cost curve and reducing the fraction of our national economy that goes for health care?

SEBELIUS: Well, I think that we have already had some success. I think the goal is to continue to achieve that, a fully insured population arguably with preventative care, with an opportunity to see a primary care doctor and not go through the emergency room will in and of itself reduce costs.

Having people identified earlier who may have serious problems and managing those problems will reduce health costs. But I think the delivery system also needs some considerable help in paying for not a number of procedures, number of tests, number of prescriptions but paying for health outcomes.

MCNERNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Mr. Latta?

LATTA: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And Madam Secretary, thanks very much for being with us today. Appreciate your testimony so far today.

What I'd like to do is I'll get these to you because there are so many we've received. These are questions that we've received from our constituents back home, specifically about what's going on with the website and for them.

And so what I'll do, I'd like to get those to you. But there is a lot of questions here and a lot of thoughts gone into a lot of these questions.

But if I could start with last week's testimony when our -- four of the contractors were here. And in one of the questions that I had posed to Ms. Campbell from CGI, in her testimony she had stated that they delivered the medicare.gov and also the federalreporting.gov.

And I'd asked at that time, were these sites more or less complicated than the site that we were talking about here today?

And she said, of course, the site today was more complicated.

And in the questioning and from her testimony -- and we've been hearing about this end-to-end testing that wasn't happening, that we had individuals out there saying that about two weeks had been done, but I had asked her about was there sufficient enough time when they did medicare.gov?

And the response that she gave me back was on medicare.gov, which was a less complicated site -- and she stated that we had sufficient time to test the system before it went live.

And I asked her in a follow-up then, what was that sufficient time?

And she said we had a number of months before the system went live at that time.

And then -- and I just want to make sure, because again, you know, sometimes things don't get reported accurately.

But in the "U.S. News and World Report" on October the 18th of this year -- and there is some questions going back and forth. And I just want to make sure that, you know, that you were quoted properly.

Said, "'After two weeks of review', the HHS secretary concluded, 'we didn't have enough testing specifically for high volumes for a very complicated project. The online insurance marketplace needed five years of construction and a year of testing,' she said. 'We had two years and almost no testing.'"

Is that correct?

SEBELIUS: I don't know the quote. I'd never suggested that we needed five years. I don't know where that is from.

(CROSSTALK)

LATTA: Well, that's one of the things we're going to check.

SEBELIUS: We clearly did not ever have five years. The law was signed in (inaudible) 2010.

LATTA: Well, let me -- and then last week you were -- when you were down in Texas you were being asked by a reporter about the system and the launch. And one of the parts of the question was that, at what point did you realize the system wasn't going to be working the way that you envisioned before the launch and why didn't we stop it before the launch?

LATTA: And, again, this is what was reported.

"We knew that if we had another six months we would probably test further. But I don't think anyone fully realized both the volume caused such problems but volumes also exposed some of the problems we had."

Now going back, though, to Ms. Campbell's statement that they tested more extensively on a system that was not as complicated, but HHS, CMS decided to go forward with only a very short period of testing. Do you think that was acceptable?

SEBELIUS: Well clearly looking back, it would have been ideal to do it differently. We had a product that frankly people have been waiting for decades to have access to affordable health care.

Medicare existed well before the website. Medicare is a program that started 50 year ago. The website was an additional feature for consumer ease and comfort. And so they were not launching Medicare. They were not delivering health benefits to seniors. They were putting together an additional way to enroll in Medicare.

I would suggest, sir, that we had deadlines in the law that people had benefits starting January 1. We wanted a extensive open enrollment period so that a lot of people who were not familiar with insurance, didn't know how to choose a doctor or choose a plan, had never been in this marketplace, or people who needed to understand fully what the law offered had ample time to do that.

So the date that I was, again, required to select for open enrollment, that's again part of the statute. How long would open enrollment be? We picked that data. All the contractors that began early in this process in the fall of 2010 when we issued -- I'm sorry, 2011 when we issued the initial contracts to CGI and QSSI knew the October 1 date. That was not changed. It wasn't added to.

As we got closer to the system, one of the reasons, again, that we pared down what needed to launch on October 1 was an attempt to minimize the risk to the system, to get people to their ability to see clearly what they were entitled to, what the plans were, and if those chose to, to enroll. Clearly the testing should have been longer, should have been more sufficient.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

LATTA: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Mr. Braley?

BRALEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Secretary people who are watching this hearing might be under the assumption that there's some kind of political debate going on over the Affordable Care Act, but I think people in Iowa don't care anything about who's winning the political debate. They want these problems fixed and they want them fixed now. And I think that's the responsibility of everyone in this room to make sure that that happens.

I tried to go into the marketplace on October 7 and I encountered problems immediately dealing with the security code questions which required you to select dates. One of them was type a significant date in your life. Today is my birthday, so I put that in. I tried three different ways of entering that date and got a message each time, important, this is not a valid answer. Same thing for the third date entry.

And a lot of times when you registering online for anything and you have to put a date in, there will be a little prop there that tells you what the format is you're required to enter. Do you know, have we solved this problem in the security code area?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir. One of the initial issues was just getting people into the site and the ID proofing, which is a two-step process. One is that you give some preliminary information and you set up a password.

But the second to ensure that your personal data can't be hacked, can't be interfered with is the second step where some personalized questions which only can be verified by you are indeed part of that. Again, that was a -- an initial hold up in the system. We focused a lot of attention on that in the first several days.

It was fixed, only to then discover that there were system problems throughout the application. And that piece has been fixed, but I would suggest it also was a function of trying to make sure we had the highest security standards, that we were not cavalier about someone's personal information being able to be addressed and attached. And it -- it was a functionality that didn't perform properly but does now.

BRALEY: One of the things that keeps coming up in this hearing because you are from Kansas is references to "The Wizard of Oz." And people went to see the wizard because of the wonderful things that he did.

The Affordable Care Act is doing a lot of great things in Iowa. The Des Moines Register wrote that Iowans buying health insurance on the government's new online marketplace will face some of the lowest premiums in the country. It's increasing competition in our state. Iowa consumers are able to choose from 40 health plans in the marketplace.

You've mentioned the growth of health care spending is at the slowest rate in 50 years. Fifty thousand Iowa seniors have received prescription drug rebates. Bans on preexisting conditions are

allowing people to get coverage and switch carriers, and now insurance premium increases are subject to review and can be rejected by the -- the people reviewing those plans.

But all of these good things don't mean anything unless we solve these problems. And what I need to know is how confident are you that the problems will be fixed by December 1?

SEBELIUS: Well again, Congressman, I have committed to that date because that is the assessment of both inside and outside experts have analyzed. And I think they kicked all the tires and looked at all the systems. I know that there's no confidence in that date until we deliver on the date. I'm well aware of that, and that's on me.

BRALEY: Since Americans were supposed to have six months to sign up, would you support ensuring they still have six months by extending the open enrollment period for two more months?

SEBELIUS: At this point, Congressman, they will have fully four months of fully functional all ways to sign up. And again, there are ultimate ways and the website right now that people are getting through.

The open enrollment period is extraordinarily long. It's about six times as long as a typical generous open enrollment period. And it's important for the insurance partners to know who is in their pool so again they can stay in the market next year and know who they're insuring.

So we think that the timetable will allow people four months' time to fully use the website. They can use it right now. They can use the call center. They can go to navigators. They can enroll.

UPTON: Gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Harper?

HARPER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here today. I'm sure there are other things you'd rather be doing, but we welcome the opportunity to have this conversation.

I'm going to ask a clerk to bring you a document for you to look at so I can ask you a couple of questions. If you can go to page eight on that, I have highlighted an item there. But this is a copy of a CGI slideshow from October 11 discussing technical issues that must be addressed within the website.

And on page eight of what I've handed you, CGI recommended that CGI and CMS have a review board to agree on which issues can technically be solved and which should politically be solved. Was such a review board convened?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I cannot tell you. I've never seen this document and I'm not aware of this recommendation.

HARPER: But CGI is responsible for the website, correct?

SEBELIUS: CGI is responsible for the application.

HARPER: For the application. Does it surprise you that in the slideshow that they gave October 11 they acknowledged political reasons for (inaudible)?

SEBELIUS: Sir, again, I've never seen this document. I have no idea what that means. Did you ask CGI when they came last week?

HARPER: Can you find out for us if such a review board was done and if any decisions were made on political reasons or any other reasons and find that out for us?

SEBELIUS: Sir, that question needs to go to CGI, but I can -- I can ask them to report to you.

HARPER: Well, if you would do that..

SEBELIUS: This is their document, if I understand it. This is not our document.

HARPER: Yes. Would you turn to page nine of that document please? And it states challenges on page nine in this presentation by CGI. And it says under challenges, unable to determine at this time whether low enrollment counts are attributable to system issues or due to users choosing not to select or enroll in a plan.

So those are two completely different issues obviously. If it is a system issue, that's something you have confidence at some point will be resolved. Correct?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

HARPER: And if it's a user selection issue, that's an entirely different story, is it not?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

HARPER: OK. Now when you used the phrase earlier about a punch list, that's -- that's like having somebody move into a house. Someone's buying a new house and they go through and they've been told this house is going to be ready for you to move in on October 1. They load up the van, they come in, and they get in and it's not finished. Part of the plumbing's not right. The wiring's wrong and -- and they go in.

This creates the situation where, you know, we -- health care shouldn't be a zero-sum game. I mean, we want to be fair to everyone. We want to -- we want to help people who are vulnerable. But at the same time, we shouldn't have to hurt folks.

HARPER: We've got people in my district, in my state who are getting notices of cancellation. They're being told of higher premiums that they're having. And these are great concerns that we have. And how do we work through that?

And I want to say I appreciate you accepting responsibility for these initial rollout failures that we've had. But who is ultimately responsible? It is the president, correct?

SEBELIUS: For the website?

HARPER: The president is ultimately responsible for the rollout, ultimately.

SEBELIUS: No, sir. We are responsible for the rollout.

HARPER: But who do you answer to?

SEBELIUS: I answer to the president.

HARPER: All right. So is the president not ultimately responsible like a company CEO would be?

SEBELIUS: Sir, he's the president of the United States. I have given him regular reports and those -- I am responsible for the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. That's what he asked me to do. That's what I'll continue to do.

HARPER: So you're saying the president is not responsible for HHS?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I didn't say that.

HARPER: OK, so the president ultimately is responsible. While I think it's great that you're a team player and taking responsibility, it is the president's ultimate responsibility, correct?

SEBELIUS: You clearly -- whatever. Yes, he is the president. He is responsible for government programs.

HARPER: My time expired.

UPTON: The gentleman's time expired.

Mr. **Lujan.**

LUJAN: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. Before I begin, I'd like to ask unanimous consent to submit into the record some articles from New Mexico publications, first entitled "Small Business: Owner Health Exchange Will Save Me $1,000 A Month."

UPTON: Without objection.

LUJAN: I see my time did begin there. So I'll try to get through this, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, I was intrigued by a line of questioning by Congressman Green asking about the individual marketplace. How volatile was the individual marketplace before the Affordable Care Act became law?

SEBELIUS: I would say it wasn't a mark marketplace at all. It was unprotected, unregulated, and people were really on their own.

LUJAN: Madam Secretary, the Kaiser Family Foundation reports have over 50 percent churn out of individuals that have coverage and individual market churn out of coverage every year. They either lose coverage, they're priced out or drop it.

Is that consistent with what you're aware of?

SEBELIUS: That's an accurate snapshot. About a third of the people are in for about six months. And over half are in for a year or less.

LUJAN: So individuals that were in the individual marketplace before the passage of the Affordable Care Act did not have the same protections as those in group coverage?

SEBELIUS: That's true.

LUJAN: And would those individuals in the individual marketplace sometimes have higher co-pays?

SEBELIUS: Higher co-pays, unlimited out of pocket costs for often coverage that was medically underwritten or excluded whatever medical condition they had in the first place.

LUJAN: So these were typically one-year contracts. If they used the plan because they got sick nor a car descent or a victim of domestic violence, sometimes they would be thrown off the plans or their rates would go up?

SEBELIUS: Yes.

LUJAN: I think that's important to note, Madam Secretary. And I'm intrigued as well that my understanding is that last month HHS conducted an analysis that found that nearly six out of uninsured Americans getting coverage through the marketplace will pay $100 a month. Is that correct?

SEBELIUS: They'll have a plan available for less than $100 if that is their choice. Yes.

LUJAN: And that number would be even higher -- would be better if more states chose the option of using federal funds to expand Medicaid to cover the low income population?

SEBELIUS: Definitely. That's just a marketplace snapshot. Those are people that will be in the marketplace.

LUJAN: Madam Secretary, I don't think I heard anyone from the other side of the aisle today -- my Republican colleagues, ask you how can Congress work with you and support you in fixing this website and fixing this problem?

I hope that we all agree we want this website fixed.

I would yield to anyone that would disagree.

Seeing no one accepting that. I'm glad to hear that we agree with this.

Now Madam Secretary, what can Congress do to work with you to fix this website?

SEBELIUS: Well, I'm not sure that there is hands on work that you can do. Maybe we have some technical expertise, but I would say getting accurate information to constituents is helpful.

Letting people know that they can check out the facts in the law. That they may be entitled to some financial support.

That cancellation of policies means that the policy that they had may not exist, but they have a lot of choices of new policies and a law that now says they must be insured in a new policy.

That they don't have to be insured by their company at a higher price.

LUJAN: I appreciate that, Madam Secretary.

Going back to the individual marketplace, Madam Secretary, did this Congress in previous years before the Affordable Care Act make it illegal for health insurance companies to raise rates on someone after they submitted a claim for going to the hospital or becoming sick or getting rid of preexisting conditions?

SEBELIUS: No, sir.

LUJAN: Madam secretary, one last note here.

It seems that we've received some horrible news that there are bad actors already taking place of fraudulent web sites that imitate the health care exchange or misleading seniors into disclosing their personal information.

I've signed on to a letter to you led by my colleague Representative Raul Ruiz out of California to request that you prioritize fraud prevention efforts.

What has the administration done to prevent the fraudulent acts and protect personal information?

SEBELIUS: I can tell you, Congressman, the president felt very strongly that, that need to be part of our outreach effort, which is it why the attorney general and I convened representatives of state attorneys general, insurance commissioners, the U.S. attorneys and the Justice Department and the Federal Trade Commission -- which has jurisdiction -- to make sure that we first got out ahead of some of this developing consumer outreach.

No one should ever give personal health information, because personal health information is not needed for the policies any longer. That's a red flag. We want to make sure that people turn over

potential fraudulent acts. We have put training in place for navigators. We have our law enforcement...

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

I would just note that we -- with the indulgence of the secretary, we're hoping that we can have all members ask some questions, but we also know that with four minutes we're going to have a little trouble.

So I'm going to ask unanimous consent that we try to limit our questions and answers to no more than two minutes.

And I talked to Mr. Waxman.

Is that okay?

Because otherwise we will -- there will be a lot of folks who will not be able to ask a question at all.

(UNKNOWN): Three of us.

SEBELIUS: And Mr. Chairman, I would submit that if the questions get submitted we would be happy to provide timely answers also.

UPTON: OK, so can I do that?

So with that we'll try two minutes.

Mr. Lance?

LANCE: I guess I won the Lottery on the two minutes, Madam Secretary.

(LAUGHTER)

UPTON: Time has expired. OK.

(LAUGHTER)

LANCE: 20 seconds, Mr. Chairman.

On the website, Madam Secretary, the contractors testified last week that they needed more than two weeks for end to end testing. Why in your opinion was there not more than two weeks?

SEBELIUS: Again, we have the products, the insurance policies themselves by companies were loaded into the system. So we could test up until then but it wasn't until September -- mid-September that that was done. Again, the contractors said we would have loved more testing time, but we think we're ready to go ahead.

LANCE: I believe that will ultimately be a dispute between CMS and HHS and the contractors and if there is anything question do regarding that because, obviously that, didn't work. And I had thought given this as the signature issue with the president that the website would be ready.

Number two, in my judgment the president's statements were overstatement overstatements. The four Pinnochios is an indication of that. There's a report in the New Jersey newspaper this is morning that 800,000 people in New Jersey who purchased their policies in individual or small employer markets will be affected by this.

Mr. Walden, in a previous question, mentioned the fact that in an individual market you would be able to keep your policy grandfathered. Yet regulations issued by HHS say that grandfathered status would not be a continued for so much as a $5 change in a co-pay.

Is that accurate?

Do you believe that that is a significant change?

SEBELIUS: Sir, we gave, I think in, the grandfather regulations a guide for how pricing could change, medical inflation and I think it was in most cases plus 15 percent.

There were some individual consumer outfacing issues that were more rigid than that, but I would say that in terms of having companies being able to collect a profit margin, that was certainly built into the grandfather status.

LANCE: I think that's too little a change, respectfully.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Tonko?

TONKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

TONKO: And welcome, Honorable Secretary. Thank you for fielding our questions and for responding when you were extended the courtesy to offer a response.

As a strong supporter of the Affordable Care Act, I'm frustrated and I think it's fair to say the American people are frustrated as well. And I heard you here many times this morning say you're frustrated.

I think, by and large, people want this law to work. When I talk to folks back home in the capital region of New York that I represent, even people who opposed the law initially aren't rooting for the failure of the Affordable Care Act. Instead, they want Congress to come together to fix these problems so that we can move on to real issues that matter like creating jobs and growing the economy.

My home state of New York, which also experienced Web site problems at the outset, has now completed enrollment determinations on over 150,000 New Yorkers, with more than 31,000 having already signed up for quality low-cost health insurance.

Given that many states have had success in overcoming these initial Web site issues, has HHS looked at what these state Web sites are doing as it searches for solutions to fix Healthcare.gov?

SEBELIUS: Absolutely. And we shared a lot of the information going in. I think that the hub feature that we have in our Web site that all states are using, including the state of New York, is fully functional. And that's good news for New York and California and others who are running their own state Web sites.

But we are learning from them. We've shared information with them. And we are eager for all the help and assistance moving forward.

TONKO: Thank you. Similarly, many states made the illogical choice of rejecting Medicaid expansion contained in the ACA that would help some of their poorest citizens get access to the health care situation.

This is despite the fact that Medicaid expansion is almost entirely financed by federal dollars. Can you comment broadly on HHS's plan in the future to encourage more states to run their own marketplaces and expand Medicaid so that the law can function as designed?

SEBELIUS: Well, absolutely. Most recently last week the state of Ohio did move into the Medicaid market. And we now have 30 governors, I think 27 states have fully completed the process, another three are in the process.

Republicans and Democrats, who -- some of whom sued us about the constitutionality of the act who are now deciding that for the citizens of their state they want to be part of the expanded Medicaid.

And we will continue to have those conversations. It's not just about the marketplace. It's also about Medicaid.

TONKO: Thank you very much.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

Dr. Cassidy?

CASSIDY: You said that only if -- an individual policy is only canceled if it changes significantly. But to be clear, after May 2010 if co-insurance went up by any amount, even by a dollar, according to your regulations, that would not qualify as a grandfathered clause. Just to add that out there for the record. I gather even by a dollar.

That said, I get a letter from someone in my district, Adrienne (ph). She says that -- oh, she lost her coverage. She lost her coverage because spousal coverage is gone. She has gone on the exchange. She doesn't qualify for a subsidy, but that her premium and out-of-pocket costs under any plan is $10,000 a year.

She feels -- she writes this. She feels betrayed by her government. Now she has to sit there asking herself, is this fair? If you were she, do you think that this would be fair?

SEBELIUS: Dr. Cassidy, I want to start by the amount that you gave is not accurate. I was told $5, not $1.

CASSIDY: Yes, that's for the co-pay, not for the co-insurance. For the co-insurance, it's any amount. But I have limited time. Do you think that it's fair -- if you were she, if you were Adrienne, do you think is fair? Loses her spousal coverage, now it's 10k, no subsidies?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I don't have any idea what she's looking at. I can tell you that, again, based on what we've seen in the market and what we've seen in the plans, people will be getting full insurance for the first time at...

(CROSSTALK)

CASSIDY: Well, again, this is what she reports. Do you think it's fair -- if what she reports is true, do you think it's fair?

SEBELIUS: I can't answer fair or not fair. I don't know what she was paying or what she was paying for.

CASSIDY: That's OK. Let's move on.

SEBELIUS: Did she have full insurance?

CASSIDY: Richard writes that his daughter received a note that his premium is going up because she's being lumped with older, costlier patients. Now it's possible that the only people that sign up will be those who are more costly. Does HHS have plans on what to do if only those who are more costly sign up and premiums rise for everybody?

SEBELIUS: I think, sir, that's what we're trying to do to make sure that...

(CROSSTALK)

CASSIDY: But if only the costly sign up, do you have plans? If you accept that...

SEBELIUS: That's the importance of the individual mandate that you've just outlined. Getting rid of pre-existing conditions, making sure that people can come in...

CASSIDY: But if only the most costly sign up, do you have backup plans?

SEBELIUS: We will encourage others to sign up. It's why there is a penalty in place and why...

CASSIDY: Is this to assume that there are no backup plans? I don't mean to be rude, but...

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Yarmuth.

YARMUTH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, nice to see you. I come to this hearing with a little bit different perspective. Kentucky is doing a great job with our exchange. As of this morning we had 350,000 people who have explored the Web site, 59,000 have started applications, 31,000 are now fully enrolled in new coverage, and 5,000 just in the last week.

And I think very importantly, more than 400 businesses have begun applying for their employees as well. So, yes, the idea that somehow this is going to be bad for businesses is not borne out in Kentucky.

Would it be safe to say that if 36 states had done what Kentucky and New York and California have done instead of 14 that the rollout would have been much smoother and the Web site would have been much easier to construct?

SEBELIUS: Well, I don't think there's any question that the -- you know, in January of 2013 we knew how many states were not running their own Web site, in I think mid-February we learned about partnerships. So it was not until that point that we learned that 36 states would actually be coming through the Web site.

Having said that, we should have anticipated, we should have planned better. We should have tested better. I don't think that's any excuse, but we clearly are running a very different vehicle for enrollment than we thought we were going to run in March of 2010.

YARMUTH: Right. On the subject of cancellation of policies, isn't it true that, first of all, the federal government can't require insurance companies to sell insurance?

SEBELIUS: That they can't...

YARMUTH: The federal government can't require insurance companies to sell insurance?

SEBELIUS: Yes, that's true.

YARMUTH: And in fact, insurance companies all over the country are making very difficult decisions now about where they want to participate and where they don't. And in some markets they're actually trying to get out of the market, canceling people because they want to play in other markets and so forth.

They're all making the decisions now...

SEBELIUS: Well, and we know we have more insurers, 25 percent more insurers in the individual market than we did prior to the law being passed.

YARMUTH: Right. So there a lot of dynamics going on here that are not necessarily an indication that the president misled anybody. They're business decisions being made all over now.

SEBELIUS: Well, in cancellation of policies, again, that one- year contract notice is a routine in the individual market. It has been in place for years. And for a lot of people, their policies now -- they are being canceled because they're being notified you can no longer be medically underwritten.

We can't charge you more because you're a woman. We won't ever have the kind of limitation on what your policy can pay out or charge you exorbitant out of pocket rates. Those policies will cease to be offered in the marketplace.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Guthrie?

GUTHRIE: Thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here. And last week Mr. Lau from Serco was here. I know the president has talked about the alternatives to the Web site as phone-calling or using a paper application.

And what he said, and I think you've said it with the phone, they take the paper applications but they enter them into the same Web portal. So I know you get around the issue of getting on and getting logged off.

But also -- but there's still issues with data within the Web portal. As you said, you can't even get reliable data who is even signed up.

So he also said because of the surge in paper applications, it's like six to eight weeks to process. So if November 30th is when this will be ready, that they can use, and even if you do it now, eight weeks you're getting close to January 1st, and somebody does lose their insurance so they're signing up for this, and they get to January 1st, even though you have a March 31st open enrollment, what happens to these? Is there a contingency plan for these people to continue their insurance?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I think that we have improvements every day on the speed of the site. Serco was giving you early snapshots of difficulty of accessing the site. I think that's greatly improved.

GUTHRIE: Well, they said just processing the paper, actually.

SEBELIUS: Well, I understand. But it is the site for -- they put the application into the site and get a determination. That's part of what the process is. So the site is part of the portal all the way through. This is an integrated insurance vehicle. And so that will improve.

And we -- again, with four months of continuous service, which is far longer than most people had, some of these cancellation numbers, Mr. Garrity (ph), again, pointed this out from Florida Blue Cross, but it's true of everyone else, these are not January 1st numbers. They are year-long numbers.

So over the course of 2014 when an individual's policy is due to expire, that individual...

(CROSSTALK)

GUTHRIE: ... but somebody could expire January 1st and not be able to get coverage if the Web site -- and the vendor said they needed months to test. They would have liked to have months and months to test. That's what they said.

So if we're going to get to November -- even if it works November 30th...

SEBELIUS: Well, I would say we're testing as we go. There is beta testing going on right now. That's why we are fixing and how we can identify things. People are getting through every day and we now know a lot more than we...

(CROSSTALK)

GUTHRIE: ... but the paper process, if it does take even four weeks, then it's November 30th and people's cancel on January 1st, there needs to be a contingency for that person.

SEBELIUS: Well, again, typical insurance is two to four weeks of signup. They will have two full months of signup.

UPTON: Gentleman's time has expired.

Ms. Schakowsky?

SCHAKOWSKY: Thank you, Madam Secretary, for bringing to millions of Americans access to affordable, comprehensive health care coverage that's going to be there when they need it.

I want to thank you especially as a woman. Women can no longer -- being a woman can no longer be considered being a preexisting condition. Women can no longer be charged more than a man for the same coverage. Women have access to comprehensive benefits like prescription drugs and free preventive screenings and free contraceptive coverage and maternity care, which is often left out of coverage. And the days of complicated pregnancy or diabetes or domestic violence being a preexisting condition, those days are over.

You know, I want to say to my colleagues after a three-and-a-half year campaign to repeal, to discredit, to even shut down the government over Obamacare, I want to say, get over it.

We all agree that there are problems but these are problems that I see being fixed. And so I want to ask one -- oh, and I want to say that what we did under Medicare Part D can be an example of how we can work together.

And in fact, Chairman Upton and I both sent a letter asking for more money for community based groups to help implement the program and make it work. We can work together.

So if you could just briefly say how are the navigators -- how important are they in making this system work for the American people?

SEBELIUS: Well, what we know, Congresswoman, is that a lot of people are not web savvy and are not frustrated by the website because they don't have a computer. They don't want to use a computer, they don't trust a computer. They need a live human being to ask questions, get questions answered, talk about the plan, talk about insurance.

So the navigators play a hugely important role. We have about 2,500 trained navigators on the ground right now. We have thousands more community assisters who are trained and ready to go, about 45,000 agents and brokers have gone through specific Affordable Care Act training.

But those individuals, working with their clients, customers and in the case of navigators and community assisters, just the public at large, they are not paid by a company. They are not collecting a fee. They just want to help people get coverage; they are hugely important.

UPTON: Gentlelady's time -- Mr. Olson.

OLSON: I thank the chair.

And welcome, Madam Secretary.

(UNKNOWN): Thank you.

OLSON: I would like to open with a quote from an American icon -- I'll hold up a poster. It says, "If the user is having a problem, it's our problem."

I'm glad to hear you raised this philosophy during your testimony today, ma'am.

Obamacare was signed into law 1,256 days ago. And since then, there's been user problem after user problem after user problem.

Regarding healthcare.gov, your deputy administrator for consumer information, Gary Cohen, testified one month ago, where we are sitting, that -- and this I quote, "CMS has worked hard to test the infrastructure that will allow Americans to enroll in coverage confidently and simply and securely," end quote.

Yet according to "Forbes" and "The Wall Street Journal," you told them that you needed five years of construction and one year of testing. The program has crashed and burned at least three times and the user is still having problems.

(Inaudible) up here, ma'am?

It's been down the whole time you've been testifying. The system is down at this moment. My question, ma'am, is very simple.

When did you know these changes were going down? A month, a day, a quarter?

And did you tell the president what you knew?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I was informed that we were ready to launch on October 1st. The contractors, who we had as our private partners told us and told this committee that they had never suggested the delay, and that is accurate. Our CMS team felt we were ready to go.

I told the president that we were ready to go.

Clearly I was wrong. We were wrong. I -- we knew that in any big, new, complicated system, there would be problems; no one ever imagined the volume of issues and problems that we've had. And we must fix it.

OLSON: Yes, ma'am. But credible journalists said you knew you needed six years to get this program...

SEBELIUS: Sir, I -- that quote has been repeated. I can guarantee you I would have never stated that because the law was passed in March of 2010. I chose the open enrollment date. I don't know where that quote comes from, but that is not from me.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

Mr. Barrow?

BARROW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thanks for attending today, Madam Secretary. I suspect that deep down most people on this committee support the concept of reforming insurance market so that more people have access to better insurance coverage. We have disagreements about the means used to get to those ends which is ultimately why I voted against the Affordable Care Act.

It seems that every day we're hearing of something new going wrong. I'm concerned that these short-term enrollment problems could become long-term insurance market problems. My

constituents already losing confidence the federal government's ability to pull this thing off and I think the only way to begin to restore their trust is to delay the individual mandate penalties until we're sure the system is going to work. It's not fair to penalize consumers when their non-compliance is not their fault. We also need to take the time to make sure additional fits and starts won't cause larger problems. Right now I'm less concerned about who's to blame and more concerned about what went wrong and how to fix it and how we're going to ensure it doesn't happen again.

Nearly all of our constituents want and need health insurance. It would be a huge mistake if we're so blinded by our love or our hatred for Obamacare that we miss the opportunities to address its flaws.

Now to the subject of technical problems becoming market problems, can problems of folks getting into the system snowball into risk pool problems where those who choose not to enroll can actually affect the costs of those who do choose to enroll?

SEBELIUS: Certainly a risk pool needs a balanced market. So you need people who are older and sicker to be balanced with people who are younger and healthier, that's how a pool works.

BARROW: At what point are we going to see a problem having the risk pool if the tech problems cause -- affect the folks who are entering?

What are we going to look for? What are we going to use to decide something needs to be done?

SEBELIUS: Well, again, sir, we will be monitoring during the six months of open enrollment as will our insurance partners who is coming into the pool; that's why we want to give this committee and others reliable, informed data about not only who it is but what the demographics are and where they live. That's part of our...

BARROW: If things aren't better by the end of this next month, at what point are we going to start thinking about further delays in posing penalties?

SEBELIUS: Well, again, I think that having a defined open enrollment period is one of the ways that you then make an assessment if you have a pool that works or not. You cannot have an unlimited open enrollment period with any insurance company because that really doesn't work.

BARROW: Thank you.

UPTON: Mr. McKinley.

MCKINLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Last week -- last week the CGI representative at Campbell said that she had met her contract obligations and met specifications and she said the only problem she had was with pace. But the pace wasn't part of the specification.

Do you -- and we asked her, what you were -- you would testify to, did -- she said you would testify that she did complete her contract in accordance with the specifications.

Would you?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I don't think until the product is working the way it's designed to work that anybody has finished their job. And that's really my interest.

MCKINLEY: I'm so sorry, with time, you know, they've shortened our time with it.

So, if she hasn't met -- she hasn't met their specifications but yet we're still using her, so is the American taxpayer still paying the money to fix the problems that she didn't do -- her company didn't do in the first...

SEBELIUS: None of our contractors have been paid the amount...

MCKINLEY: Will she be paid for this work into the future as we go to correct this problem?

SEBELIUS: We will make that determination as the work goes forward. I would tell you sir that as we learn what needs to be fixed, how long it takes, we'll know more about...

(CROSSTALK)

MCKINLEY: I'm very sorry about the timeframe, but cut it down.

Who owns the software now, that now that we've -- this has been developed with taxpayer money to develop the software to do this...

SEBELIUS: It is owned by the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services.

MCKINLEY: So it's all owned by us? OK.

Will they be able to use it by a license with -- for other clients?

SEBELIUS: Not to my knowledge. I think it is...

MCKINLEY: Maybe (inaudible)...

SEBELIUS: ... specifically designed for the marketplace with these products in mind.

MCKINLEY: Then last questions are trying to...

SEBELIUS: And the clients are the American public.

MCKINLEY: ... that under IV and V, and she testified that she thought that was something we should have done. Under HHS, you recommend or the HHS recommends that for software development, that they should have an independent verification and validation program.

But it wasn't used in this case.

Can you share with us in the time that's gone why we didn't use IV and V on something as crucial...

SEBELIUS: Again, I don't think that's accurate, sir. At every point along the way there is independent testing.

MCKINLEY: Independent?

SEBELIUS: Yes and outside...

MCKINLEY: You recommended verification and validation not someone within your staff?

SEBELIUS: Pardon me? There is a level of company self-attested testing. There is a level of CMS testing and then there is an independent test on each piece of the contracting.

(CROSSTALK)

MCKINLEY: (OFF-MIKE) acknowledged that it wasn't done independently, and that's what the...

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Gentleman's time...

MCKINLEY: It needs to be done independently, people who do not have...

UPTON: ... has expired.

SEBELIUS: No, it -- I'll get you the information, but there are three levels of testing, one of them is independent for every piece of this contracting, yes.

UPTON: Ms. Castor.

CASTOR: Good morning.

When open enrollment began a few weeks ago the people back home in Florida who are helping neighbors sort through the new options for coverage, the navigators, were taken aback by how grateful people are to have new pathway to the doctor's office and the care they need.

Affordable options.

The -- they are no longer being discriminated against because they had cancer, and diabetes or asthma. They are very grateful. They said -- they said to me directly, it's like they found water in the desert.

Right now they are surprisingly -- they said it's taking time, because people want to sort through all of these options before they finally sign up at the end of the 26-week enrollment period. So we must fix the marketplace. We must to meet their expectations and we have high expectations for you and the administration.

But I think it's important to point out the Affordable Care Act is more than just a website. It -- despite all the obstruction by Republicans in my home state of Florida, nationally, the -- even going so far as to shut down the government, millions of Americans are already benefiting and there are benefits that are not tied to healthcare.gov.

Some Madam Secretary, let's clarify what's working despite healthcare.gov.

Is it correct to say many of the improvements that the ACA makes to employer coverage and Medicare were the vast majority of Americans receive their coverage are not dependent on healthcare.gov.

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

CASTOR: And -- so the delays and problems with healthcare.gov do not affect the millions of individuals thanks to the ACA who no longer have to worry about lifetime monetary caps on their coverage that previously sent them to bankruptcy?

SEBELIUS: That's absolutely true. And I think the quote that the president was quoted recently saying, "If you have health care, you can -- you don't have to sign up for the new marketplace," was referring to the large portion -- the 95 percent of insured Americans who plans are solid and stay in place and move forward.

CASTOR: And I understand the frustration with the website. What I don't know why people are not similarly outraged by the lack of Medicaid coverage in many of our states.

Do you find that hypocritical?

(LAUGHTER)

SEBELIUS: Well, I think it's very troubling that millions of low income working Americans will still have no affordable option if states don't take advantage of the expansion program leaving states bearing the cost of uncompensated care, families bearing the cost of parents who can't take care of

their kids, workers not able to go to work and people still accessing care through emergency room doors, the most expensive, least effective kind of care they could get.

UPTON: Gentlelady's time has expired.

Mr. Gardner?

GARDNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Secretary Sebelius, for being here. Here's my letter. This is the letter my family got canceling our insurance. We chose to have our own private policy back in Colorado so we could be in the same boat as everyone of my constituents. And yet my insurance policy has been canceled. The White House website says if you like your health plan you have, you can keep it.

Did I hear it wrong?

SEBELIUS: Again, sir, I don't know how long you've had your policy...

GARDNER: Why aren't you losing your insurance?

SEBELIUS: Pardon me?

GARDNER: Why aren't you losing your health insurance?

SEBELIUS: Because I'm part of the federal employees...

GARDNER: Why aren't you in the exchange? You're in charge of this law, correct, why aren't you in the exchange?

SEBELIUS: Because I'm part of the federal employee health benefit plan.

GARDNER: Why aren't you in the -- why won't you go into the exchange? You're a part of this law. You're literally in charge of this law. Should you be any different than all of the other Americans out there losing their health insurance?

SEBELIUS: I'm part of the 95 percent with affordable available health care coverage.

GARDNER: You're part of a plan that most Americans aren't (sic) available to them. Why will you not agree...

SEBELIUS: I'm not eligible for the exchange, because I have coverage in...

GARDNER: You can decide to drop your coverage of your employer. You have the choice to decide not to choose...

SEBELIUS: That the not true, sir.

GARDNER: I chose not to go...

SEBELIUS: Members of Congress are now part of the exchange thanks to an amendment that was added by Congress, but I'm not eligible.

GARDNER: Madam Secretary, with all due respect...

SEBELIUS: If I have affordable coverage in my workplace, I'm not eligible to go into the marketplace, that's part of the law.

GARDNER: Madam Secretary, I would encourage you to be just like the American people and enter the exchange and agree to find a way...

(APPLAUSE)

SEBELIUS: It's illegal.

GARDNER: .. and I would like to show you an advertisement that's going on in Colorado right now.

This is an advertisement that a board member of the Colorado exchange has put forward, do you agree with this kind of advertising for Obamacare?

SEBELIUS: I can't see it. And again...

GARDNER: It's a college student doing a keg stand.

SEBELIUS: If the Colorado exchange did that...

GARDNER: Do you approve of this kind of advertising?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: ... they are a state based marketplace.

GARDNER: Do you approve of this kind of advertising?

SEBELIUS: I don't see it. I don't know what it is, and I did not approve it. This is a state based marketplace...

GARDNER: That's a pretty big font. That's a pretty big picture of a keg and you can't see it?

SEBELIUS: Do I approve of it? I've...

GARDNER: You have the ability to opt out, by the way, as a federal employee. You could take the insurance. So I just...

SEBELIUS: If I have available employer based coverage...

GARDNER: I would also like to submit a waiver for my district from Obamacare and hope you consider waiving Obamacare for the Fourth Congressional District.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

(UNKNOWN): Does your policy cover -- never mind.

(LAUGHTER)

UPTON: Mr. Matheson?

MATHESON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, Madam Secretary, thanks for your time.

I just want to ask on the issue of the fixes to healthcare.gov, we've had a lot of conversation about that today and we've talked about confidence levels for being ready by a certain time. But, I think one question that a lot of us have is, can you define what the magnitude of the problem is? Is there a scale or metric by which we can understand how bad this is today, and how we're going to get to where we go to have it fixed?

SEBELIUS: Well, again, sir, I've been informed that the problems are in -- the reports I've seen are really in two areas.

They are in the performance area, which is speed and reliability. It's too slow and doesn't have reliable transfers and in functionality, there are parts of the system that don't make accurate transfers.

So we have done an extensive assessment. They are prioritized, as I indicated earlier. One of the priorities is the enrollment features, which pass individual information to the companies where they want to enroll. That is not reliable at this point. The companies are not getting accurate data. So it's an example of the kind of thing we know we need to fix.

MATHESON: And is there a way to -- if you set up metrics figure out if we're making progress in terms of fixing those issues with speed and performance and functionality.

SEBELIUS: Again, with the team and Jeff Zients at the head of it, reporting to Marilyn, there are definitely a comprehensive set of issues going forward that will be measured and accelerated.

MATHESON: Do you have target dates along the way if you want to meet the November 30th time -- assume it's functional of what you want -- do you have target or metrics along the way to make sure you're on the path?

SEBELIUS: My understanding is, yes, there are sort of groups of targets that fixes that can be loaded together. It isn't one at a time. So they don't take days, but they are try being to determine with a specific path, one of the charges that QSSI has, really looking at the umbrella of what needs to be fixed, prioritizing them, figuring out what destabilizes if something else is fixed, how they can be grouped together. And that report will be in later next week.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

Mr. Pompeo?

POMPEO: Great, thank you.

Thank you for coming, Secretary Sebelius.

I would like to talk about Kansas a little bit today.

Much like with some of my colleagues have made references to the "Wizard of Oz", I don't think anybody not from Kansas should be able to do Oz allegories. But, my story -- the way I think about it, is those folks worked awful hard to go down the yellow brick road. At the end of the day, when they got there and pulled back the curtain, they found there was nothing they didn't already have.

And as we pull back the curtain on the Affordable Care Act, I think people are finding it's not exactly what they're gonna have worked so hard to find their way too as well.

I want to talk about two stories. There's this commitment, if you like your plan you can keep it. I have a letter I'll submit for the record, from Mr. Breeto (ph) in Kansas. You might know him. I saw him the other night in Benton.

He got the following letter from Blue Cross Blue Shield that says, "Because your current plan does not offer the benefits standard specified you'll be discontinued on December 31st," and this says good news. And then there's a group of folks, Pizza Hut -- you know the company from Kansas, franchisees founded there -- lots of folks have now taken employees, families who are working there, and they've gone from having full-time jobs to part-time jobs. So they aren't able to keep the health care plan they had either and the one they wanted.

POMPEO: What do you tell -- why -- why were the plans that these folks had good enough when you were the insurance commissioner in Kansas and when you were -- Kansas as governor, but those plans today aren't good enough for those hard-working Kansas families?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I would tell you, in the roles I had the honor of serving of in Kansas, I worked every day to try and eliminate some of the discriminatory features of the insurance industry that finally, with the Affordable Care Act, are gone. My successor and elected insurance Republican commissioner Sandy Praeger and I worked on a whole series of plans to expand coverage.

So I did work on these issues. We were not able to necessarily...

(CROSSTALK)

POMPEO: So you -- you -- to use your words, you say these were -- I think you said "lousy" plans. And Ms. Tavenner said "not true insurance." Do you think that the plans that were offered when you were the insurance commissioner weren't true insurance?

SEBELIUS: In the individual market, the insurance commissioner in Kansas and virtually every place in the country does not have regulatory authority...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: ... over the plan. There's a lot...

(CROSSTALK)

POMPEO: ... a yes-or-no question: Were they true insurance plans when you were the insurance commissioner?

SEBELIUS: A lot of them are not true insurance plans, no.

POMPEO: Thank you. I yield back.

UPTON: Gentleman from Vermont, Mr. Welch.

WELCH: Thank you.

I'm gonna try to just summarize quickly what I've been hearing. Number one, the website must be fixed. You've been very forthright, and you're gonna fix it.

Number two, I'm hearing a tone change. We've had a real battle about health care. We had a battle in this Congress. It was passed. The president signed it. The Supreme Court affirmed it -- a really brutal battle. There was an election where the American people affirmed it. And then the last-gasp effort was the shutdown and the threat of debt default.

But what I'm hearing today is that there are problems and people want to fix 'em because all of us represent people who are gonna win or lose depending on how effectively this is rolled out.

Third, there's some significant question about existing insurance policies, what the president said and so on. But let's acknowledge something: A lot of insurance companies were ripping off innocent American people by promising them insurance until they got sick, and then it got canceled because they, quote, "had a pre-existing condition," that wasn't, quote, "disclosed." That's gotta end.

The challenge for us going forward is to make health care affordable.

So Madam Secretary, my question is, is there any indication that there's been a slowing of premium increases as a result of the Affordable Care Act? Because unless we can keep those premium

increases down -- they can't rise faster than the rate of inflation, wages and profits -- all of us are gonna lose.

SEBELIUS: Well, I would say, the trends in the private market over the last three and a half years are that cost increases have slowed down, are rising at a lower rate than the decades before. And in fact, in this individual market, the old individual market, the typical increase was 16 percent year in and year out rate increase. And often that came with additional medical underwriting. So it gives a sense of how the costs were.

We know that Medicare costs are down. We know that Medicaid costs actually had a decrease per capita last year, not an increase per capita, and underlying health care costs are down.

These rates in the new marketplace have come in about 16 percent lower on average than was projected -- not by us but by the Congressional Budget Office.

And we know that in many of these markets, they're much more competitive. I believe in market competitiveness. That actually drives down rates. The states where the most companies are participating have the lowest rates. And new companies have come in significantly below the old monopoly companies that often dominated this individual marketplace.

So we're on a pathway. Are we there? No. But you're absolutely right, affordable coverage, at the end of the day, for everybody is the goal.

WELCH: OK. I yield back.

Thank you, Madam Secretary.

UPTON: Madam Secretary, I'm trying to make sure that you're out of here by 12:30 before we start the second round of questions.

(LAUGHTER)

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Mr. Kinzinger?

SEBELIUS: That was a joke, right?

(LAUGHTER)

KINZINGER: I see -- I see sheer panic.

Madam Secretary, thank you for being here.

You stated earlier to Mr. Harper that you give the president regular updates on the marketplace. The president stated that he knew nothing about the status and functionality of the marketplace. How often, and what were the subjects of those updates?

SEBELIUS: Well, I think there were a series of regular meetings with the president, with some of our federal partners, with offices of the White House from the OMB to others on a monthly basis giving reports on policy and where we were going. None of those, I would say, involved (ph) detailed operational discussions. That wasn't the level. It was, are we coming together, do we have companies...

KINZINGER: Sure.

SEBELIUS: ... do we have plans.

KINZINGER: And I understand that. I mean, obviously, when it comes to the president of the United States, certain level of details you have to see at kind of a 10,000 foot, 20,000 foot overview. But in terms of the actual functionality, whether it's the website or the marketplace, he was legitimately caught off guard on October...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Well, I assured him, and -- that we were ready to go. Everyone knew with a big plan that there were likely to be some problems. No one...

KINZINGER: OK.

SEBELIUS: ... anticipated this level of problem (ph).

KINZINGER: And just second -- a quick question. Where is HHS getting the money to pay for these fixes? Is it coming from other HHS accounts? Have you used your transfer authority to move money from non-ACA programs to pay for the cost of implementing the president's health care program? And if so, from which programs have you drawn money to help with the fix that's not ACA-related?

SEBELIUS: Well, as you know, Congressman, it's been two years since we've had a budget at HHS. And we also have not had at the president's requested implementation budget authorized by the Congress. Each of those years we have used not only resources internally but I do have legal transfer authority that I've used and a non-recurring expense fund. We will get you all the details of that...

(CROSSTALK)

KINZINGER: Great. Thank you. So the answer is yes, though, there is some non-ACA money being transferred and used for the implementation of...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: There is money that is specifically designed for either outreach and education, so the health centers have hired education and outreach people as part of their outreach for health personnel. I would say it's -- it's definitely a related cause to get expanded health care.

KINZINGER: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Mr. Sarbanes?

SARBANES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here.

My understanding is that a lot of the -- the companies, insurers that have been offering plans in the individual market, the ones who are sending out these notices, are actually repositioning themselves in the health insurance exchange to offer alternative plans. Is that correct?

SEBELIUS: Yes.

SARBANES: And in addition to -- to those insurers who've been in the individual market (inaudible) have a lot of other companies and insurers providing plans in the health insurance market?

SEBELIUS: That is true.

SARBANES: So the way I look at this is -- you know, I went to buy Oriole tickets awhile back when the season was still under way, and I was standing in line. And I got up to the ticket window and they

closed the window. But I didn't have to go home because they opened another window a few feet away.

So essentially what's happening is people are coming up on the renewal period. They're getting up to the window of the individual market. They're being told, well, that window's closed but if you go right down the line here there's another window that's open. And by the way, when you get there, you'll get better coverage potentially at reduced premiums. And if you go down to window 3 there's some subsidies that may also be available to you.

So this notion that people are being turned away from an affordable product that provides good, quality care is preposterous. And in fact they're being steered to a place where they can get good, quality coverage, in many instances much better than the coverage that they had before, at an affordable rate that is supported by the subsidies that can be available to many, many people. This is -- this is what's so promising about the Affordable Care Act.

And so I think it's important for people to understand that that window's not being shut. They're just being steered someplace else where they can get a good opportunity.

SEBELIUS: And I think the first option for those companies is to say, 'We'd like to keep you here, and here are the plans we're offering.' But to be fair, customers will now have an opportunity to look across a landscape, which they couldn't before. They will have entry into those other windows, which many of them didn't have before with a pre-existing condition.

And as you say, about 50 percent of this market will have financial help in purchasing health insurance, which none of them had before.

UPTON: Gentleman's time expired.

Mr. Griffith?

GRIFFITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Earlier in your testimony here today you said a couple times, "plans we enjoy but then," as you noticed with Mr. Gardner's eloquent testimony, that we're not going to be in the same plan that you're in after January 1.

I was one of those who thought it was a good idea as a part of a proposal that was floating around the halls here in Congress that the president and Cabinet secretaries ought to also be in the marketplace and not have a special federal plan that -- that you will have after January 1, but we will not. The president, while that was being discussed, issued a veto threat.

Did you discuss the veto threat with the president before he made it? And have you discussed it with him since then? Yes or no on the first?

SEBELIUS: No, sir.

GRIFFITH: No.

And then I would have to ask you, relating back to the contractors involved in this, CGI told us that the Spanish Web site was ready to go, that they thought everything was ready, just as they did with the regular site. And, obviously, that didn't prove out. But that they were told not to implement it.

Likewise, the shop-and-browse section was ready to go.

Do you think that they were misleading this committee when they made those comments?

SEBELIUS: I think what they believed is that that product independent of the entire operational site was ready and tested. What -- a determination was made -- I was involved with the Spanish Web site and the Medicaid transfers to say, let's minimize the risk for the whole site, let's load a week later.

GRIFFITH: But that raises the next question up, because one of the -- of the other contractors, QSSI, I believe it was, indicated to us that -- that part of the problem was that, once you took away the ability to browse, everybody had to go through the business of setting up an account, and you stopped -- or CMS stopped one of the browsing options as well, and that that actually contributed to the logjam and contributed to the problems.

So, isn't it -- is he correct on that, that not allowing people just to look without having to sign up, wouldn't that have made it easier for the American people?

SEBELIUS: In hindsight, I think that probably would have been advantageous, I can tell you that the reason the decision was made going forward was to minimize risk, that didn't work so well.

But adding additional features that didn't involve people actually wanting to get to what they would independently pay and what they would qualify for and what the plans were, seemed to be things that could be added down the road. It was wrong.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Bilirakis?

BILIRAKIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it very much,

Thank you, Madam Secretary, for testifying today.

Madam Secretary, over the weekend, the New York Times wrote the following, "Project managers at the Department of Health and Human Services assured the White House that any remaining problems could be worked out once the Web site went live. But other senior officials predicted serious trouble and advised delaying the rollout."

Can you confirm if this is true? Did any senior department official predict serious problems? And did any senior department officials advise delaying the rollout of the exchanges or parts of the exchanges on October 1st? Could you...

SEBELIUS: I can tell you that no senior official reporting to me ever advised me that we should delay. You heard from the contractors on the 24th that none of them advised a delay. We have testing that did not advise a delay. So not -- not to my knowledge.

BILIRAKIS: Did they indicate to you that there were serious problems?

SEBELIUS: They indicated to me that we would always have risks, because this system is brand-new and no one has operated a system like this before to any degree.

So, we always knew that there would be the possibility that some things would go wrong. No one indicated that this could possibly go this wrong.

BILIRAKIS: Can you name some of these officials that gave you the advice, that there were serious problems?

SEBELIUS: Again, I -- we had series of meetings with teams from CMS. I was always advised that there is always a risk with a new product and a new site, but never suggested that we delay the launch of October 1st, nor did our contracting partners ever suggest that to us.

BILIRAKIS: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Appreciate it. I yield back.

UPTON: Mr. Johnson?

JOHNSON: Madam Secretary, thank you for being here with us today. CMS was the integrator of the Web site prior to and leading up to the 1 October rollout...

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

JOHNSON: Correct?

You've testified you've now hired an outside company to serve as the integrator...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: One of the contractors has taken on an additional role...

JOHNSON: Who is that company?

SEBELIUS: QSSI.

JOHNSON: QSSI.

SEBELIUS: Who built the hub.

JOHNSON: OK.

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

JOHNSON: This is the same company that told our committee last week that they were not only the developer of the hub and the pipeline, but also an independent tester of the system.

SEBELIUS: Yes.

JOHNSON: You've acknowledged in your testimony today that inadequate testing played a significant role in this failed launch, so aren't you concerned that QSSI has lost its ability to be an objective independent arbitrator in addressing the problems that plague the system now? Because they're part of the tester, part of the developer, part of the problem.

SEBELIUS: No, I haven't lost my -- my confidence in them. I think the testing that they did is validating the pieces of the equipment. What we've said since the launch is that we did not do adequate end-to-end testing.

JOHNSON: OK.

SEBELIUS: That was not the QSSI responsibility.

JOHNSON: All right. And in this new role as integrator, are you going to be paying QSSI more than they were to be paid under their original contract? I -- I would expect with this expanded role they're going to get paid more, right?

SEBELIUS: That discussion is under way in terms of what the role will entail, what the outlines are, yes, sir.

JOHNSON: OK. Well, hard-working American taxpayers have already paid for this implementation once. Do you think it's fair to ask taxpayers to pay more so that QSSI can now attempt to do something that Administrator Tavenner and her CMS team were unable to do right the first time?

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, I think the American taxpayers expect us to get the site up and running. As I told you earlier...

JOHNSON: Oh, I'm certain that they did. They expected it the first time.

SEBELIUS: I understand, and so did I. We have not expended the funds that have been encumbered for the contracts. We have not -- and we will monitor every dime we spend from here on in, and re-audit things that are going forward.

JOHNSON: Well, with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

UPTON: The gentleman yields back.

Mr. Long?

LONG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Secretary, for being here today and giving your testimony.

Earlier today, you said that "I'm responsible for the implementation of the Affordable Care Act." I've heard you referred to, and maybe yourself, as the point person for the rollout, the architect of implementing Affordable Care Act. So you are kind of the president's point person, are you not, for this rollout?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

LONG: I -- earlier, you were asked, and there's a lot of things striking about the rollout of this and about the Affordable Care Act altogether. But the thing that's most striking to me is that when we have the point person for the rollout here, and you're not going in to the exchange.

Now, I've heard you say that, and you got some advice from the folks behind you, but I'm asking you today: Can you tell the American public, if your advisers behind you, that if they happen to have given you some wrong information, if it is possible for you to go into the exchange like all these millions of Americans that are going with the exchanges, will you commit to forego your government insurance plan that you're on now and join us in the pool? Come on in. The water's fine. All the congressmen, all of our staff have to go into the exchanges.

We have to go into the D.C. exchanges. And I will say that I tried to get on the website. I was successful during the hearing earlier, and I got to the D.C. exchange, which is where I have to buy from, I got part way through. And then when it got to the point to enter my Social Security number, I could not bring myself to do that, from what I've heard from people like John McAfee and folks about the security.

Will you tell, if your advisers are wrong, and it is possible for you -- I'm not saying it is -- but if it is, if it's possible for you to forego your government program you have now? Will you tell the American public that, "Yes, I will go into the exchanges next year like everyone else"?

SEBELIUS: Sir, the way the law is written...

LONG: It's a yes or no -- I'm -- let's say that you're wrong on that. Yes or no, if -- if you're wrong, will you? Yes or no?

SEBELIUS: But I don't want to give misinformation to the American public...

LONG: You what?

SEBELIUS: ... who may be -- I don't want to give misinformation. If you have affordable coverage...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: I want you to go home and research it. If -- if you're wrong...

SEBELIUS: ... if you have affordable coverage...

LONG: ... will you go into the exchanges?

SEBELIUS: I -- if I'm...

LONG: If you can, will you? That's a yes or no. If you can, will you?

SEBELIUS: I will take a look at it. I don't have any idea...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: That's not an answer. That's not a yes or no.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

LONG: You're the architect of the whole program and you won't go into it with the rest of the American public.

SEBELIUS: I did not say that, sir. I think it's illegal for me to...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: If it's not illegal. If it's legal, will you go in?

(CROSSTALK)

WAXMAN: Mr. Chairman? Mr. Chairman?

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: Come on in, the water's fine.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

WAXMAN: I have a unanimous consent request. I'd like to -- Madam Secretary, I'd like you to answer for the record. If you were able to do what the gentleman just suggested or follow the recommendation of Cory Gardner, our colleague from Colorado, and went into the bought -- to buy an individual policy, would you be able to find one that would protect you from cheap shots? Or do you think that has to be mandated for coverage?

(LAUGHTER)

I'll leave the record open for your response.

UPTON: Yeah, we'll wait for that response to come back.

SEBELIUS: I would gladly join the exchange if I didn't have affordable coverage in my workplace. I would gladly join it. And the D.C. market is an independent state-based market, even though D.C. is not a state. We do not run the D.C. market in the federal marketplace.

UPTON: The gentlelady from North Carolina, Ms. Ellmers?

ELLMERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I have a couple of questions. Thank you for being with us today, Madam Secretary.

I'd like to go to the issue that has been raised by my colleagues on the left here about accurate information. Number one, I've heard the issue of Medicare Part D brought up many, many times. Although my colleagues all voted no against it initially, now they're extolling the virtues of Medicare Part D.

Is Medicare Part D a mandate or is it voluntary?

SEBELIUS: It is voluntary.

ELLMERS: It is a voluntary program.

SEBELIUS: Yes.

ELLMERS: That's the first accurate -- piece of accurate information I would like to get.

You know, we're asking or we're actually forcing millions of Americans to go to find a health care premium in some way, whether it's to go to the exchange or whether they are to be insured.

ELLMERS: Many of my constituents are reaching out to me, those with individual policies, and they are saying to me that my -- my rates are going up 400 percent; my rates are going up 127 percent. These are my constituents.

Now, you know, we're talking about open enrollment, but it's forcing the issue, is it not, that if an American does not have health care coverage, they are essentially breaking the law. Is that not correct?

SEBELIUS: If someone can afford coverage and has that option and chooses not to buy coverage, they will pay a fee on their (inaudible) next year's tax.

(CROSSTALK)

ELLMERS: And it is a law, so therefore they are breaking the law.

(CROSSTALK)

ELLMERS: OK. You also brought up the issue when you were in Kansas, that you fought against discriminatory -- discriminatory issues. Now, I, you know, as far as the essential health benefits, correct me if I'm wrong, do men not have to buy maternity coverage?

SEBELIUS: Policies will cover maternity coverage for the young and healthy.

ELLMERS: Including men.

SEBELIUS: Under 30-year-olds will have a choice also of a catastrophic plan which has no maternity coverage.

ELLMERS: The catastrophic, but the men are required to purchase maternity...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Well, an insurance policy has a series of benefits whether you use them or not. And one of the benefits will be maternity coverage, mental health coverage...

(CROSSTALK)

ELLMERS: And that is why the health care premiums are increasing because we're forcing them to buy things that they will never need.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

SEBELIUS: The individual policies cover families. Men often do need maternity coverage for their spouses and for their families. Yes.

ELLMERS: Single male, age 32, does not need maternity coverage. To the best of your knowledge...

(CROSSTALK)

ELLMERS: ... has a man ever delivered a baby?

UPTON: The gentlelady's time has expired.

(LAUGHTER)

The gentlelady, Ms. Cathy McMorris Rodgers?

MCMORRIS RODGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And Madam Secretary, you know, although we were told repeatedly that if you liked your health insurance plan, you'd be able to keep it. We're now being told by the government that they have determined many existing plans to be lousy, sub-par.

In reality, this law is becoming quickly less about helping Americans purchase affordable coverage and more about compelling millions of Americans into a struggling Medicaid program.

In my home state of Washington, 90 percent of enrollees will be in Medicaid; 16,000 of them coming into a program that they were already eligible for; Colorado, 89 percent; Kentucky, two-thirds; Maryland, 97 percent. And this is -- these are states that are already struggling with their budgets, wondering how they're going to cover Medicaid, which is, as we all know, for the most vulnerable population.

So isn't it true that in states like Washington, they're going to have new, unexpected costs associated with a dramatic influx into Medicaid?

SEBELIUS: Well, Congresswoman, the Medicaid expansion provision of the Affordable Care Act is...

MCMORRIS RODGERS: Could you -- are states going to face new costs...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Federal government pays 100 percent of the costs of newly insured for the first three years, and gradually reduces...

(CROSSTALK)

MCMORRIS RODGERS: These are existing -- these were people that were already eligible. And we know that two out of three doctors don't accept new Medicaid patients. We know that current provider rates are going to drop at the end of 2014. So isn't it true that existing Medicare -- Medicaid enrollees are going to further compete for scarce resources in these states?

SEBELIUS: If the citizens of Washington who are signing up were eligible for Medicaid, they certainly will be entitled to enroll in Medicaid now. The newly insured will be fully paid for. The doctors have additional...

(CROSSTALK)

MCMORRIS RODGERS: I'm concerned that the most vulnerable in this country are going to lack access to the care that they think they're going to receive. And I know time is short...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Well, I think that's absolutely true. And in states that are choosing not to expand Medicaid, it's particularly dire. So I would love to work with you on that...

(CROSSTALK)

MCMORRIS: It's existing Medicaid. Finally, I just wanted to inform the secretary, you told us several hours ago when the hearing started, that the website was down. If you look at the screen several hours later, healthcare.gov is still down. You promised the system would be ready on October 1st. You're clearly wrong.

So before I leave you today, I would just impress upon you this is more than a broken website. This is a broken law. Millions of Americans are getting notices their plans are being canceled.

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: The gentlelady's time is expired.

I just -- I would do a couple of things here. First, I'm going to ask unanimous consent that the written opening statements for any member on the committee be introduced into the record. And without objection, the documents will be there.

I also would ask unanimous consent to put the document binder and other documents presented to the secretary during questioning into the record. Without objection, so ordered.

Let me just say in conclusion, we do look forward to having you back in December to get an update on where we are. And we'll work with your schedule to find a right time and date early that -- that week.

I want you to know we're going to want real numbers. You'll have them by then. Is that right, in terms of the signup? You'll have them in the next couple of weeks.

SEBELIUS: That's correct. We'll have them by mid-November.

UPTON: We look forward to getting those done.

We appreciate -- we really do appreciate your time this morning to take questions. I apologize to all the members who we had to shorten the time, but those things happen when we have this much interest. And we look forward to continuing to get an update and look for your continued work.

WAXMAN: Mr. Chairman?

UPTON: Yes?

WAXMAN: From our side of the aisle, we want to work with you. And I would hope on the other side of the aisle, they would take that same approach. Let's do something constructive, not just negative attacks against a bill that I think is going to be a God-send for millions of Americans.

Thank you for being here.

SEBELIUS: Thank you.

UPTON: Thank you.

The hearing is adjourned.

END

LOAD-DATE: October 30, 2013

429 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

October 30, 2013 Wednesday

Lujan questions HHS secretary -- Video extra

SECTION: TODAY'S NEWS

LENGTH: 886 words

Congressman **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District and a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee participated in a hearing today in which Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius testified on the Affordable Care Act. Below is a transcript of **Luján's** exchange with the Secretary, in which they discussed important consumer protections under the law and their commitment to preventing and combating fraud.

Luján: Madam Secretary, I was intrigued by a line of questioning by Congressman [Gene] Green asking questions about the individual marketplace. How volatile was the individual marketplace before the Affordable Care Act became law?

Sebelius: I would say it wasn't a marketplace at all. It was unprotected, unregulated, and people were really on their own.

Luján: Madam Secretary, the Kaiser Family Foundation reports that over 50 percent churn - out of individuals that have coverage in the individual market - churn out of coverage every year. They lose coverage, they are priced out, or drop it. Is that consistent with what you are aware of?

Sebelius: That is an accurate snapshot. About a third of the people are in for about 6 months and over half are in for a year or less.

Luján: So individuals that were in the individual marketplace before the passage of the Affordable Care Act did not have the same protections as those that were in group coverage?

Sebelius: That's true.

Luján: And would those individuals in the individual marketplace sometimes have higher copays?

Sebelius: Higher copays, unlimited out-of-pocket costs for often coverage that was medically underwritten or excluded whatever medical condition they had in the first place.

Luján: So these were typically one-year contracts. If they use the plan because they got sick or in a car accident or a victim of domestic violence, sometimes they would be thrown off their plan or their rates would go up?

Sebelius: Yes.

Luján: I think that's important to note, Madam Secretary. And I'm intrigued, as well, that my understanding is last month HHS conducted an analysis that found that nearly 6 out of 10 uninsured Americans getting coverage through the marketplace will pay less than $100 per month. Is that correct?

Sebelius: They will have a plan available for less than $100 if that's their choice, yes.

Luján: And that number would be even higher - would be better - if more states chose the option of using federal funds to expand Medicaid to cover their low-income population?

Sebelius: Very definitely. That's just a marketplace snapshot. Those are people who will be in the marketplace.

Luján: Madam Secretary, I don't think that I've heard anyone from the other side of the aisle today, my Republican colleagues, ask you, "How can Congress work with you and support you in fixing this website and fixing this problem." I hope that we all agree we want this website fixed. I would yield to anyone that would disagree. Seeing no one accepting that, I am glad to hear that we agree with this. Now Madam Secretary, what can Congress do to work with you to fix this website?

Sebelius: Well, I'm not sure that there is hands-on work that you can do; maybe we have some technical expertise. But I would say getting accurate information to constituents is helpful, letting people know that they can check out the facts in the law, that they may be entitled to some financial support, that cancelation of policies means that the policy they had may not exist but they have a lot of choices of new policies and a law that now says they must be insured in a new policy - that they don't have to be insured by their company at a higher price.

Luján: I appreciate that Madam Secretary. Going back to the individual marketplace, Madam Secretary, did this Congress in previous years before the Affordable Care Act make it illegal for health insurance companies to raise rates on someone after they submitted a claim for going to the hospital or becoming sick or getting rid of pre-existing conditions.

Sebelius: No sir.

Luján: Madam Secretary, one last note here. It seems that we've received some horrible news that there are bad actors already taking place - fraudulent websites that imitate the health care exchange or misleading seniors into disclosing their personal information. I've signed onto a letter to you, led by my colleague Representative Raul Ruiz out of California, to request that you prioritize fraud prevention efforts. What has the administration done to prevent these fraudulent acts and protect personal information?

Sebelius: I can tell you, Congressman, that the President felt very strongly that that needed to be part of our outreach effort, which is why the Attorney General and I convened representatives of state Attorneys General, Insurance Commissioners, the U.S. Attorneys, and the Justice Department, and the Federal Trade Commission - which has jurisdiction - to make sure that we first got out ahead some of this, developing consumer outreach. No one should ever give personal health information because personal health information is not needed for these policies any longer. That is as red flag. We want to make sure that people turn over potential fraudulent acts. We have put training in place for navigators. We have our law enforcement folks doing outreach.

Video

LOAD-DATE: October 31, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Political Transcript Wire

October 30, 2013 Wednesday

REP. , FRED UPTON HOLDS A HEARING ON AFFORDABLE CARE ACT AND HEALTH CARE ENROLLMENT

LENGTH: 35729 words

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE HOLDS A HEARING ON THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT ENROLLMENT WEBSITE

OCTOBER 30, 2013

SPEAKERS: REP. , FRED UPTON, R-MICH. CHAIRMAN REP. , RALPH M. HALL, R-TEXAS REP. JOE L. , BARTON, R-TEXAS REP. EDWARD WHITFIELD, R-KY. REP. , JOHN SHIMKUS, R-ILL. REP. , JOE PITTS, R-PA. REP. GREG WALDEN, R-ORE. REP. LEE TERRY, R-NEB. , REP. MIKE ROGERS, R-MICH. REP. TIM MURPHY, R-PA. REP. , MICHAEL C. BURGESS, R-TEXAS REP. MARSHA BLACKBURN, R-TENN. REP. , PHIL GINGREY, R-GA. REP. STEVE SCALISE, R-LA. REP. , BILL CASSIDY, R-LA. REP. CORY GARDNER, R-COLO. REP. MORGAN GRIFFITH, R-VA. REP. BRETT GUTHRIE, R-KY. REP. , GREGG HARPER, R-MISS. REP. ADAM KINZINGER, R-ILL. REP. LEONARD LANCE, R-N.J. REP. BOB LATTA, R-OHIO REP. DAVID B. MCKINLEY, R-W.VA. REP. CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS, R-WASH. REP. PETE OLSON, R-TEXAS REP. MIKE POMPEO, R-KAN. REP. , GUS BILIRAKIS, R-FLA. REP. BILL JOHNSON, R-OHIO REP. BILLY LONG, R-MO. REP. RENEE ELLMERS, R-N.C.

REP. HENRY A. WAXMAN, D-CALIF. RANKING MEMBER REP. , JOHN D. DINGELL, D-MICH. REP. FRANK PALLONE JR., D-N.J. REP. BOBBY L. RUSH, D-ILL. REP. ANNA G. ESHOO, D-CALIF. REP. ELIOT L. ENGEL, D-N.Y. REP. GENE GREEN, D-TEXAS REP. DIANA DEGETTE, D-COLO. REP. LOIS CAPPS, D-CALIF. REP. , MIKE DOYLE, D-PA. REP. JAN SCHAKOWSKY, D-ILL. REP. JIM MATHESON, D-UTAH REP. G.K. BUTTERFIELD, D-N.C. REP. , JOHN BARROW, D-GA. REP. DORIS MATSUI, D-CALIF. REP. KATHY CASTOR, D-FLA. DEL. DONNA M.C. CHRISTENSEN, D-VIRGIN IS. REP. , JOHN SARBANES, D-MD. REP. **BEN RAY LUJAN,** D-N.M. REP. PAUL TONKO, D-N.Y. REP. JERRY MCNERNEY, D-CALIF. REP. BRUCE BRALEY, D-IOWA REP. PETER WELCH, D-VT. REP. , JOHN YARMUTH, D-KY.

WITNESSES: , KATHLEEN SEBELIUS, SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

[*] UPTON: Good morning.

The Energy and Commerce Committee welcomes the president's point person on health care, , Secretary Sebelius, as part of our continuing oversight of the health care law.

And we look forward to a thoughtful conversation on a number of issues including transparency and fairness. Over the months leading up to October 1 launch, the secretary and her colleagues at HHS repeatedly looked us in the eye and testified that everything was on track. And despite the numerous red flags and lack of testing, they assured us that all systems were a go.

But something happened along the way. Either those officials did not know how bad the situation was, or they did not disclose it.

And, sadly, here we are now, five weeks into enrollment and the news seems to get worse by the day. Healthcare.gov was down last night at 5:00 p.m. It was also down on Monday, and it crashed last weekend.

And even this morning when we attempted to view the site before the hearing, we were hit with an error message.

But this is more than just a Web site problem. That was supposed to be the easy part, remember? Americans were assured that their experience would be similar to other online transactions, like purchasing a flight or ordering a pizza, and that their sensitive personal information would always be secure.

But, after more than three years to prepare, malfunctions have become the norm, and the administration has pivoted from saying they're on track to setting a new target date of November 30th.

And for those few Americans who have successfully applied, will the Web site glitches become provider glitches come January 1st?

Americans are scared and frustrated, and this situation should rise above politics. Many folks at home watching us today have spent hours or even days trying to sign up. They continue to take time away from work or loved ones, but have made little progress.

And soon they may worry about being on the wrong side of their government, facing potential penalties.

I recently spoke to a woman from Buchanan (ph), Michigan, who was excited to sign up, but has since become very disillusioned after spending hours on the phone and Web site with little success.

There are also millions of Americans coast to coast who no doubt believe that the president's repeated promises that if they liked their plan that they would be able to keep it, no matter what.

They are now receiving termination notices. And for those who lose their coverage, they, like -- they may be losing their faith in their government. Today's hearing is about fairness for the American people who are losing their coverage or seeing their premiums skyrocket as high as 400 percent.

This hearing is also about transparency. While the administration continues to boast the number of Americans that have applied, they intentionally withhold precise enrollment numbers.

Why? These numbers are critical to fully understand the status and gauging the progress of implementation.

Lead contractor, CGI, testified only last week that they had the data, but needed the administration's permission to release it.

We asked the secretary on October 8th for those figures, but we still have not received a response. We hope to get one today. The American people deserve answers as well as the peace of mind that promises will be kept. The secretary has an opportunity today to embrace transparency and start restoring the public's faith in the administration and the government.

I yield to my colleague, ranking member of the committee, Mr. Waxman.

WAXMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm pleased , Secretary Sebelius is here today. She's here to discuss the Affordable Care Act. Just like with Medicare Part D, the launch of the new Web site has not gone well. But, just like Medicare Part D, the early glitches in this rollout will soon be forgotten.

A lot of the discussion today will focus on that Web site. This is an important issue, and I want to learn what the secretary can tell us about the problems being experienced and how they will be fixed.

But we should keep this issue in perspective. The Affordable Care Act is working. It has been improving the health security of millions of Americans for the past three years.

Because of the Affordable Care Act, more than 7 million people on Medicare have saved more than $8 billion on their prescription drugs. More than 100 million Americans have access to free preventive coverage and no longer face lifetime limits on their coverage. Over 10 million Americans have received rebates from insurance companies.

And, finally, this January, the worst abuses of insurance industry will be halted. Never again will a family be denied coverage because their child has a chronic health condition. Never again will individuals see their premiums shoot up because they got sick or faced an unexpected medical expense. Never again will a woman have to pay twice as much as a man for the same insurance.

That is why allowing insurers to continue offering deficient plans next year is such a bad policy. The law says that all plans except those that were grandfathered in 2010 must meet the new consumer protection standards. If we don't enforce this policy, insurance companies can continue offering flimsy coverage that disappears when people actually need it, and no one should want that.

It is understandable that there will be a focus today on what isn't working, but we must also remember what is working. The health insurance plans that are being offered in the exchanges are good plans. Their premiums are much lower than expected. Sixty percent of the uninsured individuals shopping in the new marketplaces will be able to get coverage for less than $100 per month. Half of the young adults will be able to get coverage for less than $50 per month.

And since Congress adopted the Affordable Care Act, health care costs across the whole economy have grown at their lowest level in decades.

The success of the Affordable Care Act is due to the efforts of many people, but one individual more than any other is responsible for all the good that has been accomplished, and that is our witness today, , Secretary Sebelius.

WAXMAN: So I would urge my colleagues to stop hyperventilating. The problems with healthcare.gov are unfortunate and we should investigate them, but they will be fixed. And then every American will have -- finally have access to affordable health insurance.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Thank you.

Before we swear in , Secretary Sebelius, I want to clarify Energy and Commerce Committee practice for the swearing in of witnesses.

The committee typically has two types of hearings, oversight hearings and hearings that focus on legislation and policy.

Secretary Sebelius, for example, has testified previously before our committee to discuss issues related to the HHS budget or other policy matters. As is the case with all policy witnesses, , Secretary Sebelius was not required to take an oath prior to testifying.

Today's hearing is different. It is an oversight hearing. It is a long standing committee practice to swear in all witnesses at oversight hearings whether they be private citizens or cabinet secretaries.

WAXMAN: Mr. Chairman, I thank you for your comments. And I just want to join you in simply explaining that it -- swearing in of the witness before an oversight committee hearing has always been under oath.

That is a standard procedure in this committee when we're conducting an oversight hearing, so it may seem strange to have the secretary of Health and Human Services have to be sworn in, but all witnesses in an oversight hearing are sworn in and that is our procedure.

UPTON: Thank you.

So I would now like to introduce our witness for today's hearing. The Honorable , Kathleen Sebelius is the secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. She was appointed to this position in April of 2009 and was sworn in as the 21st secretary on April 28th, 2009.

So I will now swear you in if you would rise. As Ranking Waxman and I just discussed, the committee is holding an investigative hearing and when doing so have had the practice of taking testimony under oath.

Do you have any objection to testifying under oath?

SEBELIUS: (Inaudible).

UPTON: And the chair now advises you that you are -- see -- I would now read you -- do you swear that the testimony you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

SEBELIUS: (Inaudible).

UPTON: You are now under oath and subject to penalties set forth in Title 18, Section 1001 of the U.S. Code. You may now give a five- minute summary of your written statement.

Welcome again and thank you for being here.

You got to use that mike. You don't know how many people want to hear you this morning.

(LAUGHTER)

SEBELIUS: Thank you, Chairman Upton, Ranking Member Waxman, members of the committee.

I left my position as governor of Kansas 41/2 years ago for the opportunity to continue work I've been doing for most of my over 35 years of public service, to expand the opportunities for all Americans regardless of geography or gender or income to have affordable health coverage.

During my years as the state legislator, as an elected insurance commissioner, as head of the National Association of Insurance Commissioners and as a two-term governor and now as HHS secretary, I have worked on that effort that I care deeply about.

There are still millions of Americans who are uninsured as well as underinsured, people who have some coverage at some price for some illness but have no real protection from financial ruin and no real confidence they'll be able to take care of themselves and their families if they have an accident or an illness. And for them a new day has finally come.

In these early weeks, access to healthcare.gov has been a miserably frustrating experience for way too many Americans including many who have waited years, in some cases their entire lives for the security of health insurance. I am as frustrated and angry as anyone with the flawed launch of healthcare.gov.

So let me say directly to these Americans, you deserve better. I apologize. I'm accountable to you for fixing these problems. And I'm committed to earning your confidence back by fixing the site. We're working day and night and will continue until it's fixed. We've recently added new management talent, additional technical expertise and a new general contractor to identify, prioritize and manage fixes across the system in two broad categories: performance, which deals with speed and reliability and function, which deals with bugs and problems in the system.

Our extensive assessment has determined that healthcare.gov is fixable. And I want to just outline a couple of the improvements we've made to date.

We now have more users successfully creating accounts. We can process up to 17,000 account registrations per hour or nearly five per second.

Instead of some of the users seeing a blank screen at the end of the application process, they can now see whether they're eligible for financial assistance and make more informed decisions.

Because we've improved performance, customers can now shop for plans quickly; filtering plans takes seconds and not minutes. Users are getting fewer errors and time-out messages as they move through the application process and the system has been strengthened with double the size of servers, software that's better optimized and a high-capacity physical database which replaces a virtual system.

The chairman referred to outages this weekend and again yesterday. And I would suggest to the committee that if you read the statement of Verizon who hosts the cloud service, it is the Verizon server that failed, not healthcare.gov, and it affected not only HHS but other customers.

We still have a lot of work to do. We have a plan in place to address key outstanding issues. It includes fixing bugs in software that prevented it from working the way it's supposed to and refreshing the user experience so folks can navigate the site without encountering error messages, time out and slow response times.

And by the end of November, we're committed that the vast majority of users will be able to review their options, shop for plans and enroll in coverage without the problems way too many have being experiencing.

But consumers are using the site every day and continue to do so. And problems are being solved. But we know that we don't have a fully functioning system that consumers need and deserve. We are still at the beginning of a six-month open enrollment which extends through the end of March and there's plenty of time to sign up.

And just to put it in perspective, the average open enrollment for an insurance plan is two to four weeks. The new marketplace has a 26-week open enrollment and those who enroll by December 15th will be able to access their benefits on day one.

Even with the unacceptable problems with healthcare.gov, which we are committed to fixing, the Affordable Care Act by any fair measure is working for millions of Americans who are benefiting from new health security, young adults, Americans living with pre-existing health conditions, seniors on Medicare.

Eighty-five percent of Americans who already have health coverage are protected with new rights and benefits.

The 15 percent of our neighbors and friends who are uninsured have affordable new options in a competitive market and cost growth for health care is lower than it's been in years. Millions of Americans are clearly eager to learn about their options and to finally achieve health security made possible by the Affordable Care Act.

And my commitment is to deliver on that promise.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Well, thank you very much.

Yes, if you -- the mike got pulled a little bit from you.

Yes, let's start this clock. Can you fix that? (Inaudible).

I appreciate you being here this morning and we've worked with our leadership to see that we don't have votes on the House floor this morning so we won't be interrupted.

I appreciate your time for sure and in an effort to allow every member to ask a question, we're going to be reducing the time for questions to be just four minutes, so hopefully we can get through all the members that are here. And I'm going to be pretty fast with the gavel, let me just say.

So we have got plenty of questions. So let's try and get through them.

(Inaudible).

You know, I think everyone in America remembers the president's words. If you like your health care plan, you can keep it, period. Under the Affordable Care Act insurance policies that were in effect on March 23rd, 2010, when the law was enacted, would be grandfathered.

Then a few months later, despite the president's word, HHS helped promulgate a new reg that in your own review showed that it effectively could deny perhaps as many as more than 50 percent, maybe even higher, of those holding individual policies the right to renew their own insurance plan.

UPTON: And I would guess that there are a lot of us on this panel today that are hearing from angry and confused constituents who are now being forced to go onto an inept website, whether they like it or not, to shop for a new replacement policy. They're finding premiums often more than 100 percent what they were paying before, some even as high as 400 percent, as I've heard from, and rising deductibles as well.

So when was the president specifically informed of the regulation change? And if so, was it pointed out that this totally undermines his biggest selling point? And I would note, that on the screen, in a statement that he made more than three years after the regulation change was promulgated, the President said again, "So the first thing you need to know is this. If you already have health care, you don't have to do anything." So he's been on the same page from the very start, yet the regulations changed months after the bill was enacted that are now causing perhaps millions of Americans to be denied the ability to renew their individual coverage.

Why was that change made, and did the President know it?

SEBELIUS: Well Mr. Chairman, there was no change. The regulation involving grandfathered plans, which applied to both the employer market and the individual market indicated that if a plan that was in effect in March of 2010 stayed in effect without unduly burdening the consumer with reducing benefits and adding on huge costs, that plan would stay in effect and never have to comply with any of the regulations of the Affordable Care Act. That's what the grandfather clause said. The individual market which affects about 12 million Americans, about 5 percent of the market, people move in and out, they often have coverage for less than a year. A third of them have coverage for about six months, and if a plan was in place of March of 2010 and again, did not impose additional burdens on the consumer, they still have it. It's grandfathered in.

UPTON: But why not let the consumer decide whether they want to renew it or not? Why was -- why were regulations promulgated in the summer of 2010 that then undermined the ability for those folks to re- sign up, which is one of the reasons for the large number of cancellation notes?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: And there were no regulations changed We outlined the grandfather policy so people could keep their own plan. We then began to implement the other features of the Affordable Care Act, so if someone is buying a brand new policy in the individual market today, or last week, they will have consumer protections for the first time. Many people in the under -- individual market are medically underwritten. That will be illegal. Many women are charged 50 percent more than men. That will be illegal. You cannot, again, eliminate someone because of a pre-existing health condition. You cannot dump someone out or lock someone out, so those provisions. But if again, a plan is in place, and was in place at the time that the President signed the bill and the consumer wants to keep the plan, those individuals are grandfathered in and that's happening across the country in the individual market.

UPTON: We're learning in fact that folks who did have a plan who liked it in fact are being told that it's canceled in the -- in the last -- my time is expired. Let me yield to the Ranking Member, Mr. Waxman for four minutes.

WAXMAN: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I have to smile at your line of questioning because everybody expected this hearing was about the website. That's all we've been hearing about is the website. But that's not the only complaint we've been hearing about since the Affordable Care Act was adopted. We were told by our Republican friends that millions of jobs would be lost and in fact, there have been a gain of 7 million jobs. They said that they -- the -- the cost for health care would skyrocket, and in fact, the opposite is true. They said there would be a massive shift to part-time jobs, and the evidence doesn't support that. They said tens of millions will lose their insurance, but in fact, everybody in this country has got to have access to health insurance because they won't be discriminated against. They said that it would explode the deficit, and yet all the reputable organizations like the Congressional Budget Office have told us that it's going to save us $100 billion over 10 years, so we've had a litany of objections for the Republicans about the Affordable Care Act which have driven them to such a frenzy they even closed the government.

So now we have you before the committee. And you're being asked, I suppose later you'll be asked about the website. But let me pursue this question about individuals who have gotten notices, that they're going to have their individual insurance policies canceled. They'll be able to get another plan, won't they?

SEBELIUS: Actually, it's the law that they must get another plan. Continuous coverage is part of the law.

WAXMAN: So the ...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: That wasn't the case in the past.

WAXMAN: So the Affordable Care Act said we're going to end the worst abuses of insurance companies. We're going to create consumer protections in the marketplace that they will be able to buy a policy even if they've been sick in the past. That women won't be charged more than me. That we're not going to let insurance companies deny coverage because of pre-existing conditions, and we're not going to let them put these lifetime caps. And there'll be an essential benefit package, so you're not just buying some things and not having other things covered. You're going to have the minimum that everybody should have, prescription drugs, mental health coverage, doctors and hospitals. Are these important consumer protections?

SEBELIUS: Well I would say, Mr. Waxman, they're very important. As a former insurance commissioner, I can tell you that the individual market in Kansas and anywhere in the country has never had consumer protections. People are on their own. They could be locked out, priced out, dumped out, and that happens each and every day. So this will finally provide the kind of protections that we all enjoy in our health care plans, as part of a group, as part of a plan that has pre-negotiated benefits, we enjoy that kind of health security, and individuals in the buying insurance on their own, farm families, young adults have never had that kind of health security.

WAXMAN: Well now they're going to have this health security, and most of the plans, as I understand it, that -- that they're no longer going to be able to keep, don't meet all the standards of the law.

SEBELIUS: Again, I think you may have heard Pat Geraghty from Florida Blues who was on some of the Sunday shows and he talks about the fact that the Florida plans want to keep their customers. They have new plans to offer, they feel that a lot of people, and these are Mr. Geraghty's words, "will have a much better plan at a similar or lower cost. Fifty percent of these 11 to 12 million people qualify for a subsidy, quality for financial help purchasing insurance for the first time ever."

WAXMAN: The bottom line is that people with good coverage like Medicare, Medicaid, employer coverage, can keep that. People with grandfathered plans in the individual market will be able to keep it. But if an insurance company sold you a new modified health insurance policy after the date of the enactment that does not meet the law's standards, then those people will be able to go into the exchange and buy a real solid health insurance plan that won't discriminate against them or anybody else. I think that's a good result. I'm pleased with it, and I think most people will be as well.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired. The Chair would recognize the Vice Chair of the committee, Ms. Blackburn.

BLACKBURN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Secretary, during -- before, during and after the law was passed, the President kept saying, "if you like your health care plan, you can keep it," so is he keeping his promise?

SEBELIUS: Yes, he is.

BLACKBURN: OK. What do you say to the 300,000 people in Florida you just mentioned, or to the 28,000 in Tennessee that cannot get health insurance? Their plans are terminated. Is he keeping his promise to them?

SEBELIUS: Well first of all, Congresswoman, they can get health insurance. They must be offered new plans, new options either inside the marketplace, or if they don't qualify for a financial subsidy, they can shop in or out of the marketplace.

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: But would you say to ...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: They absolutely will have new coverage.

BLACKBURN: What would you say to NBC news who says, "Millions are going to lose their coverage?"

SEBELIUS: Well, in all deference to the press corps, many of whom are here today, I think it's -- it's important to be accurate about what is going on, and I would defer, again, to the President of the (inaudible) plan.

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: Reclaiming ...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: (inaudible) ongoing coverage, they will be offered new plans.

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: Madam Secretary, let me tell you something.

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Fifty percent of them in the market right now will -- will qualify for ...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: What do you say to Mark and Lucinda in my district who had a plan, they liked it, it was affordable, but it is being terminated and now they do not have health insurance?

SEBELIUS: Insurance companies cancel individual policies year in and year out. They're a one-year contract with individuals. They are not lifetime plans, they are not an employer plan. Your constituents will have lots of options.

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: Let me -- let me move -- let me move on. It's what they wanted, and I will remind you, some people like to drive a Ford, not a Ferrari, and some people like to drink out of a red Solo cup and not a crystal stem. Your taking away their choice. Let's put the screen shot up. I want to go to the cost of the website and talk about the website. This is what is happening right now with this website. We've had somebody in the back trying to sign on. It is down. It is not working. Last week I asked for the cost from each of the contractors that were with us last week. So can you give me a ballpark on what you have spent on this website that does not work, that individuals cannot get to? What is your cost estimate?

SEBELIUS: So far, Congresswoman, we have spent about $118 million on the website itself, and about $56 million has been expended on other IT to support the web.

BLACKBURN: OK. Would you submit a detailed accounting of exactly what has been spent? And when do you expect constituents to stop getting these kind of error messages?

SEBELIUS: Again, I was with the -- I talked to the president of Verizon over the weekend on two occasions. Verizon hosts the cloud, which is not part of the website. It is a host for a number of websites. The Verizon system was taken down Saturday night into Sunday. It was down almost all day Sunday. They had an additional problem that they notified us about yesterday and it continues on. So I'd be happy to talk to the president of Verizon and get him to give you...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: OK, let me -- let me come back to that, because I want to get to this issue of exactly who is in charge of this project. Because you're now blaming it on the contractors and saying it's Verizon's fault.

So let me ask you this: Did you ever look at outsourcing the role of the system integrator -- and obviously you did not from the contractors that we had last week -- you all -- they had several different people, whether it was you or Gary Cohen or Michelle Snyder or Henry Chao, that they thought were in charge. So who is responsible for overseeing this project? Is it you or your designee?

SEBELIUS: Let me be clear, I'm not pointing fingers at Verizon. I'm trying to explain the way the site operates. We are -- we own the site. The site has had serious problems. I...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: Who is in charge, Madam Secretary?

SEBELIUS: The person now in charge as an integrator is QSSI, one of our...

BLACKBURN: Who was in charge as it was being built?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: ... CMS was in charge up...

(CROSSTALK)

BLACKBURN: At that team, who is the individual...

SEBELIUS: Michelle Snyder is...

BLACKBURN: Michelle Snyder is the one responsible for this debacle?

SEBELIUS: Well, excuse me, Congresswoman. Michelle Snyder is not responsible for the debacle. Hold me accountable for the debacle. I'm responsible.

BLACKBURN: Thank you. I yield back.

UPTON: Chair would recognize Mr. Dingell from the great state of Michigan.

DINGELL: Thank you for your courtesy.

I have a few questions I'll be asking you on behalf of Congresswoman Shea-Porter, but I'll do that by writing. I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to revise and extend my remarks.

UPTON: Without objection.

DINGELL: Mr. Chairman, I would like to begin by thanking you; welcoming the secretary to a room in which her distinguished father, former governor of Ohio, served for so many years.

I begin my questions by quoting from an expert for whom I have enormous respect. He said as follows: "As I mentioned earlier, the new benefits and its implementation are hardly perfect. Rather than trying to scare and confuse seniors, I would hope that we could work together as we go through the implementation phase to find out what is wrong with the program, and if we can make some changes to fix it.

"Let us do it, and let us do it in a bipartisan fashion. It is too big a program and is too important to too many people to do that. But having said that, it does appear that it is working. Let us admit it, you know, and not keep beating a dead horse."

My beloved friend, Mr. Barton -- who I think gave us the beginning of our efforts today.

Madam Secretary, I've seen reports that consumers receiving plan cancellation notices from their insurance companies saying that plans are no longer available. Does the ACA require insurance companies to discontinue the plans that people had when the law was passed, yes or no?

SEBELIUS: Not when the law was passed if the plans have not changed, no, sir.

(CROSSTALK) SEBELIUS: That's the grandfather clause.

DINGELL: Now, that's because the plans existed prior to the passage of the law are grandfathered in, as you have said?

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

DINGELL: So if an insurance company is no longer offering a certain plan, that's because that insurance company made a decision to change their policies, and that caused them to take away the grandfather status from their insurance purchasers, is that right?

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

DINGELL: Now, Madam Secretary, I want you to submit for the record a statement of what it is we can do about insurance companies that run around canceling the policies of their people. And I don't have time to get -- get the answer, but I want to get a very clear statement from you as to what you can do so we can take some skin off some folks that have it coming.

(LAUGHTER)

Now, Madam Secretary, it's my understanding that these decisions of a business character are most common in the individual insurance market, and that much turnover already exists and existed prior to the enactment of the legislation.

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

DINGELL: Is that correct?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

DINGELL: Is it correct that 35 percent to 67 percent (ph) of the enrollees in the individual market leave their plan after one year for different reasons?

SEBELIUS: A third are in about less than six months in the individual market and over 50 percent are in for less than a year, yes, sir.

DINGELL: Now, in the cancellation letters, which move around from the insurance companies, some insurance companies are suggesting an alternative plan at a higher price. Do they have the right to do that?

SEBELIUS: Well, they have a right to do that, sir, but consumers have a right to shop anywhere to compare plans and they have choices now that they've never had before -- and some financial assistance...

DINGELL: And they have no right...

SEBELIUS: ... coming their way for about 50 percent of those people.

DINGELL: ... to enforce that demand on the insurance company?

SEBELIUS: Oh, absolutely not. No one is rolled over into a plan. And in fact, individuals for the first time ever will have the ability to compare plans, to shop, and to make a choice inside or outside the marketplace.

DINGELL: Looks to me like the insurance companies are trying to inflict on their -- on their customers the view that this is their right and that this is the only option available to them, is that correct?

SEBELIUS: Well, I -- I think that insurance companies would like to keep their customers. Having said that, customers for the first time have a lot of choices, because they can't be locked out...

(CROSSTALK)

DINGELL: But the insurance companies have no right to enforce that view on the customer?

SEBELIUS: There is no rule that says you have to stay with your company or you have to be rolled over...

(CROSSTALK)

DINGELL: And you don't...

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

(CROSSTALK)

DINGELL: ... when they come forward and tell you that you've got to buy a particular policy, is that right?

SEBELIUS: Absolutely.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

Chair would recognize the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Barton.

BARTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Before I ask my questions, we have a former member of the committee on the Democrat side from the great state of Kansas in the audience, Mr. Slattery. And we are -- we're glad to have you.

And Madam Secretary, we're glad to have you too.

SEBELIUS: Thank you, sir.

BARTON: There is a famous movie called the "Wizard of Oz," and in the "Wizard of Oz" there is a great line. Dorothy at some point in the movie turns to her little dog Toto and says, "Toto, we're not in Kansas anymore."

Well, Madam Secretary, while you're from Kansas, we're not in Kansas anymore. Some might say that we are actually in the "Wizard of Oz" land given the parallel universes we appear to be habitating.

Mr. Waxman and most of those on the Democrat side think things are great. You apparently, although you did apologize and you have said it's a debacle, you also seem to think that the Affordable Care Act is great. Well, myself and others have a different view. Ultimately the American people will decide.

Now, last week when the contractors were here, I focused my attention on the apparent lack of privacy in the website. If we'll put up the first slide that I had last week -- if we can.

This -- this is what's public, Madam Secretary. And it's -- it's basically a disclaimer that says that any unauthorized attempt to upload information or change information on the website is prohibited. It really doesn't say anything about privacy. But you do have to accept that in order to go forward with the application.

The next slide shows what's not public. And this is in the source code. We tried to determine this morning if it was still in the source code, but it's (ph) been pointed out, the website's down.

This is much more what I would say -- frightening to me. It says, "You have no reasonable expectation of privacy regarding any communication or data transiting or stored (ph) on the information system. At any time and for any lawful government purpose, the government may monitor, intercept, search and seize any communication or data transiting or stored (ph) on the information system. Any communication or data transiting or stored (ph) on this information system may be disclosed or used for any lawful government purpose."

Cheryl Campbell of CGI Federal said she was aware of it, but said that it wasn't her responsibility to put that in the source code. Were you a aware of it? And was it your responsibility to put this in the source code?

SEBELIUS: Mr. Barton, I did not put things in the source code. I can tell you, it's my understanding that that is boiler plate language that should not have been in this particular contract, because there are -- the highest security standards are in place, and people have every right to expect privacy.

BARTON: All right.

Now, the last time we could check, this was still there. You are given almost unlimited authority under the Affordable Care Act to administer it. Will you commit to the committee and to the American people that, one, you do want to protect their privacy and, two, you will take this out, fix it, make sure that it -- it doesn't have bearing on people that try to apply through the website?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir. And we have had those discussions with CGI, and it is under way. I do absolutely commit to protecting the privacy of the American public, and we have asked them to remove that statement. It is there in error. It needs to be taken down, and we should be held accountable for protecting privacy...

(CROSSTALK)

BARTON: Well, thank you, Madam Secretary. I -- I sincerely appreciate that, and I'm sure the American people do too.

My last question -- or it's really a comment. I've introduced H.R. 3348, which says, let's make this system voluntary for the first year since we're having so many problems and let the American people decide. What that means is, if people choose not to participate they will not be charged the penalty for non-participation. Would you support such a reasonable approach to this while we work out the problems in the system?

SEBELIUS: No, sir.

BARTON: OK. Well, that's an honest answer.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

BARTON: Thank you, Madam...

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Chair would recognize the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Pallone.

PALLONE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I know we're not in Kansas, but I do believe increasingly we're in Oz because of what I see here.

(LAUGHTER)

So this "Wizard of Oz" comment by my colleague from Texas I think is particularly apropos, given what we hear (ph) on the other side of the aisle. I don't know how you keep your cool, Madam Secretary, you know, with this continuous effort on the part of the GOP to sabotage the ACA, to scare people and bring up red herrings. And I think that this privacy issue is another red herring. And I'm gonna ask you a question about that.

But before that, I just wanted to say, this whole idea that's being brought up today that somehow, you know, policies are being canceled and people don't have alternatives is just another red herring. You know, what I think my colleagues on the other side forget is that this is not socialized medicine. This is in fact private insurance in a competitive market.

And if I'm an insurance company and all of a sudden everyone else is selling a better policy with better benefits at a lower price, I can't continue to sell a lousy skeletal policy that doesn't provide

benefits and cost more because I'll be out of the market. And so that's what's happening here. Insurance companies are canceling lousy policies with high prices because they can't compete. And that's what's gonna happen when you have a private insurance market, which is what we have here. We don't have a government-controlled system. We have private markets.

So I just wanted to make that point.

But I have to drill down on what Mr. Barton said here. You know, before reform, the individual insurance market was dysfunctional, premiums would shoot up if people got sick, their coverage could be canceled if they had a pre-existing condition, and they did not have secure, quality coverage.

Now, I've heard my Republican colleagues say that patient health information will be at risk in this application process, and this is flat out false. In fact, the ACA makes a giant leap forward for protecting health insurance by taking it completely out of the insurance application process by banning discrimination based on pre- existing conditions.

Mr. Barton, again, is, you know, raising this red herring just like the cancellation of insurance by talking about privacy. But Madam Secretary, prior to the ACA when people applied for insurance coverage, did insurers make them provide a long, detailed, invasive medical history, but now because the law bans discrimination based on pre-existing conditions, individuals will not have to provide this information in their applications?

So regardless of this clause, please comment on the privacy issue and why it's irrelevant.

SEBELIUS: Well, Mr. Pallone, in the past, any individual American who was in an employer-based coverage, in government coverage like the ones we enjoy in Medicare, in Medicaid, the V.A., a whole variety of plans, that's about 95 percent of insured Americans had no medical underwriting, had group protections, had consumer protections.

The people who were outside that consumer-protected space were individuals buying their own coverage in an individual market. Medical underwriting demanding health records and often going through extensive doctor interviews and getting health records was a standard for that market. Pricing could vary widely depending on gender, depending on health condition. People could be denied coverage and were frequently. That's the market that is currently being reformed with consumer protections.

If a person had a policy in place in March of 2010 like that policy and the insurance company made no changes to disadvantage the consumer, those policies are in place, you keep your plan, you like it, and that goes on.

For the people who, though, had a medically underwritten policy, were paying more than their neighbor because they happened to be female, could not get their health condition for a fixed hip written into their insurance plan, they will have a new day in a very competitive market; 25 percent of the insurers are brand new to the market and they are offering competitive plans.

PALLONE: Mr. Chairman, could I just ask that this document...

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Sure. Put it into the record without objection.

PALLONE: Thank you.

UPTON: Chair would recognize Mr. Hall.

HALL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, I think Congresswoman Blackburn asked you about the federal government and how much they'd spent today and they're spending some money as we speak, aren't they?

It's down right now, isn't it?

Is that -- are you had -- you projected ongoing problems?

SEBELIUS: I'm sorry, sir. I'm having a hard time...

HALL: OK.

SEBELIUS: ... hearing.

What was the...

HALL: She asked you how much it had spent today and I'm asking what you expect to pay in addition to that on the repairs that the website is going to require and they're requiring them as we speak here.

So those are things you projected; you knew they would happen and they will happen. But you surely looked ahead and you have some estimate of what is going to happen.

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

HALL: And going to cost.

SEBELIUS: For our two major contractors who are USSI, a subsidiary of United and for CGI, there are obligated amounts. For CGI, who is in charge of the entire application, there has been $197 million obligated and that is to last through March of 2014.

And as I said before about $104 million has been expended in that obligated amount.

HALL: I'm going to try to be here on 2014 to be sure that your testimony is correct, OK?

(LAUGHTER)

I'm just joking with you.

(LAUGHTER)

SEBELIUS: OK.

HALL: And if -- were you born in Kansas, Meade (ph) -- Kansas?

SEBELIUS: I was not. I was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. I married a Kansan and went to Kansas.

HALL: All right. I was in the third grade there. And I thought I saw you on a tricycle there one day.

(LAUGHTER)

SEBELIUS: Well, it was an illusion.

HALL: Let me ask you a question, have you ever rejected a financial bill from one of the contractors?

Have you ever?

SEBELIUS: Have I ever...

HALL: Rejected a financial bill from one of them?

SEBELIUS: Sir, again, I -- our...

HALL: Well, I guess you can say yes or no.

SEBELIUS: ... our accounting office does a routine audit and review of every bill that comes in before they do it. I do not personally. I want to be very accurate about -- I don't personally pay contracts, negotiate contracts. By law and by precedent that's really illegal for someone who isn't a warranted contract officer to engage in the debate or discussion around federal contracts.

HALL: How much has the administration spent on the exchanges in total?

Not just healthcare.gov but all of the exchanges?

SEBELIUS: Sir...

HALL: How difficult is that figure to give me or if you can't give it to me...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I would like to get it to you in writing very quickly.

HALL: Madam Secretary, I'd like to talk -- I don't know how much time I have got left but I would like to talk about a couple of businesses in my district who are struggling with how to move forward. One is a manufacturing and one is in the pet boarding and training business. One has 85 employees and the other has 56.

Here's some quotes from some of their recent letters: "The situation we're in is we would have to pay $170,000 in penalties under Obamacare. This is another example of the government picking the winners and losers. We're the losers. There is no way I can be competitive if I have to raise my prices to cover $170,000. Here are my options: do not pay the penalty, raise my prices and go out of business. Eighty-five people lose their jobs, lay off 35 employees who don't have to pay the penalty and move more production to this country, reduce 35 jobs."

And here's a quote from the other: "Since they are high labor low margin, business cannot afford to pay for insurance for our employees we're faced with either closing our business perhaps through bankruptcy, though there are heavy financial obligations that would continue whether we operate or not.

"Fire enough employees to get under 50 employees limits and close some of our business. Even if we close the location we cannot escape many expenses such as rental agreements."

What am I supposed to tell these people?

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, I think that in the employer market, about 95 percent of all American businesses are exempt from any kind of requirement to cover employer -- employee insurance, and they are outside the law. They continue to be outside the law, but they will have some new options for those who want to cover their employees and some new tax credit possibilities.

For large employers, about 96 percent of them already cover their employees. And as you know, the penalty that your constituents referred to is not a penalty that is imposed in 2014. It is being discussed with businesses about what kind of information is exchanged and it will take place in 2015.

UPTON: The gentleman's time...

HALL: He's going to use the gavel on me if you don't hurry.

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

HALL: I yield back my time.

UPTON: At which time the Chair would recognize the gentlelady from California, Ms. Eshoo.

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Madam Secretary. You're a distinguished woman, you have distinguished yourself and your state, the offices that you've held, and now working for the American people and I salute you for it. I -- I want to really congratulate my Republican pals for being absolutely 1000 percent consistent. You love what's wrong with the website, and you detest what's working in the Affordable Care Act. And I think that that is on full display here. But let's get back to the website, because that's what the hearing is about.

It's my understanding that November 31st (sic) is a -- is a hard date for having everything up and running. Do you have -- now, HHS did testify in September that they were 100 percent confident that the site would be launched and fully functional on time on October 1st. That didn't work. Do you have full confidence in this new hard date?

SEBELIUS: Congresswoman, I can tell you that the assessment that we have made is that it will take until the end of November for an optimally functioning website. I know that the only way I can restore confidence that we get it right is to get it right, so I -- I -- I have confidence, but I know that it -- it isn't fair to ask the American public to take our word for it. I've got to fix this problem, and we are underway doing just that.

ESHOO: But are you confident that -- I think I said November 31st, which is, which does not exist, but November 30th. You have confidence in November 30th?

SEBELIUS: I do.

ESHOO: Is there any penalty to QSSI or CGI for not delivering on what they promised?

SEBELIUS: Well, I think the, as you can see, we have a -- obligated funds for a contract. We certainly have not expended all those funds, and we expect not only the CMS team, but our contractor partners to fulfill their obligations and have to be...

(CROSSTALK)

ESHOO: But if they fail to fulfill their obligations. I don't know what's in the contract. Is there a penalty?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Well, I understand, but, there isn't a built-in penalty, but I can tell you that paying for work that isn't complete is not something that we will do. QSSI, as you know, has taken on a new role as integrator of the hub that they built and have in operation is -- is working extremely well, not only for the federal exchanges, but all the state-based markets are using the hub, and that's why we had confidence in their ability to actually take this next role on and coordinate the activities moving forward, which have to be driven with a very clear set of outcomes, very accountable timelines and deadlines, and they will be helping to manage that process.

ESHOO: On the issue of security, there was a security breach that arose recently, that I read about at any rate. And what I think is very important here, because the issue of privacy has been raised, and I think that that has been answered. Very importantly, there isn't any health information in these systems. But there is financial information, so my question to you is, has a security wall been built, and are you confident that it is there and that it will actually secure the financial information that applicants have to disclose?

SEBELIUS: Yes, ma'am, I -- I would tell you that there was not a breach, there was a blog by a sort of skilled hacker that if a certain series of incidents occurred, you could possibly get in and obtain somebody's personally identifiable...

(CROSSTALK)

ESHOO: But isn't that telling? Isn't that telling?

SEBELIUS: And we immediately corrected that problem, so there wasn't a -- it was a theoretical problem that was immediately fixed. I would tell you we are storing the minimum amount of data, because we think that's very important. The hub is not a data collector. It is actually using data centers at the IRS, at Homeland Security, at Social Security to verify information, but it stores none of that data, so we don't want to be...

ESHOO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Gentlelady's time has expired. The Chair would recognize Mr. Shimkus.

SHIMKUS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Madam Secretary. Madam Secretary, before I start my questions, the Washington Post gave the administration, the President, yourself, four Pinocchios on this whole debate of if you like the insurance you have, you can keep it. Would you recommend to the President that he stop using that term? Wouldn't it be helpful in this debate?

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, I think he used the term at the time that the law was passed, and he continues to say...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: And as of September 26th, also, so...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: That's why we wrote...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: So the answer is you don't buy -- you don't believe that the Washington Post, and therefore...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I haven't read the Washington Post, but thank you.

SHIMKUS: Well, we'll hand this down to you so you can see it. Have you ever shopped -- I know you have, but this is for a -- at a grocery store with a coupon? Ever used a coupon?

SEBELIUS: Yes.

SHIMKUS: So, the coupon gives you the terms and conditions of when you go to the checkout to -- to get whatever's off the price of the goods. When you all added the "See Plans Now" option, you in essence gave the searcher in essence a coupon based upon what they're seeing there. And the desire was, let people know what the price is. However, as the -- the news reported, and I followed up in last week's hearing, was that if you are under 50 years old, you get quoted the price of someone who's 27. If you're older than 50, if you're older than 50, could be 64, you get quoted a price of someone who's 50 -- 50 years old. Isn't that misleading?

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, the "Learn" side of the website, which has been up since actually late...
(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: So that's truthful, then. If you quote a price...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: It is clearly a hypothetical situation...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: Oh, are you -- do you -- wait...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: That for now people that...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: OK, on the "See Plans Now" option, are you saying this is a hypothetical? That's not what it says on the site. It says, "This is the price, when you put in your age," and if your age is 49, it quotes you as if you're 27.

SEBELIUS: Sir, the only way someone can get an accurate information about their price is to get their individual eligibility (inaudible)...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: Let me ask you another -- when did you decide to use this, the low 50 at 27, and above 50 at 50 years old. When did you make that decision?

SEBELIUS: That was decided by the team as...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: By who? Who made the -- the...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I withhold (ph) that information.

SHIMKUS: The problem with the whole debate is y'all won't tell us who made the decisions.

SEBELIUS: Well, I can tell you I did not design the site.

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: So who?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I will get...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: Well, who made the decision on the 27-year-old quote for someone who's 50?

SEBELIUS: I just said I will get you that information.

SHIMKUS: Thank -- thank you. Let me go to, because it's misleading and the White House insists it didn't mislead the public, and (inaudible) we find after you did. But let me -- let me finish on this

debate. Another transparency issue. If someone, a constituent of mine or someone in this country has strongly held pro-life views...

(CROSSTALK)

(UNKNOWN): Oh, here we go.

SHIMKUS: Can you commit to us to make sure that the federal exchanges that offer that is clearly identified and so people can understand if they're going to buy a policy that has abortion coverage or not? Because right now, you cannot make that determination.

SEBELIUS: Sir, I -- I don't know. I -- I know exactly the -- the issue you're talking about. I will check and make sure that that is truly identifiable.

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: Here's -- here's -- OK, thank you. Well, here's -- here's our request. Can you provide for the committee the list of insurers in the federal exchange who do not offer, as part of their package, abortion coverage?

SEBELIUS: I think we can do that, sir.

SHIMKUS: Well, you should be able to do it, so...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I just said...

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: No, you said "If we can do it."

SEBELIUS: No, I think we can do that is what I said.

(CROSSTALK)

SHIMKUS: I think, or I know we can do it?

SEBELIUS: I -- sir, I -- I can't tell you what I don't know firmly right now. I know that is the plan, I will get that information to you.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

The chair would recognize Mr. Engel from New York.

ENGEL: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, I appreciate your coming here today to answer questions about the Affordable Health Care Act (sic).

You know, my Republican colleagues' actions here remind me of a story I read when I was a little boy, and that's the story of Chicken Little, who ran around yelling, "The sky is falling. The sky is falling." But unlike Chicken Little, my Republican colleagues are actually rooting for the sky to fall.

Republicans are holding this hearing today under the auspices of an investigative hearing, as if they want to get to the bottom of what went wrong with the website in order to help fix it. But I don't think, Madam Secretary, there's one person in this room who is naive enough to actually think that the Republicans want to see this law work. They voted over 40 times to repeal the law, they

shutdown the government and threatened to force a default in order to stop it. They're rooting for failure.

Madam Secretary, can you tell us what would be the impact on Americans' health insurance if Republicans had been successful in their efforts to de-fund or repeal the Affordable Care Act?

SEBELIUS: Well, I think that the estimates at the Congressional Budget Office is that would have increased the deficit by about $110 billion in the first decade and close to a trillion dollars in the second decade.

We know that we have 42 million or 43 million Americans without health insurance at all, some of them Medicaid eligible and some in the -- over the Medicaid eligibility. Thirty governors so far, Republicans and Democrats, have declared their support for moving ahead with Medicaid expansion, but absent that, the Affordable Care Act, those folks would be without any kind of health security.

And in the private market, what we know is it takes a real toll.

But I'd say the biggest issue is not just the financial toll, not the community toll, not the country toll -- which is significant. I have a good friend who runs the cancer center at the University of Kansas. I was with him and cancer researchers recently, and he said that if you get a cancer diagnosis, you are 60 percent more likely to live five years and beyond if you have insurance than if you don't. I think that's a pretty powerful statement for why we need affordable health care for all of our citizens.

ENGEL: Well, thank you. The -- the Republicans have not been able to de-fund or repeal it, but they have denied requested funding. They've raised specious arguments about death panels and socialized medicine, and they've worked to intimidate groups that could help the implementation effort. There's been a spreading of misinformation about the cost of coverage -- we hear some of that today -- and to actively dissuade the uninsured from seeking coverage.

So Madam Secretary, how are these tactics -- impacted your ability to implement the Affordable Care Act?

SEBELIUS: Well, I don't think there's any question that a lot of people need a lot of information. I think it's one of the reasons we had millions visit the site -- try to visit the site. It's why I am so frustrated and disappointed that the site is not fully functional, and why I'm so committed to getting it functional, because clearly there is a demand. We need to get information to people about the law.

This is the law. This is not any longer a debate. It was a law passed by both houses of Congress, signed by the president of the United States, upheld by the Supreme Court. The president was re-elected. It is the law. And people have benefits and rights under that law, and we've got to get that information so they can make good choices for themselves and their families.

ENGEL: Well, thank you.

It is the law, and, frankly, I find it disconcerting that my Republican colleagues have done nothing but root for this law to fail for the last three and a half years. And now there's a big show here of being upset at problems with the website...

(CROSSTALK)

ENGEL: ... keeping people from signing up for coverage fast enough.

So I would just say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, you're really on the wrong side of history here. The website will be fixed and millions of Americans will be able to get quality, affordable health insurance coverage through the Affordable Care Act.

And again, I thank you for being here today, Madam -- Madam.

UPTON: Mr. Pitts, chairman of the Health Committee.

PITTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Madam Secretary.

Have you personally tried to register or enroll on the website? SEBELIUS: Sir, I created an early light account so I would see the prompts that were coming to people who were interested. I did work my way to the application feature fairly early on. But, frankly, I -- I have affordable health care, so I...

(CROSSTALK)

PITTS: No, I just wanted to know if you've been through the process that millions of Americans are having to go through.

Madam Secretary, the -- the initial website crashes appear to be largely a result of the decision to prevent browsing of the plans. CGI Federal testified at our hearing last week that they had designed the website to allow users to browse and compare plans before having to create an account.

Ms. Campbell told us that two weeks prior to the October 1st launch, they were told to turn off the browsing feature. Were you aware in September that this decision was made?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I wasn't aware of that particular decision that was made by the CMS team. I was aware that we were paring back some features to not put additional risk on the website, which is ironic at this point.

PITTS: And who made that decision? Who made that decision?

SEBELIUS: Administrator Tavenner made that decision.

PITTS: And do you know why that was made?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir, because we were anxious to get the website up and running and functional -- which we clearly have failed to do to date -- although I would suggest the website has never crashed. It is functional, but at a very slow speed and very low reliability, and has continued to function.

Having said that, they pared down some of the features, feeling that it would be better to load them in later. One was the shop and browse feature. Another was the Spanish version of the website and the Medicaid transfers. All three of those issues were paired down in September...

PITTS: Thank you.

SEBELIUS: ... to not load the system.

PITTS: Thank you.

Last week, CGI Federal and QSSI testified that CMS was responsible for end-to-end testing and that they believe that months of testing would have been preferable to two weeks.

Do you believe that two weeks was enough time to complete testing of the entire system?

SEBELIUS: Clearly, not.

PITTS: And when were you made aware of the result of the test, including the one where the system collapsed with only a few hundred users?

SEBELIUS: Leading up to the October 1st date, we had regular meetings with not only a team at CMS but administrators involved. I was made aware that we were testing, and as we found problems we

were fixing those problems. And I think there is a CGI report at mid- August identifying some problems. And between August and October that became the punch list for CGI to fix those problems. That's why you test.

PITTS: Now, in The Washington Post on October 21st there was an article that said about a month before the exchange opened a testing group of 10 insurers urged agency officials not to launch the site because it was riddled with problems. Were you aware in September that insurers recommended a delay in the launch of the exchange?

SEBELIUS: I was not aware that they recommended delay. I know everyone was concerned that there were risks and there were likely to be problems with a brand new integrated insurance system. I don't think anyone ever estimated the degree to which we've had problems in the system, and, certainly, the contracting partners did not.

PITTS: And did HHS respond to the insurers' recommendation to delay the launch?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I can't -- I wasn't in the meeting. I don't know...

PITTS: Can you find out and...

SEBELIUS: ... what occurred at the meeting, and I don't know who they talked to.

PITTS: ... answer that question for us?

SEBELIUS: Sure, I will get back to you.

PITTS: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Mr. Green?

GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Madam Secretary, thank you for taking time to be here today.

I represent parts of east and north Houston, Harris County, and our district has one of the highest uninsured rates in the country. Even worse, we have one of the highest rates of people who have jobs but don't receive their insurance through their employer.

It's for this reason that I believe Houston would be a good place for you to come and spend -- spread the word about the tremendous benefits of the Affordable Care Act. However, we learned (inaudible) your office that you're unable to attend because of scheduling conflicts. And I -- hopefully, we can have agreement that some time in the future you'll come to the fourth largest city that probably has the highest number of uninsured in a metropolitan area. And, of course, we're in the state of Texas that has the number of highest uninsured in the country.

The -- it's important to me and our constituents to get it right, and that's why I share your and the president's disappointment the website's not working as planned.

November 30th is not soon enough. Many of my constituents have been waiting for years to be able to purchase health insurance, and we owe it to them to get the marketplaces up and running.

The contractors have not served our country well and should fix it or not be paid.

Now we're hearing about the cancellation letters being sent by insurance companies (inaudible) customers notifying them that their plans are no longer offered. Are these Americans losing their

health care coverage because of the Affordable Care Act, or is it because these plans were changed after the enactment of the act?

SEBELIUS: I would say it's the latter, sir. If a plan was in place since the enactment of the act, no one would have received a cancellation...

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: So if somebody in America had an insurance plan before the act and -- the president was correct: If you have -- if you like what you have, you could keep it.

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

GREEN: The plans were changed, and so now they have to comply with the new law.

SEBELIUS: They can either choose to be grandfathered and keep the same plan, which meant the same benefits and -- and actually the regulation allows insurance companies to charge medical inflation plus a trend line so they didn't have to charge the same price. They could increase it; they could increase co-pays. They could increase co- insurance. What they couldn't do is cancel benefits that the policy holder relied on. They couldn't disadvantage the policy holder. But if that plan is in effect, absolutely, it is still in effect.

GREEN: OK, but some of these millions of letters we're hearing about are probably because their plans changed?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Absolutely. And again, in the individual market, plans change every year. Insurers design new products...

GREEN: And that's -- even in the small business market that happens. So these plans are not allowed now, because they're completely inadequate. They don't offer the minimum essential benefits, is that correct?

SEBELIUS: That is correct.

GREEN: OK. And having been a state legislator -- and I know as governor in Kansas -- I assume every state has some type of minimum mandated benefits that they have for their health insurance plans.

SEBELIUS: They do, but it applies, again, sir, in the past usually to the group markets, where 90 percent of covered Americans get their policies. This market has always been the wild west.

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: OK. The Americans who received those letters from their companies about cancellations, they're eligible to purchase plans on the exchange?

SEBELIUS: Or out of the exchange. Individuals who don't -- aren't interested in some kind of financial help can go outside the exchange, inside the exchange. Their insurer can offer them plans. They have choices they've never had before.

GREEN: And because of the benefits of the Affordable Care Act, 80 percent of their premium dollar will come back to them?

SEBELIUS: That's correct. That's...

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: OK. And that's not true -- and I don't -- I know it's not true in Texas, but I don't know what -- any states that have that 80 percent requirement.

SEBELIUS: Well, no state had it, I would suggest, in that kind of broad base prior to the Affordable Care Act, so it's...

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: Let me give you an example of one of the plans I found out doing case work a few years ago. A large company provided $25,000 maximum benefit for their employees in the year. Most employees didn't know about it, and -- until this one constituent found out that she had cancer. And the bill ended up being $300,000. And so that's some of those plans that are not being allowed to be sold now, is that correct?

SEBELIUS: Well, not only will (ph) the plan have a limit on out- of-pocket costs per year, it will have a limit on a lifetime out-of- pocket costs and it will have -- it will take away the notion that you would run out of your coverage in the middle of a treatment, which a lot of plans do.

GREEN: I know I'm out of my time, but it's like buying a car...

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: ... look good, but if it doesn't have a motor, it's no good to have that car.

(CROSSTALK)

GREEN: So that's why the Affordable Care Act has...

SEBELIUS: Save a lot of gas, but it doesn't get you...

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Gentleman's time has expired.

Gentleman from Oregon, Mr. Walden.

WALDEN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Governor -- Secretary, we're delighted to have you before the committee. You and I both know how important this issue is to all Americans that we get it right. So I hope you can appreciate, we're trying to understand what we missed along the way. And -- and one of the things that bothered me was the letter that was sent from your agency to the GAO back in -- June 6th. And I'll read in part, it said, "We're in the final stages of finalizing and testing the I.T. infrastructure that will support the application enrollment process. HHS is extremely confident that on October 1, the marketplace will open on schedule and millions of Americans will have access to affordable, quality health insurance."

I'm just an average guy from a small town in Oregon, but when I read that, it tells me you believed everything was good to go, the testing was in place, and we should have full confidence everything would work. Correct?

SEBELIUS: That's the letter I signed, yes, sir.

WALDEN: Actually, it was signed by your assistant.

SEBELIUS: Or whoever -- yes, yes.

WALDEN: But the same point.

And so I went into this believing in your response -- your agency's response to GAO, things were ready to go, we should have full confidence, because when somebody uses the word "extremely confident," tells me you're extremely confident.

Second piece, then when we had the testimony from the witnesses last week, I asked them about the end-to-end testing and what the industry standard would be, and they said it really should have been months, especially for a project of this magnitude. And yet we heard it was only two weeks.

Now in August, GCI told CMS in their report...

SEBELIUS: CGI.

WALDEN: I'm sorry, CGI, thank you.

That on August 9th that there was not enough time in the schedule to conduct adequate performance testing. Did that make its way all the way to you? And do you think there was adequate time?

SEBELIUS: Sir, clearly, as I've said before, we did not adequately do end-to-end testing. The products were not locked and loaded into the system until the third week in September. Each of the component parts...

WALDEN: Right...

SEBELIUS: ... was tested, validated...

WALDEN: ... they told us that.

SEBELIUS: ... independently validated end-to-end (ph).

WALDEN: I'm sorry.

All those worked, though, right? They told us last week that their individual modules were tested and met specification. Do you concur with that analysis based on what you know?

SEBELIUS: I do concur with the testing that was done, yes.

WALDEN: OK, so it really was the end-to-end -- which is why some of us thought we should delay until it could be done right to avoid this very collapse that now is upon us. And I realize not everybody agreed to (ph) that.

The second piece here gets back to The Washington Post, which I realize you haven't had -- and I understand -- a chance to read this morning, but the four Pinocchios about the president repeatedly saying, 'If you have a plan, you'll keep your plan.' We all heard that to mean, 'I've got a plan with a company. I'll continue to have it even if they make minor changes,' when in fact your own rules as written said, no, that's really isn't what's going to happen. If minor changes are made that means the plan changed; that means you don't get it.

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, that isn't true. They (ph) -- rules did not say what you just suggested, and I think the estimate, given that there would be turnover in the market, was really an outside projection. It wasn't our rules. It's -- it was a snapshot of what happens in the market; that plans change so dramatically...

WALDEN: Sure, every year.

SEBELIUS: ... over time that the estimate was -- they wouldn't be -- not because of our rules, but because of insurance companies' business decisions.

(CROSSTALK)

WALDEN: Well, but you set up what (ph) those market rules looked like they had to comply with, correct?

SEBELIUS: Only if they chose not to grandfather the policy. That's...

WALDEN: But that meant they couldn't make any change (ph)...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Any grandfathered policy stayed in place, still would be in place.

WALDEN: Right, but if they made...

SEBELIUS: ... none of these rules apply.

WALDEN: But if they made any change...

SEBELIUS: No, they could make changes in pricing. They could make changes in benefits. They couldn't dramatically disadvantage the consumer, but they could have trend lines. They -- they had a wide corridor to make sure that -- that a similar plan -- so if a consumer liked the plan, the plan, if it stayed...

(CROSSTALK)

WALDEN: So here's what the practical implication -- I've got letters from constituents all over my district who have gotten letters from their insurers who say because of Obamacare, they're no longer going to be in the individual market, or at least with that plan in the individual market. And the result is this person from Cove, Oregon, said, "I was paying $600 a month for a $3,000 deductible. Now it costs me $800 a month for a $5,000 deductible."

I've got others here, I'll put in the record.

A woman whose job -- she had 40 hours, now down to 29. Neither has health insurance, nor enough income to live on her own because of the way this law is getting implemented.

I realize my time's (ph) expired.

UPTON: Gentlelady from Colorado, Ms. DeGette.

DEGETTE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Secretary, for being with us today.

I want to follow up on a couple of those questions that Mr. Walden was asking you about CGI. As you know, Chairman Issa last night released this document, monthly project status report from CGI last night, and it looks to me as sort of a technical document that has a punch list of outstanding open issues.

And some of them do highlight items that upon first read seem to be alarming. For example, one of the entries said, "Due to the compressed schedule there's not enough time built in to allow for adequate performance testing." And this certainly, in retrospect, sounds bad. But the date of the document that Chairman Issa released is September 6th, and then on September 10th, four days later, CGI came into this committee and testified under oath, quote, "CGI Federal is confident it will develop -- deliver the functionality that CMS has directed."

And -- and we're -- we're trying to figure out, or at least I'm trying to figure out, how CGI is now coming in and saying, you know, 'We warned everybody that this wasn't gonna be ready,' when they came in and directly told me that they would be ready to launch on October 1st.

So it kind of raises a question, how these statements can be reconciled. One explanation is that CGI was lying to this committee. I think that's unlikely. Another is that CGI thought that the items flagged in the report were like a punch list that could be addressed.

So here's my question to you, Madam Secretary: Was CGI telling your department the same thing that they told the committee on September 10th, that the company was confident that its programs would be ready?

SEBELIUS: Congresswoman, all of the contractors testified here in September and again, I think, last week before this committee. And the testimony was fairly similar, that they were ready to go in September. They were asked in -- last week if they had suggested that we should delay the launch date. Each of them said, no. I think the chairman...

(CROSSTALK)

DEGETTE: So they never asked you to delay the launch date?

SEBELIUS: They did not. And, frankly, I -- I think it is not valuable at this point...

DEGETTE: Right.

SEBELIUS: ... to do a lot of pointing blame, fixing the blame. What I want to do is fix the problem.

DEGETTE: And so do I...

SEBELIUS: I think we need the whole team to move ahead, and we will report back regularly.

DEGETTE: Right, but we're relying on these contractors to fix this. And so that goes to my last question, which is Mr. Zients has now come in and he says the site is going to be functional for the vast majority of users by the end of November. Is that right?

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

DEGETTE: And given what CGI told us and the other vendors, do you believe that that is correct? Do you believe it will be pretty much ready to go by the end of November?

SEBELIUS: I do. And I think that we are making improvements each and every day. It is easier to use now than it was two weeks. It is way from where we need it to be.

DEGETTE: So it's not like it's all going to be fine by the end of November. It's beginning to improve already. Is that your testimony?

SEBELIUS: It is a continuous process, as websites are. Patches are made, fixes are made on an ongoing basis. And as we find issues like Congresswoman Eshoo talked about, we are fixing them in real time.

DEGETTE: And you're going to guarantee yes or no that people will have privacy when they go on this site?

SEBELIUS: Absolutely.

DEGETTE: Now I just want to say one last thing. I was on the Washington Journal where callers call in this morning, and I had a man, Max, call in. And he said he got one of those letters from the insurance companies that his insurance was canceled. So what he did is he went on to the website

and he -- under the federal exchange and he found a better plan, and now he's going to sign up. So I would hope that that's what everybody would be able to do. And I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Mr. Terry?

TERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I'm pleased to hear that the website will be fully operational by the end of November. And would be able to -- would you come back to our committee so we can see if that's actually accomplished and how it was accomplished?

SEBELIUS: I will make every effort to do that.

TERRY: OK. You were governor and state insurance commissioner in Kansas, and I reached out to our state insurance commissioner and governor and found out that they have absolutely no data about Nebraskans who have either tried to enroll or enrolled.

As you know, Nebraska is one of the states that opted not to do their own exchange and rely on the federal exchange. So it's interesting to me that neither our insurance commissioner nor the governor's office had any data about Nebraskans and this -- this -- and enrolling in these plans.

I also asked our insurance commissioner if any of the navigators, if they knew who the navigators were and whether they had to apply to be certified or licensed in essence like an insurance agent would be. And they told me they have no clue who's been authorized by HHS to be a navigator and work with people in Nebraska.

So this is concerning to me, so I'm going to ask you a few questions along this line. First of all, do you have data on how many people in general in the United States have tried to enroll in a plan through this website?

SEBELIUS: No, sir. We do not have any reliable data around enrollment, which is why we haven't given it to date.

TERRY: Or have any data on how many people have tried to enroll but because of the problems have not been able to accomplish that?

SEBELIUS: No, sir. I can tell you I met with insurers last week. And one of the priority fixes is the so-called 834s, the document that sends an individual's name to a company and verifies it. That is one of the systems that is not working.

TERRY: I appreciate that. And the contractors I asked specifically about the information of how many people have tried to enroll and enrolled, and they say they do have those numbers but can't tell us that because of a contract with HHS saying that they -- they're gagged on that information.

SEBELIUS: I would suggest that the numbers are not reliable according to (inaudible).

TERRY: Well, I'll tell you what. My question is going to be though will you on the record right now authorize them to give us those numbers and let us determine whether those are reliable?

SEBELIUS: No, sir. I want to give you reliable, confirmed data from every state and from the federal marketplace. We have said that we will do that on a monthly basis. By the middle of the month you will have that data, but I don't want to turn over anything that is not confirmed and reliable, and that's what we'll do.

TERRY: Well, but that data out there exists and you will not let us (inaudible)

SEBELIUS: Sir, I would -- I would tell you right now it is not reliable data. According to the insurance companies who are eager to have customers, they are not getting reliable data all the way through the system (inaudible) real problems that we have.

TERRY: The number of people that have clicked on and tried to get or enrolled, I'm not asking about what they enrolled in or whether they came in and said they were 65 and were quoted something that they were 27 years old. That should be a pretty reliable number just on the surface. So would you...

SEBELIUS: The system isn't functioning, so we are not getting that reliable data. Insurers who I met with said that that is the case. We know that there's 700,000 applications that have been (inaudible).

TERRY: The reliability of that data certainly flies in the face of the testimony from the contractors. All right. I yield back.

UPTON: Ms. Capps?

CAPPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, , Secretary Sebelius, for your presence here today and your testimony. While I too am frustrated with the flawed rollout of healthcare.gov, I do appreciate your longstanding commitment to improving the health care options for all Americans and fixing this website quickly.

I think it's important to note that in my home state of California and other states as well, the new exchange marketplace, we call it Covered California, is working. And rates -- constituents are finding that rates are as much as 29 percent less than those that they found on the marketplace last year.

I'm thankful my constituents now have this option. And as I look around to implementation nationwide, it seems clear to me that political decisions in individual states have really made the difference for consumers.

The governors and legislators -- state legislators that embrace this law are delivering for their communities, but those elected who are trying to ignore the opportunities presented and continue to throw up road blocks both here in Congress and in state legislatures should not now seem surprised that there are significant bumps along the way.

This seems to me to be completely disingenuous. Having embraced the law since open enrollment began October 1, Californians have started nearly 180,000 applications with more beginning every day.

I know my time is limited, but I want to have a second to mention a conversation I had just last night with a (inaudible) town hall to my district on the central coast of California. One of the first callers I heard from was a mother from Santa Barbara. Her name's Meryl, and she wanted to tell me the story of her son.

Her son is 28 years old and he had been paying $425 a month for his insurance before the Affordable Care Act. She was happy to report that he has already applied through Covered California and has found a policy that works better for him. It has all the essential health benefits covered, which his former policy did not, and now will only cost him $109 a month.

This is significant savings for Meryl's son, and this is a story that's being repeated at least in California often. So there are millions of residents in many states who have now set up their own websites and marketplaces. In those states, tens of thousands of people are now as we speak signing up for coverage. And this is demonstrating that the Affordable Care Act is working.

In New York and Washington, over 30,000 people have enrolled. In Oregon, over 50,000 people have been enrolled. Kentucky, 31,000 people have been enrolled. We could go on and on. The success of the state exchanges, which is where this is meant to be implemented, shows how badly this law is wanted and needed, how much it will be of help to so many people who want quality, affordable health care.

So my three quick questions to you are this, Madam Speaker (ph). What is your assessment of how this first month have been gone -- has gone in the states that are running their own marketplaces, which this Congress intended that the Affordable Care Act work?

SEBELIUS: Well everything we hear from the state-based markets is that they are doing well. They have not submitted data yet. We, again, are working with them around a monthly schedule so that they will confirm Medicaid data and enrollment data. And we'll see the real numbers at the end of the month and make sure that the -- they're available to the public.

But everything we hear is that they see the same demand, they are eager to enroll folks and that that is going smoothly.

CAPPS: And what do you think this success shows about the demand and the interest for affordable health insurance on the part of constituents?

SEBELIUS: Well I don't think there's any question that in spite of a series of road blocks and blockades and a lot of misinformation driven by about a $400 million marketing campaign last year, Americans are eager to see what their benefits may be under the law, what their opportunities are, how to get health security for themselves and their families, and we want to make sure that they see those benefits.

The website is one of the ways to do that. The call center, on the ground enrollment, personal outreach, are a variety of ways, and I would tell your colleague, Mr. Congressman, I'd be happy to get you the list of the Nebraska folks who are on the ground. It's available easily. It's public record, so I'd be happy to send it to you, so you could share it with your insurance commissioner and governor.

UPTON: The gentlelady's time has expired.

Gentleman from the great state of Michigan, Mr. Rogers.

ROGERS: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here. Short time, get through some questions here, if I can.

Is it your testimony that the -- that there -- every night to try to increase the functionality of the system you're hot swapping codes?

So my understanding is that between 2:00 and 4:00, write new code, put it into the system, yes or no?

SEBELIUS: Clearly, I am not hot swapping code. There is a technical team...

(CROSSTALK)

ROGERS: No, no. You are in charge of the operation that hot swaps code on functionality. Is that -- you're trying to improve the functionality, yes?

So that happens every night, yes?

SEBELIUS: No, I don't think it does happen every night. It happens periodically during the hours of 1:00 and 5:00, but it is not a nightly feature.

ROGERS: Great.

Has each piece of that code that's been introduced in the system been security tested?

SEBELIUS: That's my understanding, yes, sir. And the testing...

ROGERS: Each piece of that code has been tested? Yes or no?

SEBELIUS: I don't know, but I can tell you that security...

ROGERS: That's a much safer answer, trust me.

SEBELIUS: ... is an ongoing operation that as code is loaded, you need to retest over and over and over again. So whether it's pretested, I can't tell you.

ROGERS: All right. You need to test the code.

Have any end-to-end security tests been conducted since healthcare.gov went live on October 1st, yes or no?

SEBELIUS: My understanding is, there's continuous testing as the -- our temporary authority to operate calls for.

ROGERS: Yes or no, has an end-to-end security test on healthcare.gov went live, yes or no?

SEBELIUS: I will find out exactly what testing they are doing. I know they are doing simultaneous testing as new code is loaded.

ROGERS: Are there any end-to-end security tests run after every new piece of code is put -- I'm not talking about testing the code now, I'm talking about an end-to-end security test.

SEBELIUS: I can tell you how...

ROGERS: Covers the cost of the boundaries...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: ... I can get you that information.

ROGERS: I can tell you they are not, and I'd be interested to hear why not.

Tab -- if you go to tab two quickly in your book, I'm going to read three things...

SEBELIUS: What book, sir?

ROGERS: You have a tab there. If you go to tab two -- right there.

Well, while you're looking, I'll read. It's dated September 27th, and it is to Marilyn Tavenner. Let me just -- a couple of pieces here.

"There are inherent security risks with not having all code tested in a single environment. Finally, the system requires rapid development and release of hot fixes and patches so it is not always available or stable during the duration of the testing."

Secondly, "The security contractor has not been able to test all of the security controls in one complete version of the system."

And if you look in the first part, which is most troubling at all, it says, "Due to system readiness issues, the security control assessment was only partly completed. This constitutes a risk that must be accepted before the marketplace day one operations."

And so let me tell you what you did.

You allowed the system to go forward with no encryption on back- up systems. They had no encryption on certain boundary crossings. You accepted a risk on behalf of every user of this computer that put their personal financial information at risk because you did not even have the most basic end-to-end test on security of this system.

Amazon would never do this. ProFlowers would never do this. Kayak would never do this.

This is completely an unacceptable level of security. And here's the scary part, we found out after the contractors last week that an end-to-end test hadn't been conducted on security, not functionality, because if it's not functioning, you know it's not secure.

Your ongoing hot patches without end-to-end tests: the private contractors told us it would take a very thorough two months just for an integrated end-to-end security test, that I'll tell you has not happened to date.

Why? Because you're constantly adding new code every night to protect the functionality of the system. You have exposed millions of Americans because you all, according to your memo, believed it was an acceptable risk.

Don't you think you had the obligation to tell the American people that we're going to put you in this system, but beware, your information is likely to be vulnerable?

Would you commit today, Secretary, to shut down the system and do an end-to-end security test so that these Americans can have their information...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: No, sir. If you read the memo...

ROGERS: Oh, I have read it.

SEBELIUS: ... say that weekly testing of our berta (ph) devices, including interface testing, daily, weekly scans are going on. This is a temporary authority...

ROGERS: (Inaudible), that's not what the memo says, number one, and number two, the contractors will tell you...

(CROSSTALK)

(UNKNOWN): Mr. Chairman, point of order. I think the witness ought to be allowed to answer what was a speech by the colleague, because he's raised a lot of issues.

UPTON: If the gentlelady will quickly answer.

ROGERS: (Inaudible) here today, that's...

UPTON: Does the secretary wish to respond briefly?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I would just say this document is a document signed by Administrator Tavenner, which discusses mitigation strategies for security that are ongoing and upgraded and a authorization to operate on a permanent basis will not be signed until these mitigation strategies are satisfied. It is under way right now, but daily and weekly monitoring and testing is under way.

ROGERS: Mr. Chairman, there are people using this system today and she's just admitted again the system isn't secure nor has (inaudible).

UPTON: The gentleman...

(UNKNOWN): Mr. Chairman, she didn't admit that. You said it, but she didn't say it.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

Mr. Doyle.

DOYLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, welcome.

Those of us who fought for this law, who voted for this law, have a vested interest in its success, and the concerns that you here expressed on this side of the panel are real, because we want to see Americans get health care.

I think it's somewhat disingenuous for my colleagues on the other side of the podium here to have this faux anger and this faux concern over a bill that they absolutely want to fail and have rooted for its failure and have voted over 40-some times to repeal this bill, never putting an alternative plan on the floor for the American people, but just to simply say they want to make sure this plan doesn't succeed.

And I think the real fear is, that the plan will succeed and the American people will learn of the real benefits of this plan, not the propaganda campaign that's gone on by the Republicans for the last three years.

Madam Secretary, I think one of the keys to success of this plan is that we get young people to enroll in this plan. And I have some questions about some enrollment concerns that I have. Now I understand that you've said approximately 700,000 people have applied for coverage via the healthcare.gov and the state exchanges, is that -- is that...?

SEBELIUS: They've completed an application.

DOYLE: Right. Which is different from enrollment.

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

DOYLE: So my question is, are you expecting -- I know you don't have exact numbers yet, but are you expecting a large number or a small month number of enrollments during the first month?

What is your thoughts on that?

SEBELIUS: Well, our projections prior to launch were always that there would be a very small number at the beginning. We watch the Massachusetts trend, which started slowly and built. I think there's no question that given our flawed launch of healthcare.gov, it will be a very small number.

DOYLE: Yes, I mean, in the Massachusetts plan, I think the first month it was 123 people signed up, less than 1 percent of the overall first-year enrollment in that first month. And we saw the same kind of numbers in Medicare Part D the first month of open enrollment back in 2006.

Madam Secretary, young Americans are the most likely age group to be uninsured, and a lot of us are concerned because of the problems that we've been having with the website, that a lot of these young folks may not come back on; you know, they have very short attention spans.

I've got four kids that all work on the Internet, and if they can't get something in five minutes, they are on to something else.

What do we do, and what plans are in place by your department to encourage young people to go back and revisit that site and to make sure that we're getting young people looking at that site and accessing it?

SEBELIUS: Well, step number one is fix the site, because we don't want people to be invited back and then have a bad experience a second time around. I think that's absolutely right. The site is particularly important to tech-savvy younger generation folks who we need to enroll.

I think that we have -- so fixing the site is step one.

And step number two is getting information to folks that the law even exists. A lot of young people haven't followed this dialogue for the last three and a half years.

(CROSSTALK) DOYLE: Yes, I think we need a real marketing campaign, and we really need to reach out to young people, especially at the end of November when you say this site is going to be working a lot better, to make sure they are checking that site out.

SEBELIUS: You bet.

DOYLE: One of my four kids is self-employed. He's 33 years old, paying about $140 a month for a Blue Cross plan. He's eligible for a subsidy. We browsed that site. He's gonna able to get coverage for about half of what he's paying right now, and that's good news for us, because I think my wife is paying his premium, so I think we're going to save the money.

But I think it's important we had to prod him to go on that site and enroll, and I think for a lot of young people, they are not going to do it unless it's easy, so it's important we get that fixed. Thank you.

SEBELIUS: I agree.

UPTON: Dr. Murphy, chairman of the oversight subcommittee.

MURPHY: Thank you, Madam Secretary, and welcome.

You had mentioned that the people who did the technology on the website made a number of mistakes, you mentioned Verizon. When we had them before our committee last week, they said it wasn't their fault they were told within HHS there was some problems there.

SEBELIUS: Sir, Verizon wasn't involved in the website (inaudible)...

(CROSSTALK)

MURPHY: Right, with the data, I understand, I'm sorry.

But they had a role, CGI had a role, other companies, et cetera. I'm just curious in this process, what decisions did you make that affected this for better or worse in terms of the data, the ease, or problems with the implement and being able to track how many people are actually enrolled?

SEBELIUS: My decisions (sic) specifically to design the website, I was not involved. I am prohibited to choose contractors. We go by the federal procurement, and I got regular reports on exactly what was done...

MURPHY: What about the part with regard to getting data in terms of how many people are even enrolled or trying to enroll, did you have any decisions in that process? SEBELIUS: The application process, at this point, does not work end to end very well.

MURPHY: Right, I understand it doesn't work, that's obvious.

SEBELIUS: We do not have reliable data about the end of...

MURPHY: I'm just trying to find out, if you had asked them, to say look, I'm in charge of this, I'm going to want a regular report, how many people have tried to enroll, how many people have enrolled, have you -- did you ask that question?

SEBELIUS: We have prioritized for our contractors that specific fix, and believe me, the insurance companies are eager for us to get reliable data to make sure their data matches ours, and that is not there yet.

MURPHY: I'm just trying to -- I appreciate that. I'm trying to find out if you told them that was part of the plan and what they're doing.

Let me -- real quick, I'm hearing -- we're hearing from thousands of people who have had their policies canceled. In fact, I heard from one insurer in Pittsburgh that just canceled 30,000 individual policies.

Now, they said they expect 50,000 to 30,000 to enroll in the exchange plans. Just so you know, to date, so far, the number of people who have signed up for their plan is 10, 10.

Now I'm concerned a lot of these individuals and families aren't going to be able to make it by January 1, so I'm wondering, do you know how many families will not have been able to keep their insurance by January 1, do you have any matrix (sic) to help you understand what that is going to be?

SEBELIUS: Sir, by law that has been in place at the state level, insurance companies must give their customers a 90-day notice about a policy change or a plan cancellation.

MURPHY: I'm just wondering if you have a mechanism whereby you will know if something built in this system...

SEBELIUS: Will I know if your constituents signed up for an individual plan, no.

MURPHY: People across America.

And do we know how many policies will be canceled? I mean, is it 1,000, 10,000, 1 million, 5 million, do we know?

SEBELIUS: We know that in the individual market, a number of the plans having sold are not grandfathered and are not currently meeting the law. Those notices have gone out. We know there are about 12 million people in the individual market. A number of them have grandfathered plans. A number of them have plans which meet the essential health benefits. So I can try to...

MURPHY: Let me put a face on that.

Person named Paul wrote to me, and says, "I'm supposedly one of the families this act is supposed to help, but it's, in fact, is hurting more, and would make it harder for my family to live. We'll have less money for food and other essential items. I have a wife and four children to take care of."

Another person wrote, "I received -- I had a 2013 plan which if you include the premiums, and out of pocket total liability was $5,300. For 2014, the same program liability is $9,000.

Single mom writes, "I want to convey, I'm one of the millions of people who's having their health insurance canceled, because it does not meet the standards of Obamacare. I liked my insurance. I especially liked the price. And now I'm being forced to sign up for something that will be way more expensive. As a single mom who is self employed, I'm worried about how I'm going to pay my bills."

I hope you have a mechanism to track who these people are. She's not eligible for other subsidies, but the costs are going to be driving her down.

SEBELIUS: Well sir, again, I would suggest there is no requirement that any of those consumers sign up for a plan suggested by their company at a higher price. They have now options...

MURPHY: But if a plan changes...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: (OFF-MIKE) health underwriting, without preexisting conditions, with some guarantees around...

MURPHY: She's searching around and she can't find a plan she could afford.

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: (OFF-MIKE) they never had before.

MURPHY: She can't find a plan she can afford.

UPTON: Gentleman's time expired.

Gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Butterfield.

BUTTERFIELD: Mr. Chairman, before my time begins, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

UPTON: Yes, go ahead.

BUTTERFIELD: Mr. Chairman, I'm always sensitive to committee decorum and I want to ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to display the Democratic Twitter handle. UPTON: Go ahead.

BUTTERFIELD: Hear no objection, thank you.

Secretary Sebelius, thank you so very much for coming today. I would like to ask you about the document that my Republican colleagues have just released.

This document is an authority to operate memorandum to operate the federally facilitated marketplace for six months and implement a security mitigation plan.

This document, as I understand it, describes security testing for healthcare.gov. It says that security testing of the marketplace was ongoing since its inception, and into September of this year. In fact, it says that, quote, "Throughout the three rounds of security control assessment testing, all of the security controls have been tested on different versions of the system." that's good news.

But the bad news is, that it goes on to say that, because of system readiness, a complete security assessment of all the security controls in one complete version of the system were not tested.

This document indicates that CMS postponed a final security assessment screening, but in its place, CMS did put in place a number of mitigation measures, and it concluded that these measures would mitigate any security risk.

Question, are you familiar with this document?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

BUTTERFIELD: Is it correct that this document recommends implementing a dedicated security team to monitor, track, and ensure the mitigation plan activities are completed?

SEBELIUS: Yes, it does.

BUTTERFIELD: Now is it correct that this document recommends monitoring and performing weekly testing on all berta (ph) devices, including Internet-facing web servers?

SEBELIUS: More than recommended, it's underway.

BUTTERFIELD: Is it correct this document recommends conducting daily and weekly scans?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

BUTTERFIELD: Does this document recommend conducting a full SEA test on the marketplace in a stable environment?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

BUTTERFIELD: Is it correct that this document recommends migrating the marketplace to CMS's virtual data center environment in the first quarter of next year?

SEBELIUS: Yes, it does.

BUTTERFIELD: My understanding is that an independent security expert, the MITRE Corporation, is performing security testing on the code that powers the website on an ongoing basis, is that correct?

SEBELIUS: That is correct, and MITRE did an assessment of the system, gave us a preliminary report, they are in the process of posting their final report. That did not raise flags about going ahead, and the mitigation strategy was put in place to make sure that we had a temporary authority to operate in place while the mitigation was going on, and then a permanent authority to operate will be signed.

BUTTERFIELD: Finally, do you have confidence in these and other measures you are taking to protect the security of Americans' personal information?

SEBELIUS: I do, sir.

BUTTERFIELD: Thank you.

This is the third time you've said it during the hearing, and we believe you. Thank you.

What you're telling us is that these remedial actions and the ongoing security testing from MITRE are protecting the security of the website. That's a message that it's important for the public to hear.

My Republican colleagues do not want this website to work.

I am convinced of that.

They want to block the ACA at all costs and even shut down the government to stop the law. For the last four years, they have taken every glitch, every simple glitch, and hiccup in the law and tried to exaggerate its significance, and that's happening today and it's so disappointing.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

UPTON: Dr. Burgess.

BURGESS: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I may make a unanimous consent request also?

UPTON: Yes, go ahead.

BURGESS: I would like to request unanimous consent my opening statement, which we were not allowed to be given could be made part of the record to this hearing.

UPTON: No -- no -- without objection.

BURGESS: And further, I do have a number of questions, many have come from constituents, I would also like to submit those as questions for the record...

UPTON: Without objection.

BURGESS: ... and ask the secretary for her attention to those so we can get answers, because they are, after all, important questions.

OK, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It just came to my attention that on CNN -- the -- CNN's website, that the site was hacked just last week, and I will be happy to make this available to you. I don't think...

SEBELIUS: The CNN website?

BURGESS: The -- CNN ran a story that the healthcare.gov website was hacked last week. And again, I will get this to you and would appreciate your response to that.

Mr. Terry had asked a question about -- he wanted to get the information about the number of people who'd signed up. You said you wouldn't provide that because it wasn't accurate.

Would you provide us with the number of people who have been able to enroll on the telephone? The president gave an 800-number during his speech. Could we get a number of people who've enrolled on the telephone?

SEBELIUS: No, sir, we do not have reliable enrollment data. We will have that to you by the middle of November as we committed to. We are collecting state data, we are collection telephone data, we are collecting paper data, we are collecting website data. We want it to be reliable and accountable and that's what you'll have to...

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: OK. Reclaiming my time. Telephone data doesn't seem like it would be that difficult to compile since the number is likely quite low.

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: The telephone goes through the system.

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: You have, or the president designated, I call him a glitch czar, Jeffrey Zients. Your familiar with his appointment to the -- to oversee...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: I asked him to serve in this capacity, yes.

BURGESS: OK. Many of us on the Subcommittee of Oversight and Investigations in Energy and Commerce were not as comforted as you by that selection because if you'll recall, Mr. Zients' history with this subcommittee is not great. He was involved with Solyndra, we asked him to come and talk to us about Solyndra in 2011. He refused, requiring a subpoena to be issued by this -- by this subcommittee. Will you commit to making Mr. Zients available to our subcommittee for our questions?

SEBELIUS: Congressman, you are welcome to ask Mr. Zients to come before the committee. He is volunteering his services to us for a period of time. He has been appointed by the President to start in January as the head of the National Economic Council. He was the Deputy Director at OMB for Management and Performance. I am thrilled that he is willing to take on this assignment and help us drive the management, but...

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: Again, his -- his appearance here will be important. Now a lot of people are asking if the president's words leading up to this law, if they matter, and the statement in the Washington Post today edited the President's statement, saying, "If you like your health care plan, you'll be able to keep your health care plan if we deem it adequate," but that seems like a more operational statement, and especially if you go back just a few years into the Federal Register, and I'm quoting here from the Federal Register from July 23rd of 2010, just a few months after the law was signed. The -- the rule, or the interim rule for dealing with the grandfathering written in the Federal Record, "because newly-purchased individual policies are not grandfathered, the department expects that a large population of individual policies will not be grandfathered, covering up to and perhaps exceeding 10 million people."

I hope the president was apprised of that before he made these statements, because clearly his statement wasn't operational.

SEBELIUS: Again, that's an insurance company choice, and that was a snapshot of what the market looks like.

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: Your...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: The President made it clear, and our policy was to put a grandfather clause in both employer-based coverage and in individual coverage.

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: Right, but in the Federal Register, those were the comments that were recorded. Now, I do have to...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: No, this isn't a government takeover of anything. These are private insurance plans making private decisions.

(CROSSTALK)

BURGESS: I do have to ask you this. I do have to ask you this. You serve at the pleasure of the President, we're all aware of that. But we have had many of your employees here in front of this committee, and you do have to ask yourself, are these being purposely misleading, or are they really not that smart? So I'm going to ask you this morning, for the sake of the future of health care in this country, will you please ask for the resignation of Gary Cohen, because he's repeatedly come to this committee and misled us.

SEBELIUS: I will not, sir.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

(UNKNOWN): Mr. Chairman, point of personal privilege. I just think the record ought to be clear about Jeffrey Zients. He was invited with less than a week's notice to come before this committee. He couldn't make it that day, he asked for some other day, he went to OMB and had nothing to do with the Solyndra contract, and he did come before us and talk about it, but his sole role was to represent OMB and I don't think he ought to have any -- there ought to be any disparagement of Jeffrey Zients. He's a very well-regarded public servant.

UPTON: The gentleman says the statement will stand. Ms. Matsui?

MATSUI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Madam Secretary. Now we all agree the website problems must be resolved. It's this country invented and developed the Internet and the concept of the websites, so there are high expectations. The fact that the hired private contractors could not build a ready website nearly three years is inexcusable, and after it's fixed, I hope the administration will hold those at fault accountable. But we can't lose sight of the big picture, that when this is all said and done, every American will have affordable quality health insurance and health care. This is the goal, I believe, of all Democrats and Republicans. The ACA's working in California, and it's working in my district in Sacramento, and I just want to tell you about a letter I got from a constituent. "Dear Congresswoman Matsui, as a self-employed contract employee, I've had individually-purchased health insurance for 11 years now. Insurance has gone up every year, sometimes more than once, insurance that wouldn't let me add my daughter when my ex- husband stopped his insurance policy that covered them both, insurance that I have underused for fear they would drop me, insurance that has just dropped me anyway because they decided they would no longer offer individual plans. This could have happened to me at any time. I'm so grateful that the Affordable Care Act provisions make it possible to get health insurance beginning in January for me and my daughter. As all this is happening, I have finished graduate school and started my own business. Slowly but surely things are happening and I expect to be hiring my first employees in the next six months. The provisions of the ACA are helping me in this too. I can clearly see what it will cost me to provide health benefits for my future employees, understand these costs, and build my business plan accordingly." And that is just one of the letters I have received.

Now, I've also heard from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle complain again and again about how health care reform is increasing health care costs. But the empirical evidence shows something quite different. The recent trends in Medicare spending growth are really quite remarkable. Medicare spending growth is at historically low levels, growing by less than one-half of 1 percent in fiscal year 2012, following slow growth in 2010 and 2011. The same is true on the private side of health care. Personal consumption expenditures on health care, everything from health insurance to drugs to hospital care, rose by just over 1 percent in the past year. This is the slowest increase in nearly 50 years.

Madam Secretary, what does this data tell us about what has happened to health care costs since the ACA became law?

SEBELIUS: Well Congresswoman, you're absolutely right. In the last three and a half years since the President signed the Affordable Care Act, we have seen a great slowdown in the extraordinary cost increases year in and year out for health care in the Medicare plan, in the Medicaid plan, in private insurance, and in underlying health care costs, which affect every American. Some of that has to do with some of the features that are currently in place around different care delivery and different payment systems that we are helping to drive, given the tools that we have with the Affordable Care Act, more quality outcomes, trying to prevent hospital readmissions, looking at hospital-acquired infections, medical homes that prevent people in the first place or help them stay healthy in their own homes and in their own places.

MATSUI: So it's true that the private insurance costs are growing at the slowest rate in decades also, is that true?

SEBELIUS: That is true.

MATSUI: So am I also correct that the ACA Act (sic) premiums are coming in even lower than projected by experts like the CBO?

SEBELIUS: Well, they're about, on an average, about 16 percent lower than was estimated, that those premiums would be, and that's the premium, not accounting for the number of uninsured or underinsured Americans who will then qualify for financial help. Since they don't have employer coverage, they get some help from the taxpayers paying for that coverage.

MATSUI: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

UPTON: Dr. Gingrey?

GINGREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Secretary, when you spoke at the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte last September, one of the first statements you made about the Affordable Care Act was, quote, "but for us Democrats, Obamacare is a badge of honor, because no matter who you are, what stage of life you're in, this law is a good thing. First, if you already have insurance you like, you can keep it," and I end the quote. I'd call this a red herring that misled voters, intentional or not. Now perhaps had you known that millions would lose their coverage, families would face financial disaster, as one constituent recently told me, or that the exchange rollout would be plagued by a multitude, multiple delays we've seen, you would not consider such a badge of honor.

GINGREY: The fact is, your words and those of the President as he campaigned last year, that "if you already have insurance you like, you can keep it," seemed to be directly refuted by the millions of cancellation notices already sent to Americans just in the past few weeks. Whether your statement was inaccurate, or as Mr. Hoyer said yesterday, "not precise enough," it does strike me that millions of individuals who, by listening to speeches like yours, voted, believing one thing, now find themselves without coverage and are now scrambling to find coverage in a marketplace that offers more expensive plans with fewer options.

In response to my constituents' calls for help, I created a portal on my website -- no patches or fixes needed -- that allows those who have experienced problems to reach out and tell me about their personal experiences.

In just the last few days, my office has received dozens of complaints regarding increases in their monthly premiums. I received one such notice from a mother in her early 50s who just received a notice that not only will her insurance premiums double, but she will also have to switch insurance -- insurers to keep her doctors due to the effect of the Affordable Care Act.

Can you imagine receiving notices like this? I can tell you that, just in my district, the 11th of Georgia, many more are experiencing this situation. Madam Secretary, this is akin to telling seniors that in a few weeks they're Medicare coverage will be dropped, or their premiums would double.

Now, I know that neither you nor the administration would ever advocate for such a policy. Yet, here you are subjecting those currently in the individual market to such government intervention. And I would hope that you would agree with me in recognizing that these increases are a heavy hardship on my constituents -- on all of our constituents, Republican or Democrat.

Now I'll get to my questions. You know the health care law included a hardship exemption from the individual mandate. Yet, the administration has failed to finalize the application form for the hardship exemption three and one-half years after we passed this law. As of today, can an individual apply for a hardship exemption from the individual mandate on healthcare.gov, yes or no?

SEBELIUS: I don't know.

GINGREY: I do: It's no. On October 15th, Politico reported that if the online system for getting into Obamacare coverage is rickety, the system for getting out of the mandate doesn't even exist yet. HHS says, it will take another month at least for the administration to finalize the forms for the hardship exemption from the individual mandate.

Why has it taken three and one-half years to finalize a simple application form for an exemption from the individual mandate?

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, as you know, the individual mandate is not in place until next year. We have made it very clear that if somebody is Medicaid eligible in a state that doesn't choose...

(CROSSTALK)

GINGREY: My last question and my last second.

An estimated 16 million people in the individual market have or will receive cancellation notices stating their health insurance coverage does not meet minimum coverage requirements of the Affordable Care Act.

The bill specifically grants you, Madam Secretary, the power to determine the criteria for a hardship exemption. Will you provide all of these individuals a hardship exemption since the Affordable Care Act is taking away their plan? Will do you that?

SEBELIUS: No, sir. And I think those numbers are far from accurate: 95 percent of Americans who have health insurance will be in a continuous plan -- Medicare, Medicaid, employer-based, V.A. -- 95 percent.

Five percent who are in the individual market, a portion of those 5 percent -- a portion of them, about 12 million people -- a fraction of those 12 million will have a plan that doesn't meet the criteria and has not been grandfathered in.

They are indeed receiving notices. Many of those individuals -- half of them -- will be eligible for financial help getting a new plan and they have many more choices in the marketplace. So we will not have a blanket exemption.

GINGREY: Sounds like a hardship to me, Madam Secretary.

UPTON: The gentleman's time expired.

Ms. Christensen.

CHRISTENSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you Madam Secretary for being here and thank you for all that you and your staff at HHS has done in implementing the Affordable Care Act to insure that it would provide the many benefits to children, to women, to Medicare beneficiaries and to ensure security to those who already have insurance as well as lower costs. Of course, the biggest complaint has been about the application and the enrollment website, but we have heard over and over from you that those are being addressed.

But you would recall and I know my colleagues would recall that Congressman Rush and I have always been concerned about those who do not have Internet access, those who are uncomfortable using the Internet and would not use it.

So I just wanted to just remind everyone that there are other avenues for enrolling either by telephone or by paper, either alone or with the help of a certified, you know, application assistant.

But my question goes to one of the rumors that has been circulating. There many rumors about how the Affordable Care Act has affected part-time workers. And some of my colleagues on the other side claim that the companies are moving workers to part-time jobs, because of the health care reform law and that low wage workers are being detrimentally affected.

And I understand why these claims are being made as just another part of the on going effort to undermine the law. Would you take a few minutes and just set the record straight on the part-time issue?

SEBELIUS: Certainly.

Ninety-five percent of businesses in this country are small businesses; under 50 full-time employees. And there is no responsibility that any of those employers have to provide health coverage for their employees.

On the other hand, there are now tax credits available for some of the smaller employers who want to offer coverage to actually come into the marketplace.

For the other businesses, the businesses hiring 50 or more, there is a standard that says an employee is considered full-time if he or she works 30 hours a week. And that really came from a market snapshot with help from the small business administration of where employee benefits were in the private market based on hours of work.

What was a part-time or a full-time employee?

What we know about the economic data is the high point of part- time workers was in 2008 and 2009 at the height of the last recession. It has been decreasing each and every year. There is no data to support the fact that there is an up tick based on the impending Affordable Care Act. I'm sure that there may be some individual employers making some business decisions about how many workers they want full-time and how many part-time. But I can tell you there is no economic data or employment data that supports the notion that this is an effect of the law.

CHRISTENSEN: True, and in fact, it's my understanding, that part-time workers are at the lowest percentage of workers in many, many years right now. SEBELIUS: Well, and for the first time, as you know Congresswoman, part-time workers will have options for affordable health care. They never had that before. They've never had options in the marketplace. They never had some health purchasing coverage for themselves and their families.

Their full-time colleagues have, but they have not. So they will have options.

CHRISTENSEN: And just to be clear, I had another really long question, but the last part of it -- it would be fair to say that the every point along the way you expected this website to work based on everything that you have been told by the contractors up until that point.

SEBELIUS: I expected it to work and I desperately want to get it working. I....

CHRISTENSEN: More than anyone else, I am sure.

SEBELIUS: ... can't tell you how frustrated I am, and we are committed to fixing it. The only thing that I think builds back the confidence of the public is fixing it.

CHRISTENSEN: Thank you.

UPTON: Gentlelady's time expired.

Mr. Scalise.

SCALISE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman for holding the hearing and thank you, , Secretary Sebelius, for being with us.

Last week when the contractors built the system were here, I asked them all under oath if they had actually delivered the system they were contracted to build. And all four of them answered yes. I want to ask you, did the contractors deliver the system that you contracted them to build?

SEBELIUS: I don't think I can accurately answer that question. What we know is we've a system that doesn't function properly...

SCALISE: We definitely know that.

SEBELIUS: As we fix things, we'll know more about what is broken along the way. And I'll be able to...

SCALISE: So would someone in your office know -- somebody in your office oversaw this implementation and received the product. And they either said, this is the product we contracted and paid hundreds of millions of dollars to build or it wasn't.

Does somebody have the ability to get that information?

SEBELIUS: Well, I think that we can say that products tested individually, verified individually.
SCALISE: But clearly was an integrated system.

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: (OFF-MIKE) don't work well together.

SCALISE: Well, but, you know, I used to write programs for a living. I developed software products for a living.

If you're developing an integrated system, it's irrelevant if one isolated component works by itself. But when you plug it in together it doesn't work, that's a system that doesn't work.

One of the question I had and others had, somebody in your agency made a decision weeks -- literally weeks before the deployment -- to change the system. Instead of going from a browser ability where somebody just like on Kayak or just like on Amazon.com could go shop for products, look at prices before they purchase, which is how consumers are used to doing this. Y'all made the decision to change it around and gather all their information first before you could let them see prices.

Was that you who made that decision?

SEBELIUS: No, sir.

SCALISE: Was that Ms. Tavenner?

SEBELIUS: It was Ms. Tavenner and a team who looked at not imposing additional...

SCALISE: Did that team make the decision because once they knew once people actually saw the prices, and we're getting reports from all of our constituents of dramatically higher prices than what they were expecting.

Did you make the decision because you knew that when they saw the prices they might not want to buy the product so you wanted to gather their information first?

SEBELIUS: Sir, first I did not make the decision. I was informed about the decision.

We didn't...

SCALISE: Do you agree with the decision?

SEBELIUS: ... rolling off a number of features. And clearly they can see the products. No, there is no requirement to buy anything.

SCALISE: Look, I spent two hours trying to get into the system. I never once got to a point where I could see a price. I did get kicked out many times and got some of those blank screens other people got.

I do want to share stories with you from some of my constituents because I -- we started a page on our -- on Facebook and on Twitter. We are collecting what's called Share with Scalise. People are sending us stories. And we're getting lots of stories from my constituents.

I want to read you a few of them.

Randall (ph) from Mandeville (ph) said "My health care premium went up 30 percent to over $350 a month increase."

We had Michelle (ph) from Slidell (ph), "Our insurance premiums are going up $400 a month and our deductible has increased." And then you have got Shawn (ph) from Covington (ph), who said, "My current plan through United Health Care is no longer being offered in 2014 due to Obamacare. In fact, I received a letter stating that the new health care law was indeed the reason for the removal of my current health care plan."

Madam Secretary, what you would tell Shawn (ph), who liked his plan and now has lost it? And he was promised by you and the president he'd be able to keep that plan.

What would you tell Shawn (ph) now that he has lost his plan?

SEBELIUS: I would tell Shawn (ph) to shop in the marketplace and out of the marketplace.

SCALISE: Do you really think that's acceptable answer to Shawn?

SEBELIUS: If Shawn (ph) -- again if United chose not to keep Shawn's (ph) plan in effect for Shawn (ph)...

SCALISE: Because of the law. This is the (inaudible).

SEBELIUS: Sir, the law said if you keep Shawn's (ph) plan in place, if he liked his plan, if you only...

SCALISE: But Shawn (ph) liked his plan...

SEBELIUS: ... to Shawn (ph), then the plan is still there.

SCALISE: You and I may disagree over who you work for. I work for Shawn (ph). You work for Shawn (ph), Madam Secretary. Shawn (ph) lost his plan that he liked. And there are thousands and millions of Shawns (ph) throughout this country that lost the plan they liked because some bureaucrat in Washington said we think your plan is not good enough even though you like it, even though you were promised can you keep it, you're now not able to keep that plan.

I think you deserve to give Shawn (ph) a better answer than you just have to go shop for something else even though you lost your plan.

UPTON: The gentleman's time -- the gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. McNerney?

MCNERNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Madam Secretary for coming today.

I'm going to follow up on Mr. Doyle's line of questioning. One concern I have with the fallout from the website is that many users who tried to sign up and were discouraged because of problems will now be too discouraged to come back once the site is fixed.

So what do you plan to do to get those folks to come back? SEBELIUS: Well, sir, we intend to invite them back formally by e-mail, by message. But we don't want to do that until we're confident that they will have a different experience.

So fixing the site is step one. And then inviting people back to the site to make it clear that when our timetable is fulfilled, they have four months to shop for affordable health coverage on a fully functioning site.

We know we're going to have to spend special time on young and healthy Americans who don't start out thinking they need insurance, aren't aware of the law, certainly don't want to use a failed or flawed site. So we're have to spend some particular attention on them.

MCNERNEY: Thank you.

Have the software specifications for the website and its related software elements, including the test specifications, has that changed since the initial rollout?

SEBELIUS: I know that there certainly are some changes because, since October 1st -- I'm sorry.

MCNERNEY: Yes, since the rollout, the specifications.

SEBELIUS: Well, we -- the specifications haven't changed. We are certainly fixing, as I say, speed and reliance is one of the issues we're taking a look at. That's the performance side.

But there also are some functionality sides that things do not work as they can, including the enrollment passed on to insurers. So we are fixing functionality. And I don't think that's a change in the specs. I think it is actually making the system work the way it should.

MCNERNEY: Well, are you -- or is the department doing a prioritization on the problems?

SEBELIUS: Yes.

MCNERNEY: Could you describe that a little bit?

SEBELIUS: Yes, as of last week when Jeff Zients joined us for this short-term project, we asked him to lead a sort of management team. We have pulled in all of our contractors as well as additional talent that they may have available.

We have talked to tech folks in and out of the private sector and insurance, some of their tech experts to get all eyes and ears, made a full assessment, developed a plan for fixes along the way, have a punch list for going after those fixes.

And we are doing a daily tech briefing and blog to tell people what we have found, what we have fixed, what's coming next, what the functionality is and we intend to do that until it's fully functional.
MCNERNEY: Well, thank you.

Madam Secretary, looking past the initial problems with the ACA rollout, do you think that the Affordable Care Act will be successful in bending the health care cost curve and reducing the fraction of our national economy that goes for health care?

SEBELIUS: Well, I think that we have already had some success. I think the goal is to continue to achieve that, a fully insured population arguably with preventative care, with an opportunity to see a primary care doctor and not go through the emergency room will in and of itself reduce costs.

Having people identified earlier who may have serious problems and managing those problems will reduce health costs. But I think the delivery system also needs some considerable help in paying for not a number of procedures, number of tests, number of prescriptions but paying for health outcomes.

MCNERNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Mr. Latta?

LATTA: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And Madam Secretary, thanks very much for being with us today. Appreciate your testimony so far today.

What I'd like to do is I'll get these to you because there are so many we've received. These are questions that we've received from our constituents back home, specifically about what's going on with the website and for them.

And so what I'll do, I'd like to get those to you. But there is a lot of questions here and a lot of thoughts gone into a lot of these questions.

But if I could start with last week's testimony when our -- four of the contractors were here. And in one of the questions that I had posed to Ms. Campbell from CGI, in her testimony she had stated that they delivered the medicare.gov and also the federalreporting.gov.

And I'd asked at that time, were these sites more or less complicated than the site that we were talking about here today?

And she said, of course, the site today was more complicated.

And in the questioning and from her testimony -- and we've been hearing about this end-to-end testing that wasn't happening, that we had individuals out there saying that about two weeks had been done, but I had asked her about was there sufficient enough time when they did medicare.gov?

And the response that she gave me back was on medicare.gov, which was a less complicated site -- and she stated that we had sufficient time to test the system before it went live. And I asked her in a follow-up then, what was that sufficient time?

And she said we had a number of months before the system went live at that time.

And then -- and I just want to make sure, because again, you know, sometimes things don't get reported accurately.

But in the "U.S. News and World Report" on October the 18th of this year -- and there is some questions going back and forth. And I just want to make sure that, you know, that you were quoted properly.

Said, "'After two weeks of review', the HHS secretary concluded, 'we didn't have enough testing specifically for high volumes for a very complicated project. The online insurance marketplace needed five years of construction and a year of testing,' she said. 'We had two years and almost no testing.'"

Is that correct?

SEBELIUS: I don't know the quote. I'd never suggested that we needed five years. I don't know where that is from.

(CROSSTALK)

LATTA: Well, that's one of the things we're going to check.

SEBELIUS: We clearly did not ever have five years. The law was signed in (inaudible) 2010.

LATTA: Well, let me -- and then last week you were -- when you were down in Texas you were being asked by a reporter about the system and the launch. And one of the parts of the question was that, at what point did you realize the system wasn't going to be working the way that you envisioned before the launch and why didn't we stop it before the launch?

LATTA: And, again, this is what was reported.

"We knew that if we had another six months we would probably test further. But I don't think anyone fully realized both the volume caused such problems but volumes also exposed some of the problems we had."

Now going back, though, to Ms. Campbell's statement that they tested more extensively on a system that was not as complicated, but HHS, CMS decided to go forward with only a very short period of testing. Do you think that was acceptable?

SEBELIUS: Well clearly looking back, it would have been ideal to do it differently. We had a product that frankly people have been waiting for decades to have access to affordable health care.

Medicare existed well before the website. Medicare is a program that started 50 year ago. The website was an additional feature for consumer ease and comfort. And so they were not launching Medicare. They were not delivering health benefits to seniors. They were putting together an additional way to enroll in Medicare.

I would suggest, sir, that we had deadlines in the law that people had benefits starting January 1. We wanted a extensive open enrollment period so that a lot of people who were not familiar with insurance, didn't know how to choose a doctor or choose a plan, had never been in this marketplace, or people who needed to understand fully what the law offered had ample time to do that.

So the date that I was, again, required to select for open enrollment, that's again part of the statute. How long would open enrollment be? We picked that data. All the contractors that began early in this process in the fall of 2010 when we issued -- I'm sorry, 2011 when we issued the initial contracts to CGI and QSSI knew the October 1 date. That was not changed. It wasn't added to.

As we got closer to the system, one of the reasons, again, that we pared down what needed to launch on October 1 was an attempt to minimize the risk to the system, to get people to their ability to see clearly what they were entitled to, what the plans were, and if those chose to, to enroll. Clearly the testing should have been longer, should have been more sufficient.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

LATTA: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. UPTON: Mr. Braley?

BRALEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Secretary people who are watching this hearing might be under the assumption that there's some kind of political debate going on over the Affordable Care Act, but I think people in Iowa don't care anything about who's winning the political debate. They want these problems fixed and they want them fixed now. And I think that's the responsibility of everyone in this room to make sure that that happens.

I tried to go into the marketplace on October 7 and I encountered problems immediately dealing with the security code questions which required you to select dates. One of them was type a significant date in your life. Today is my birthday, so I put that in. I tried three different ways of entering that date and got a message each time, important, this is not a valid answer. Same thing for the third date entry.

And a lot of times when you registering online for anything and you have to put a date in, there will be a little prop there that tells you what the format is you're required to enter. Do you know, have we solved this problem in the security code area?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir. One of the initial issues was just getting people into the site and the ID proofing, which is a two-step process. One is that you give some preliminary information and you set up a password.

But the second to ensure that your personal data can't be hacked, can't be interfered with is the second step where some personalized questions which only can be verified by you are indeed part of that. Again, that was a -- an initial hold up in the system. We focused a lot of attention on that in the first several days.

It was fixed, only to then discover that there were system problems throughout the application. And that piece has been fixed, but I would suggest it also was a function of trying to make sure we had the highest security standards, that we were not cavalier about someone's personal information being able to be addressed and attached. And it -- it was a functionality that didn't perform properly but does now.

BRALEY: One of the things that keeps coming up in this hearing because you are from Kansas is references to "The Wizard of Oz." And people went to see the wizard because of the wonderful things that he did.

The Affordable Care Act is doing a lot of great things in Iowa. The Des Moines Register wrote that Iowans buying health insurance on the government's new online marketplace will face some of the lowest premiums in the country. It's increasing competition in our state. Iowa consumers are able to choose from 40 health plans in the marketplace.

You've mentioned the growth of health care spending is at the slowest rate in 50 years. Fifty thousand Iowa seniors have received prescription drug rebates. Bans on preexisting conditions are allowing people to get coverage and switch carriers, and now insurance premium increases are subject to review and can be rejected by the -- the people reviewing those plans.

But all of these good things don't mean anything unless we solve these problems. And what I need to know is how confident are you that the problems will be fixed by December 1?

SEBELIUS: Well again, Congressman, I have committed to that date because that is the assessment of both inside and outside experts have analyzed. And I think they kicked all the tires and looked at all the systems. I know that there's no confidence in that date until we deliver on the date. I'm well aware of that, and that's on me.

BRALEY: Since Americans were supposed to have six months to sign up, would you support ensuring they still have six months by extending the open enrollment period for two more months?

SEBELIUS: At this point, Congressman, they will have fully four months of fully functional all ways to sign up. And again, there are ultimate ways and the website right now that people are getting through.

The open enrollment period is extraordinarily long. It's about six times as long as a typical generous open enrollment period. And it's important for the insurance partners to know who is in their pool so again they can stay in the market next year and know who they're insuring.

So we think that the timetable will allow people four months' time to fully use the website. They can use it right now. They can use the call center. They can go to navigators. They can enroll.

UPTON: Gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Harper?

HARPER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here today. I'm sure there are other things you'd rather be doing, but we welcome the opportunity to have this conversation.

I'm going to ask a clerk to bring you a document for you to look at so I can ask you a couple of questions. If you can go to page eight on that, I have highlighted an item there. But this is a copy of a CGI slideshow from October 11 discussing technical issues that must be addressed within the website.

And on page eight of what I've handed you, CGI recommended that CGI and CMS have a review board to agree on which issues can technically be solved and which should politically be solved. Was such a review board convened?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I cannot tell you. I've never seen this document and I'm not aware of this recommendation. HARPER: But CGI is responsible for the website, correct?

SEBELIUS: CGI is responsible for the application.

HARPER: For the application. Does it surprise you that in the slideshow that they gave October 11 they acknowledged political reasons for (inaudible)?

SEBELIUS: Sir, again, I've never seen this document. I have no idea what that means. Did you ask CGI when they came last week?

HARPER: Can you find out for us if such a review board was done and if any decisions were made on political reasons or any other reasons and find that out for us?

SEBELIUS: Sir, that question needs to go to CGI, but I can -- I can ask them to report to you.

HARPER: Well, if you would do that..

SEBELIUS: This is their document, if I understand it. This is not our document.

HARPER: Yes. Would you turn to page nine of that document please? And it states challenges on page nine in this presentation by CGI. And it says under challenges, unable to determine at this time whether low enrollment counts are attributable to system issues or due to users choosing not to select or enroll in a plan.

So those are two completely different issues obviously. If it is a system issue, that's something you have confidence at some point will be resolved. Correct?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

HARPER: And if it's a user selection issue, that's an entirely different story, is it not?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

HARPER: OK. Now when you used the phrase earlier about a punch list, that's -- that's like having somebody move into a house. Someone's buying a new house and they go through and they've been told this house is going to be ready for you to move in on October 1. They load up the van, they come in, and they get in and it's not finished. Part of the plumbing's not right. The wiring's wrong and -- and they go in.

This creates the situation where, you know, we -- health care shouldn't be a zero-sum game. I mean, we want to be fair to everyone. We want to -- we want to help people who are vulnerable. But at the same time, we shouldn't have to hurt folks.

HARPER: We've got people in my district, in my state who are getting notices of cancellation. They're being told of higher premiums that they're having. And these are great concerns that we have. And how do we work through that?

And I want to say I appreciate you accepting responsibility for these initial rollout failures that we've had. But who is ultimately responsible? It is the president, correct?

SEBELIUS: For the website?

HARPER: The president is ultimately responsible for the rollout, ultimately.

SEBELIUS: No, sir. We are responsible for the rollout.

HARPER: But who do you answer to?

SEBELIUS: I answer to the president.

HARPER: All right. So is the president not ultimately responsible like a company CEO would be?

SEBELIUS: Sir, he's the president of the United States. I have given him regular reports and those -- I am responsible for the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. That's what he asked me to do. That's what I'll continue to do.

HARPER: So you're saying the president is not responsible for HHS?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I didn't say that.

HARPER: OK, so the president ultimately is responsible. While I think it's great that you're a team player and taking responsibility, it is the president's ultimate responsibility, correct?

SEBELIUS: You clearly -- whatever. Yes, he is the president. He is responsible for government programs.

HARPER: My time expired.

UPTON: The gentleman's time expired.

Mr. **Lujan. LUJAN:** Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. Before I begin, I'd like to ask unanimous consent to submit into the record some articles from New Mexico publications, first entitled "Small Business: Owner Health Exchange Will Save Me $1,000 A Month."

UPTON: Without objection.

LUJAN: I see my time did begin there. So I'll try to get through this, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, I was intrigued by a line of questioning by Congressman Green asking about the individual marketplace. How volatile was the individual marketplace before the Affordable Care Act became law?

SEBELIUS: I would say it wasn't a mark marketplace at all. It was unprotected, unregulated, and people were really on their own.

LUJAN: Madam Secretary, the Kaiser Family Foundation reports have over 50 percent churn out of individuals that have coverage and individual market churn out of coverage every year. They either lose coverage, they're priced out or drop it.

Is that consistent with what you're aware of?

SEBELIUS: That's an accurate snapshot. About a third of the people are in for about six months. And over half are in for a year or less.

LUJAN: So individuals that were in the individual marketplace before the passage of the Affordable Care Act did not have the same protections as those in group coverage?

SEBELIUS: That's true.

LUJAN: And would those individuals in the individual marketplace sometimes have higher co-pays?

SEBELIUS: Higher co-pays, unlimited out of pocket costs for often coverage that was medically underwritten or excluded whatever medical condition they had in the first place.

LUJAN: So these were typically one-year contracts. If they used the plan because they got sick nor a car descent or a victim of domestic violence, sometimes they would be thrown off the plans or their rates would go up?

SEBELIUS: Yes.

LUJAN: I think that's important to note, Madam Secretary. And I'm intrigued as well that my understanding is that last month HHS conducted an analysis that found that nearly six out of uninsured Americans getting coverage through the marketplace will pay $100 a month. Is that correct?

SEBELIUS: They'll have a plan available for less than $100 if that is their choice. Yes.

LUJAN: And that number would be even higher -- would be better if more states chose the option of using federal funds to expand Medicaid to cover the low income population?

SEBELIUS: Definitely. That's just a marketplace snapshot. Those are people that will be in the marketplace.

LUJAN: Madam Secretary, I don't think I heard anyone from the other side of the aisle today -- my Republican colleagues, ask you how can Congress work with you and support you in fixing this website and fixing this problem?

I hope that we all agree we want this website fixed.

I would yield to anyone that would disagree.

Seeing no one accepting that. I'm glad to hear that we agree with this.

Now Madam Secretary, what can Congress do to work with you to fix this website?

SEBELIUS: Well, I'm not sure that there is hands on work that you can do. Maybe we have some technical expertise, but I would say getting accurate information to constituents is helpful.

Letting people know that they can check out the facts in the law. That they may be entitled to some financial support.

That cancellation of policies means that the policy that they had may not exist, but they have a lot of choices of new policies and a law that now says they must be insured in a new policy.

That they don't have to be insured by their company at a higher price.

LUJAN: I appreciate that, Madam Secretary.

Going back to the individual marketplace, Madam Secretary, did this Congress in previous years before the Affordable Care Act make it illegal for health insurance companies to raise rates on someone after they submitted a claim for going to the hospital or becoming sick or getting rid of preexisting conditions?

SEBELIUS: No, sir.

LUJAN: Madam secretary, one last note here.

It seems that we've received some horrible news that there are bad actors already taking place of fraudulent web sites that imitate the health care exchange or misleading seniors into disclosing their personal information.

I've signed on to a letter to you led by my colleague Representative Raul Ruiz out of California to request that you prioritize fraud prevention efforts.

What has the administration done to prevent the fraudulent acts and protect personal information?

SEBELIUS: I can tell you, Congressman, the president felt very strongly that, that need to be part of our outreach effort, which is it why the attorney general and I convened representatives of state attorneys general, insurance commissioners, the U.S. attorneys and the Justice Department and the Federal Trade Commission -- which has jurisdiction -- to make sure that we first got out ahead of some of this developing consumer outreach.

No one should ever give personal health information, because personal health information is not needed for the policies any longer. That's a red flag. We want to make sure that people turn over potential fraudulent acts. We have put training in place for navigators. We have our law enforcement...

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

I would just note that we -- with the indulgence of the secretary, we're hoping that we can have all members ask some questions, but we also know that with four minutes we're going to have a little trouble.

So I'm going to ask unanimous consent that we try to limit our questions and answers to no more than two minutes.

And I talked to Mr. Waxman.

Is that okay?

Because otherwise we will -- there will be a lot of folks who will not be able to ask a question at all.

(UNKNOWN): Three of us.

SEBELIUS: And Mr. Chairman, I would submit that if the questions get submitted we would be happy to provide timely answers also.

UPTON: OK, so can I do that?

So with that we'll try two minutes.

Mr. Lance?

LANCE: I guess I won the Lottery on the two minutes, Madam Secretary.

(LAUGHTER)

UPTON: Time has expired. OK.

(LAUGHTER)

LANCE: 20 seconds, Mr. Chairman. On the website, Madam Secretary, the contractors testified last week that they needed more than two weeks for end to end testing. Why in your opinion was there not more than two weeks?

SEBELIUS: Again, we have the products, the insurance policies themselves by companies were loaded into the system. So we could test up until then but it wasn't until September -- mid-September that that was done. Again, the contractors said we would have loved more testing time, but we think we're ready to go ahead.

LANCE: I believe that will ultimately be a dispute between CMS and HHS and the contractors and if there is anything question do regarding that because, obviously that, didn't work. And I had thought given this as the signature issue with the president that the website would be ready.

Number two, in my judgment the president's statements were overstatement overstatements. The four Pinnochios is an indication of that. There's a report in the New Jersey newspaper this is morning that 800,000 people in New Jersey who purchased their policies in individual or small employer markets will be affected by this.

Mr. Walden, in a previous question, mentioned the fact that in an individual market you would be able to keep your policy grandfathered. Yet regulations issued by HHS say that grandfathered status would not be a continued for so much as a $5 change in a co-pay.

Is that accurate?

Do you believe that that is a significant change?

SEBELIUS: Sir, we gave, I think in, the grandfather regulations a guide for how pricing could change, medical inflation and I think it was in most cases plus 15 percent.

There were some individual consumer outfacing issues that were more rigid than that, but I would say that in terms of having companies being able to collect a profit margin, that was certainly built into the grandfather status.

LANCE: I think that's too little a change, respectfully.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Tonko?

TONKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

TONKO: And welcome, Honorable Secretary. Thank you for fielding our questions and for responding when you were extended the courtesy to offer a response.

As a strong supporter of the Affordable Care Act, I'm frustrated and I think it's fair to say the American people are frustrated as well. And I heard you here many times this morning say you're frustrated.

I think, by and large, people want this law to work. When I talk to folks back home in the capital region of New York that I represent, even people who opposed the law initially aren't rooting for the failure of the Affordable Care Act. Instead, they want Congress to come together to fix these problems so that we can move on to real issues that matter like creating jobs and growing the economy.

My home state of New York, which also experienced Web site problems at the outset, has now completed enrollment determinations on over 150,000 New Yorkers, with more than 31,000 having already signed up for quality low-cost health insurance.

Given that many states have had success in overcoming these initial Web site issues, has HHS looked at what these state Web sites are doing as it searches for solutions to fix Healthcare.gov?

SEBELIUS: Absolutely. And we shared a lot of the information going in. I think that the hub feature that we have in our Web site that all states are using, including the state of New York, is fully functional. And that's good news for New York and California and others who are running their own state Web sites.

But we are learning from them. We've shared information with them. And we are eager for all the help and assistance moving forward.

TONKO: Thank you. Similarly, many states made the illogical choice of rejecting Medicaid expansion contained in the ACA that would help some of their poorest citizens get access to the health care situation.

This is despite the fact that Medicaid expansion is almost entirely financed by federal dollars. Can you comment broadly on HHS's plan in the future to encourage more states to run their own marketplaces and expand Medicaid so that the law can function as designed? SEBELIUS: Well, absolutely. Most recently last week the state of Ohio did move into the Medicaid market. And we now have 30 governors, I think 27 states have fully completed the process, another three are in the process.

Republicans and Democrats, who -- some of whom sued us about the constitutionality of the act who are now deciding that for the citizens of their state they want to be part of the expanded Medicaid.

And we will continue to have those conversations. It's not just about the marketplace. It's also about Medicaid.

TONKO: Thank you very much.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

Dr. Cassidy?

CASSIDY: You said that only if -- an individual policy is only canceled if it changes significantly. But to be clear, after May 2010 if co-insurance went up by any amount, even by a dollar, according to your regulations, that would not qualify as a grandfathered clause. Just to add that out there for the record. I gather even by a dollar.

That said, I get a letter from someone in my district, Adrienne (ph). She says that -- oh, she lost her coverage. She lost her coverage because spousal coverage is gone. She has gone on the exchange. She doesn't qualify for a subsidy, but that her premium and out-of-pocket costs under any plan is $10,000 a year.

She feels -- she writes this. She feels betrayed by her government. Now she has to sit there asking herself, is this fair? If you were she, do you think that this would be fair?

SEBELIUS: Dr. Cassidy, I want to start by the amount that you gave is not accurate. I was told $5, not $1.

CASSIDY: Yes, that's for the co-pay, not for the co-insurance. For the co-insurance, it's any amount. But I have limited time. Do you think that it's fair -- if you were she, if you were Adrienne, do you think is fair? Loses her spousal coverage, now it's 10k, no subsidies?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I don't have any idea what she's looking at. I can tell you that, again, based on what we've seen in the market and what we've seen in the plans, people will be getting full insurance for the first time at...

(CROSSTALK)

CASSIDY: Well, again, this is what she reports. Do you think it's fair -- if what she reports is true, do you think it's fair?

SEBELIUS: I can't answer fair or not fair. I don't know what she was paying or what she was paying for.

CASSIDY: That's OK. Let's move on.

SEBELIUS: Did she have full insurance?

CASSIDY: Richard writes that his daughter received a note that his premium is going up because she's being lumped with older, costlier patients. Now it's possible that the only people that sign up will be those who are more costly. Does HHS have plans on what to do if only those who are more costly sign up and premiums rise for everybody?

SEBELIUS: I think, sir, that's what we're trying to do to make sure that...

(CROSSTALK)

CASSIDY: But if only the costly sign up, do you have plans? If you accept that...

SEBELIUS: That's the importance of the individual mandate that you've just outlined. Getting rid of pre-existing conditions, making sure that people can come in...

CASSIDY: But if only the most costly sign up, do you have backup plans?

SEBELIUS: We will encourage others to sign up. It's why there is a penalty in place and why...

CASSIDY: Is this to assume that there are no backup plans? I don't mean to be rude, but...

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Yarmuth.

YARMUTH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, nice to see you. I come to this hearing with a little bit different perspective. Kentucky is doing a great job with our exchange. As of this morning we had 350,000 people who have explored the Web site, 59,000 have started applications, 31,000 are now fully enrolled in new coverage, and 5,000 just in the last week.

And I think very importantly, more than 400 businesses have begun applying for their employees as well. So, yes, the idea that somehow this is going to be bad for businesses is not borne out in Kentucky.

Would it be safe to say that if 36 states had done what Kentucky and New York and California have done instead of 14 that the rollout would have been much smoother and the Web site would have been much easier to construct?

SEBELIUS: Well, I don't think there's any question that the -- you know, in January of 2013 we knew how many states were not running their own Web site, in I think mid-February we learned about

partnerships. So it was not until that point that we learned that 36 states would actually be coming through the Web site.

Having said that, we should have anticipated, we should have planned better. We should have tested better. I don't think that's any excuse, but we clearly are running a very different vehicle for enrollment than we thought we were going to run in March of 2010.

YARMUTH: Right. On the subject of cancellation of policies, isn't it true that, first of all, the federal government can't require insurance companies to sell insurance?

SEBELIUS: That they can't...

YARMUTH: The federal government can't require insurance companies to sell insurance?

SEBELIUS: Yes, that's true.

YARMUTH: And in fact, insurance companies all over the country are making very difficult decisions now about where they want to participate and where they don't. And in some markets they're actually trying to get out of the market, canceling people because they want to play in other markets and so forth.

They're all making the decisions now...

SEBELIUS: Well, and we know we have more insurers, 25 percent more insurers in the individual market than we did prior to the law being passed.

YARMUTH: Right. So there a lot of dynamics going on here that are not necessarily an indication that the president misled anybody. They're business decisions being made all over now.

SEBELIUS: Well, in cancellation of policies, again, that one- year contract notice is a routine in the individual market. It has been in place for years. And for a lot of people, their policies now -- they are being canceled because they're being notified you can no longer be medically underwritten.

We can't charge you more because you're a woman. We won't ever have the kind of limitation on what your policy can pay out or charge you exorbitant out of pocket rates. Those policies will cease to be offered in the marketplace.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Guthrie?

GUTHRIE: Thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here. And last week Mr. Lau from Serco was here. I know the president has talked about the alternatives to the Web site as phone-calling or using a paper application.

And what he said, and I think you've said it with the phone, they take the paper applications but they enter them into the same Web portal. So I know you get around the issue of getting on and getting logged off.

But also -- but there's still issues with data within the Web portal. As you said, you can't even get reliable data who is even signed up.

So he also said because of the surge in paper applications, it's like six to eight weeks to process. So if November 30th is when this will be ready, that they can use, and even if you do it now, eight weeks you're getting close to January 1st, and somebody does lose their insurance so they're signing up for this, and they get to January 1st, even though you have a March 31st open enrollment, what happens to these? Is there a contingency plan for these people to continue their insurance?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I think that we have improvements every day on the speed of the site. Serco was giving you early snapshots of difficulty of accessing the site. I think that's greatly improved.

GUTHRIE: Well, they said just processing the paper, actually.

SEBELIUS: Well, I understand. But it is the site for -- they put the application into the site and get a determination. That's part of what the process is. So the site is part of the portal all the way through. This is an integrated insurance vehicle. And so that will improve.

And we -- again, with four months of continuous service, which is far longer than most people had, some of these cancellation numbers, Mr. Garrity (ph), again, pointed this out from Florida Blue Cross, but it's true of everyone else, these are not January 1st numbers. They are year-long numbers.

So over the course of 2014 when an individual's policy is due to expire, that individual...

(CROSSTALK)

GUTHRIE: ... but somebody could expire January 1st and not be able to get coverage if the Web site -- and the vendor said they needed months to test. They would have liked to have months and months to test. That's what they said.

So if we're going to get to November -- even if it works November 30th...

SEBELIUS: Well, I would say we're testing as we go. There is beta testing going on right now. That's why we are fixing and how we can identify things. People are getting through every day and we now know a lot more than we...

(CROSSTALK)

GUTHRIE: ... but the paper process, if it does take even four weeks, then it's November 30th and people's cancel on January 1st, there needs to be a contingency for that person.

SEBELIUS: Well, again, typical insurance is two to four weeks of signup. They will have two full months of signup.

UPTON: Gentleman's time has expired.

Ms. Schakowsky?

SCHAKOWSKY: Thank you, Madam Secretary, for bringing to millions of Americans access to affordable, comprehensive health care coverage that's going to be there when they need it.

I want to thank you especially as a woman. Women can no longer -- being a woman can no longer be considered being a preexisting condition. Women can no longer be charged more than a man for the same coverage. Women have access to comprehensive benefits like prescription drugs and free preventive screenings and free contraceptive coverage and maternity care, which is often left out of coverage. And the days of complicated pregnancy or diabetes or domestic violence being a preexisting condition, those days are over.

You know, I want to say to my colleagues after a three-and-a-half year campaign to repeal, to discredit, to even shut down the government over Obamacare, I want to say, get over it.

We all agree that there are problems but these are problems that I see being fixed. And so I want to ask one -- oh, and I want to say that what we did under Medicare Part D can be an example of how we can work together.

And in fact, Chairman Upton and I both sent a letter asking for more money for community based groups to help implement the program and make it work. We can work together.

So if you could just briefly say how are the navigators -- how important are they in making this system work for the American people? SEBELIUS: Well, what we know, Congresswoman, is that a lot of people are not web savvy and are not frustrated by the website because they don't have a computer. They don't want to use a computer, they don't trust a computer. They need a live human being to ask questions, get questions answered, talk about the plan, talk about insurance.

So the navigators play a hugely important role. We have about 2,500 trained navigators on the ground right now. We have thousands more community assisters who are trained and ready to go, about 45,000 agents and brokers have gone through specific Affordable Care Act training.

But those individuals, working with their clients, customers and in the case of navigators and community assisters, just the public at large, they are not paid by a company. They are not collecting a fee. They just want to help people get coverage; they are hugely important.

UPTON: Gentlelady's time -- Mr. Olson.

OLSON: I thank the chair.

And welcome, Madam Secretary.

(UNKNOWN): Thank you.

OLSON: I would like to open with a quote from an American icon -- I'll hold up a poster. It says, "If the user is having a problem, it's our problem."

I'm glad to hear you raised this philosophy during your testimony today, ma'am.

Obamacare was signed into law 1,256 days ago. And since then, there's been user problem after user problem after user problem.

Regarding healthcare.gov, your deputy administrator for consumer information, Gary Cohen, testified one month ago, where we are sitting, that -- and this I quote, "CMS has worked hard to test the infrastructure that will allow Americans to enroll in coverage confidently and simply and securely," end quote.

Yet according to "Forbes" and "The Wall Street Journal," you told them that you needed five years of construction and one year of testing. The program has crashed and burned at least three times and the user is still having problems.

(Inaudible) up here, ma'am?

It's been down the whole time you've been testifying. The system is down at this moment. My question, ma'am, is very simple.

When did you know these changes were going down? A month, a day, a quarter?

And did you tell the president what you knew? SEBELIUS: Sir, I was informed that we were ready to launch on October 1st. The contractors, who we had as our private partners told us and told this committee that they had never suggested the delay, and that is accurate. Our CMS team felt we were ready to go.

I told the president that we were ready to go.

Clearly I was wrong. We were wrong. I -- we knew that in any big, new, complicated system, there would be problems; no one ever imagined the volume of issues and problems that we've had. And we must fix it.

OLSON: Yes, ma'am. But credible journalists said you knew you needed six years to get this program...

SEBELIUS: Sir, I -- that quote has been repeated. I can guarantee you I would have never stated that because the law was passed in March of 2010. I chose the open enrollment date. I don't know where that quote comes from, but that is not from me.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

Mr. Barrow?

BARROW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thanks for attending today, Madam Secretary. I suspect that deep down most people on this committee support the concept of reforming insurance market so that more people have access to better insurance coverage. We have disagreements about the means used to get to those ends which is ultimately why I voted against the Affordable Care Act.

It seems that every day we're hearing of something new going wrong. I'm concerned that these short-term enrollment problems could become long-term insurance market problems. My constituents already losing confidence the federal government's ability to pull this thing off and I think the only way to begin to restore their trust is to delay the individual mandate penalties until we're sure the system is going to work. It's not fair to penalize consumers when their non-compliance is not their fault. We also need to take the time to make sure additional fits and starts won't cause larger problems. Right now I'm less concerned about who's to blame and more concerned about what went wrong and how to fix it and how we're going to ensure it doesn't happen again.

Nearly all of our constituents want and need health insurance. It would be a huge mistake if we're so blinded by our love or our hatred for Obamacare that we miss the opportunities to address its flaws.

Now to the subject of technical problems becoming market problems, can problems of folks getting into the system snowball into risk pool problems where those who choose not to enroll can actually affect the costs of those who do choose to enroll? SEBELIUS: Certainly a risk pool needs a balanced market. So you need people who are older and sicker to be balanced with people who are younger and healthier, that's how a pool works.

BARROW: At what point are we going to see a problem having the risk pool if the tech problems cause -- affect the folks who are entering?

What are we going to look for? What are we going to use to decide something needs to be done?

SEBELIUS: Well, again, sir, we will be monitoring during the six months of open enrollment as will our insurance partners who is coming into the pool; that's why we want to give this committee and others reliable, informed data about not only who it is but what the demographics are and where they live. That's part of our...

BARROW: If things aren't better by the end of this next month, at what point are we going to start thinking about further delays in posing penalties?

SEBELIUS: Well, again, I think that having a defined open enrollment period is one of the ways that you then make an assessment if you have a pool that works or not. You cannot have an unlimited open enrollment period with any insurance company because that really doesn't work.

BARROW: Thank you.

UPTON: Mr. McKinley.

MCKINLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Last week -- last week the CGI representative at Campbell said that she had met her contract obligations and met specifications and she said the only problem she had was with pace. But the pace wasn't part of the specification.

Do you -- and we asked her, what you were -- you would testify to, did -- she said you would testify that she did complete her contract in accordance with the specifications.

Would you?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I don't think until the product is working the way it's designed to work that anybody has finished their job. And that's really my interest.

MCKINLEY: I'm so sorry, with time, you know, they've shortened our time with it.

So, if she hasn't met -- she hasn't met their specifications but yet we're still using her, so is the American taxpayer still paying the money to fix the problems that she didn't do -- her company didn't do in the first...

SEBELIUS: None of our contractors have been paid the amount...

MCKINLEY: Will she be paid for this work into the future as we go to correct this problem?

SEBELIUS: We will make that determination as the work goes forward. I would tell you sir that as we learn what needs to be fixed, how long it takes, we'll know more about...

(CROSSTALK)

MCKINLEY: I'm very sorry about the timeframe, but cut it down.

Who owns the software now, that now that we've -- this has been developed with taxpayer money to develop the software to do this...

SEBELIUS: It is owned by the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services.

MCKINLEY: So it's all owned by us? OK.

Will they be able to use it by a license with -- for other clients?

SEBELIUS: Not to my knowledge. I think it is...

MCKINLEY: Maybe (inaudible)...

SEBELIUS: ... specifically designed for the marketplace with these products in mind.

MCKINLEY: Then last questions are trying to...

SEBELIUS: And the clients are the American public.

MCKINLEY: ... that under IV and V, and she testified that she thought that was something we should have done. Under HHS, you recommend or the HHS recommends that for software development, that they should have an independent verification and validation program.

But it wasn't used in this case.

Can you share with us in the time that's gone why we didn't use IV and V on something as crucial...

SEBELIUS: Again, I don't think that's accurate, sir. At every point along the way there is independent testing.

MCKINLEY: Independent?

SEBELIUS: Yes and outside...

MCKINLEY: You recommended verification and validation not someone within your staff?

SEBELIUS: Pardon me? There is a level of company self-attested testing. There is a level of CMS testing and then there is an independent test on each piece of the contracting.

(CROSSTALK)

MCKINLEY: (OFF-MIKE) acknowledged that it wasn't done independently, and that's what the...

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Gentleman's time...

MCKINLEY: It needs to be done independently, people who do not have...

UPTON: ... has expired.

SEBELIUS: No, it -- I'll get you the information, but there are three levels of testing, one of them is independent for every piece of this contracting, yes.

UPTON: Ms. Castor.

CASTOR: Good morning.

When open enrollment began a few weeks ago the people back home in Florida who are helping neighbors sort through the new options for coverage, the navigators, were taken aback by how grateful people are to have new pathway to the doctor's office and the care they need.

Affordable options.

The -- they are no longer being discriminated against because they had cancer, and diabetes or asthma. They are very grateful. They said -- they said to me directly, it's like they found water in the desert.

Right now they are surprisingly -- they said it's taking time, because people want to sort through all of these options before they finally sign up at the end of the 26-week enrollment period. So we must fix the marketplace. We must to meet their expectations and we have high expectations for you and the administration.

But I think it's important to point out the Affordable Care Act is more than just a website. It -- despite all the obstruction by Republicans in my home state of Florida, nationally, the -- even going so far as to shut down the government, millions of Americans are already benefiting and there are benefits that are not tied to healthcare.gov.

Some Madam Secretary, let's clarify what's working despite healthcare.gov.

Is it correct to say many of the improvements that the ACA makes to employer coverage and Medicare were the vast majority of Americans receive their coverage are not dependent on healthcare.gov.

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

CASTOR: And -- so the delays and problems with healthcare.gov do not affect the millions of individuals thanks to the ACA who no longer have to worry about lifetime monetary caps on their coverage that previously sent them to bankruptcy?

SEBELIUS: That's absolutely true. And I think the quote that the president was quoted recently saying, "If you have health care, you can -- you don't have to sign up for the new marketplace," was referring to the large portion -- the 95 percent of insured Americans who plans are solid and stay in place and move forward.

CASTOR: And I understand the frustration with the website. What I don't know why people are not similarly outraged by the lack of Medicaid coverage in many of our states.

Do you find that hypocritical?

(LAUGHTER)

SEBELIUS: Well, I think it's very troubling that millions of low income working Americans will still have no affordable option if states don't take advantage of the expansion program leaving states bearing the cost of uncompensated care, families bearing the cost of parents who can't take care of their kids, workers not able to go to work and people still accessing care through emergency room doors, the most expensive, least effective kind of care they could get.

UPTON: Gentlelady's time has expired.

Mr. Gardner?

GARDNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, , Secretary Sebelius, for being here. Here's my letter. This is the letter my family got canceling our insurance. We chose to have our own private policy back in Colorado so we could be in the same boat as everyone of my constituents. And yet my insurance policy has been canceled. The White House website says if you like your health plan you have, you can keep it.

Did I hear it wrong?

SEBELIUS: Again, sir, I don't know how long you've had your policy...

GARDNER: Why aren't you losing your insurance?

SEBELIUS: Pardon me?

GARDNER: Why aren't you losing your health insurance?

SEBELIUS: Because I'm part of the federal employees...

GARDNER: Why aren't you in the exchange? You're in charge of this law, correct, why aren't you in the exchange?

SEBELIUS: Because I'm part of the federal employee health benefit plan.

GARDNER: Why aren't you in the -- why won't you go into the exchange? You're a part of this law. You're literally in charge of this law. Should you be any different than all of the other Americans out there losing their health insurance?

SEBELIUS: I'm part of the 95 percent with affordable available health care coverage.

GARDNER: You're part of a plan that most Americans aren't (sic) available to them. Why will you not agree...

SEBELIUS: I'm not eligible for the exchange, because I have coverage in...

GARDNER: You can decide to drop your coverage of your employer. You have the choice to decide not to choose...

SEBELIUS: That the not true, sir.

GARDNER: I chose not to go...

SEBELIUS: Members of Congress are now part of the exchange thanks to an amendment that was added by Congress, but I'm not eligible.

GARDNER: Madam Secretary, with all due respect...

SEBELIUS: If I have affordable coverage in my workplace, I'm not eligible to go into the marketplace, that's part of the law.

GARDNER: Madam Secretary, I would encourage you to be just like the American people and enter the exchange and agree to find a way...

(APPLAUSE)

SEBELIUS: It's illegal.

GARDNER: .. and I would like to show you an advertisement that's going on in Colorado right now.

This is an advertisement that a board member of the Colorado exchange has put forward, do you agree with this kind of advertising for Obamacare?

SEBELIUS: I can't see it. And again...

GARDNER: It's a college student doing a keg stand.

SEBELIUS: If the Colorado exchange did that...

GARDNER: Do you approve of this kind of advertising?

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: ... they are a state based marketplace.

GARDNER: Do you approve of this kind of advertising?

SEBELIUS: I don't see it. I don't know what it is, and I did not approve it. This is a state based marketplace...

GARDNER: That's a pretty big font. That's a pretty big picture of a keg and you can't see it?

SEBELIUS: Do I approve of it? I've...

GARDNER: You have the ability to opt out, by the way, as a federal employee. You could take the insurance. So I just...

SEBELIUS: If I have available employer based coverage...

GARDNER: I would also like to submit a waiver for my district from Obamacare and hope you consider waiving Obamacare for the Fourth Congressional District.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

(UNKNOWN): Does your policy cover -- never mind.

(LAUGHTER)

UPTON: Mr. Matheson?

MATHESON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, Madam Secretary, thanks for your time.

I just want to ask on the issue of the fixes to healthcare.gov, we've had a lot of conversation about that today and we've talked about confidence levels for being ready by a certain time. But, I think one question that a lot of us have is, can you define what the magnitude of the problem is? Is there a scale or metric by which we can understand how bad this is today, and how we're going to get to where we go to have it fixed?

SEBELIUS: Well, again, sir, I've been informed that the problems are in -- the reports I've seen are really in two areas.

They are in the performance area, which is speed and reliability. It's too slow and doesn't have reliable transfers and in functionality, there are parts of the system that don't make accurate transfers.

So we have done an extensive assessment. They are prioritized, as I indicated earlier. One of the priorities is the enrollment features, which pass individual information to the companies where they want to enroll. That is not reliable at this point. The companies are not getting accurate data. So it's an example of the kind of thing we know we need to fix.

MATHESON: And is there a way to -- if you set up metrics figure out if we're making progress in terms of fixing those issues with speed and performance and functionality.

SEBELIUS: Again, with the team and Jeff Zients at the head of it, reporting to Marilyn, there are definitely a comprehensive set of issues going forward that will be measured and accelerated.

MATHESON: Do you have target dates along the way if you want to meet the November 30th time -- assume it's functional of what you want -- do you have target or metrics along the way to make sure you're on the path?

SEBELIUS: My understanding is, yes, there are sort of groups of targets that fixes that can be loaded together. It isn't one at a time. So they don't take days, but they are try being to determine with a specific path, one of the charges that QSSI has, really looking at the umbrella of what needs to be fixed, prioritizing them, figuring out what destabilizes if something else is fixed, how they can be grouped together. And that report will be in later next week.

UPTON: Gentleman's time is expired.

Mr. Pompeo?

POMPEO: Great, thank you.

Thank you for coming, , Secretary Sebelius.

I would like to talk about Kansas a little bit today.

Much like with some of my colleagues have made references to the "Wizard of Oz", I don't think anybody not from Kansas should be able to do Oz allegories. But, my story -- the way I think about it,

is those folks worked awful hard to go down the yellow brick road. At the end of the day, when they got there and pulled back the curtain, they found there was nothing they didn't already have.

And as we pull back the curtain on the Affordable Care Act, I think people are finding it's not exactly what they're gonna have worked so hard to find their way too as well.

I want to talk about two stories. There's this commitment, if you like your plan you can keep it. I have a letter I'll submit for the record, from Mr. Breeto (ph) in Kansas. You might know him. I saw him the other night in Benton.

He got the following letter from Blue Cross Blue Shield that says, "Because your current plan does not offer the benefits standard specified you'll be discontinued on December 31st," and this says good news. And then there's a group of folks, Pizza Hut -- you know the company from Kansas, franchisees founded there -- lots of folks have now taken employees, families who are working there, and they've gone from having full-time jobs to part-time jobs. So they aren't able to keep the health care plan they had either and the one they wanted.

POMPEO: What do you tell -- why -- why were the plans that these folks had good enough when you were the insurance commissioner in Kansas and when you were -- Kansas as governor, but those plans today aren't good enough for those hard-working Kansas families?

SEBELIUS: Sir, I would tell you, in the roles I had the honor of serving of in Kansas, I worked every day to try and eliminate some of the discriminatory features of the insurance industry that finally, with the Affordable Care Act, are gone. My successor and elected insurance Republican commissioner Sandy Praeger and I worked on a whole series of plans to expand coverage.

So I did work on these issues. We were not able to necessarily...

(CROSSTALK)

POMPEO: So you -- you -- to use your words, you say these were -- I think you said "lousy" plans. And Ms. Tavenner said "not true insurance." Do you think that the plans that were offered when you were the insurance commissioner weren't true insurance?

SEBELIUS: In the individual market, the insurance commissioner in Kansas and virtually every place in the country does not have regulatory authority...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: ... over the plan. There's a lot...

(CROSSTALK)

POMPEO: ... a yes-or-no question: Were they true insurance plans when you were the insurance commissioner?

SEBELIUS: A lot of them are not true insurance plans, no.

POMPEO: Thank you. I yield back.

UPTON: Gentleman from Vermont, Mr. Welch.

WELCH: Thank you.

I'm gonna try to just summarize quickly what I've been hearing. Number one, the website must be fixed. You've been very forthright, and you're gonna fix it. Number two, I'm hearing a tone change. We've had a real battle about health care. We had a battle in this Congress. It was passed. The president signed it. The Supreme Court affirmed it -- a really brutal battle. There was an election

where the American people affirmed it. And then the last-gasp effort was the shutdown and the threat of debt default.

But what I'm hearing today is that there are problems and people want to fix 'em because all of us represent people who are gonna win or lose depending on how effectively this is rolled out.

Third, there's some significant question about existing insurance policies, what the president said and so on. But let's acknowledge something: A lot of insurance companies were ripping off innocent American people by promising them insurance until they got sick, and then it got canceled because they, quote, "had a pre-existing condition," that wasn't, quote, "disclosed." That's gotta end.

The challenge for us going forward is to make health care affordable.

So Madam Secretary, my question is, is there any indication that there's been a slowing of premium increases as a result of the Affordable Care Act? Because unless we can keep those premium increases down -- they can't rise faster than the rate of inflation, wages and profits -- all of us are gonna lose.

SEBELIUS: Well, I would say, the trends in the private market over the last three and a half years are that cost increases have slowed down, are rising at a lower rate than the decades before. And in fact, in this individual market, the old individual market, the typical increase was 16 percent year in and year out rate increase. And often that came with additional medical underwriting. So it gives a sense of how the costs were.

We know that Medicare costs are down. We know that Medicaid costs actually had a decrease per capita last year, not an increase per capita, and underlying health care costs are down.

These rates in the new marketplace have come in about 16 percent lower on average than was projected -- not by us but by the Congressional Budget Office.

And we know that in many of these markets, they're much more competitive. I believe in market competitiveness. That actually drives down rates. The states where the most companies are participating have the lowest rates. And new companies have come in significantly below the old monopoly companies that often dominated this individual marketplace.

So we're on a pathway. Are we there? No. But you're absolutely right, affordable coverage, at the end of the day, for everybody is the goal.

WELCH: OK. I yield back.

Thank you, Madam Secretary.

UPTON: Madam Secretary, I'm trying to make sure that you're out of here by 12:30 before we start the second round of questions.

(LAUGHTER)

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: Mr. Kinzinger?

SEBELIUS: That was a joke, right?

(LAUGHTER)

KINZINGER: I see -- I see sheer panic.

Madam Secretary, thank you for being here.

You stated earlier to Mr. Harper that you give the president regular updates on the marketplace. The president stated that he knew nothing about the status and functionality of the marketplace. How often, and what were the subjects of those updates?

SEBELIUS: Well, I think there were a series of regular meetings with the president, with some of our federal partners, with offices of the White House from the OMB to others on a monthly basis giving reports on policy and where we were going. None of those, I would say, involved (ph) detailed operational discussions. That wasn't the level. It was, are we coming together, do we have companies...

KINZINGER: Sure.

SEBELIUS: ... do we have plans.

KINZINGER: And I understand that. I mean, obviously, when it comes to the president of the United States, certain level of details you have to see at kind of a 10,000 foot, 20,000 foot overview. But in terms of the actual functionality, whether it's the website or the marketplace, he was legitimately caught off guard on October...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Well, I assured him, and -- that we were ready to go. Everyone knew with a big plan that there were likely to be some problems. No one...

KINZINGER: OK.

SEBELIUS: ... anticipated this level of problem (ph).

KINZINGER: And just second -- a quick question. Where is HHS getting the money to pay for these fixes? Is it coming from other HHS accounts? Have you used your transfer authority to move money from non-ACA programs to pay for the cost of implementing the president's health care program? And if so, from which programs have you drawn money to help with the fix that's not ACA-related?
SEBELIUS: Well, as you know, Congressman, it's been two years since we've had a budget at HHS. And we also have not had at the president's requested implementation budget authorized by the Congress. Each of those years we have used not only resources internally but I do have legal transfer authority that I've used and a non-recurring expense fund. We will get you all the details of that...

(CROSSTALK)

KINZINGER: Great. Thank you. So the answer is yes, though, there is some non-ACA money being transferred and used for the implementation of...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: There is money that is specifically designed for either outreach and education, so the health centers have hired education and outreach people as part of their outreach for health personnel. I would say it's -- it's definitely a related cause to get expanded health care.

KINZINGER: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UPTON: Mr. Sarbanes?

SARBANES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here.

My understanding is that a lot of the -- the companies, insurers that have been offering plans in the individual market, the ones who are sending out these notices, are actually repositioning themselves in the health insurance exchange to offer alternative plans. Is that correct?

SEBELIUS: Yes.

SARBANES: And in addition to -- to those insurers who've been in the individual market (inaudible) have a lot of other companies and insurers providing plans in the health insurance market?

SEBELIUS: That is true.

SARBANES: So the way I look at this is -- you know, I went to buy Oriole tickets awhile back when the season was still under way, and I was standing in line. And I got up to the ticket window and they closed the window. But I didn't have to go home because they opened another window a few feet away.

So essentially what's happening is people are coming up on the renewal period. They're getting up to the window of the individual market. They're being told, well, that window's closed but if you go right down the line here there's another window that's open. And by the way, when you get there, you'll get better coverage potentially at reduced premiums. And if you go down to window 3 there's some subsidies that may also be available to you.

So this notion that people are being turned away from an affordable product that provides good, quality care is preposterous. And in fact they're being steered to a place where they can get good, quality coverage, in many instances much better than the coverage that they had before, at an affordable rate that is supported by the subsidies that can be available to many, many people. This is -- this is what's so promising about the Affordable Care Act.

And so I think it's important for people to understand that that window's not being shut. They're just being steered someplace else where they can get a good opportunity.

SEBELIUS: And I think the first option for those companies is to say, 'We'd like to keep you here, and here are the plans we're offering.' But to be fair, customers will now have an opportunity to look across a landscape, which they couldn't before. They will have entry into those other windows, which many of them didn't have before with a pre-existing condition.

And as you say, about 50 percent of this market will have financial help in purchasing health insurance, which none of them had before.

UPTON: Gentleman's time expired.

Mr. Griffith?

GRIFFITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Earlier in your testimony here today you said a couple times, "plans we enjoy but then," as you noticed with Mr. Gardner's eloquent testimony, that we're not going to be in the same plan that you're in after January 1.

I was one of those who thought it was a good idea as a part of a proposal that was floating around the halls here in Congress that the president and Cabinet secretaries ought to also be in the marketplace and not have a special federal plan that -- that you will have after January 1, but we will not. The president, while that was being discussed, issued a veto threat.

Did you discuss the veto threat with the president before he made it? And have you discussed it with him since then? Yes or no on the first?

SEBELIUS: No, sir.

GRIFFITH: No.

And then I would have to ask you, relating back to the contractors involved in this, CGI told us that the Spanish Web site was ready to go, that they thought everything was ready, just as they did with the regular site. And, obviously, that didn't prove out. But that they were told not to implement it.

Likewise, the shop-and-browse section was ready to go.

Do you think that they were misleading this committee when they made those comments?

SEBELIUS: I think what they believed is that that product independent of the entire operational site was ready and tested. What -- a determination was made -- I was involved with the Spanish Web site and the Medicaid transfers to say, let's minimize the risk for the whole site, let's load a week later.

GRIFFITH: But that raises the next question up, because one of the -- of the other contractors, QSSI, I believe it was, indicated to us that -- that part of the problem was that, once you took away the ability to browse, everybody had to go through the business of setting up an account, and you stopped -- or CMS stopped one of the browsing options as well, and that that actually contributed to the logjam and contributed to the problems.

So, isn't it -- is he correct on that, that not allowing people just to look without having to sign up, wouldn't that have made it easier for the American people?

SEBELIUS: In hindsight, I think that probably would have been advantageous, I can tell you that the reason the decision was made going forward was to minimize risk, that didn't work so well.

But adding additional features that didn't involve people actually wanting to get to what they would independently pay and what they would qualify for and what the plans were, seemed to be things that could be added down the road. It was wrong.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Bilirakis?

BILIRAKIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it very much,

Thank you, Madam Secretary, for testifying today.

Madam Secretary, over the weekend, the New York Times wrote the following, "Project managers at the Department of Health and Human Services assured the White House that any remaining problems could be worked out once the Web site went live. But other senior officials predicted serious trouble and advised delaying the rollout."

Can you confirm if this is true? Did any senior department official predict serious problems? And did any senior department officials advise delaying the rollout of the exchanges or parts of the exchanges on October 1st? Could you...

SEBELIUS: I can tell you that no senior official reporting to me ever advised me that we should delay. You heard from the contractors on the 24th that none of them advised a delay. We have testing that did not advise a delay. So not -- not to my knowledge.

BILIRAKIS: Did they indicate to you that there were serious problems?

SEBELIUS: They indicated to me that we would always have risks, because this system is brand-new and no one has operated a system like this before to any degree.

So, we always knew that there would be the possibility that some things would go wrong. No one indicated that this could possibly go this wrong.

BILIRAKIS: Can you name some of these officials that gave you the advice, that there were serious problems?

SEBELIUS: Again, I -- we had series of meetings with teams from CMS. I was always advised that there is always a risk with a new product and a new site, but never suggested that we delay the launch of October 1st, nor did our contracting partners ever suggest that to us.

BILIRAKIS: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Appreciate it. I yield back.

UPTON: Mr. Johnson?

JOHNSON: Madam Secretary, thank you for being here with us today. CMS was the integrator of the Web site prior to and leading up to the 1 October rollout...

SEBELIUS: That's correct.

JOHNSON: Correct?

You've testified you've now hired an outside company to serve as the integrator...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: One of the contractors has taken on an additional role...

JOHNSON: Who is that company?

SEBELIUS: QSSI.

JOHNSON: QSSI.

SEBELIUS: Who built the hub.

JOHNSON: OK.

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

JOHNSON: This is the same company that told our committee last week that they were not only the developer of the hub and the pipeline, but also an independent tester of the system.

SEBELIUS: Yes.

JOHNSON: You've acknowledged in your testimony today that inadequate testing played a significant role in this failed launch, so aren't you concerned that QSSI has lost its ability to be an objective independent arbitrator in addressing the problems that plague the system now? Because they're part of the tester, part of the developer, part of the problem.

SEBELIUS: No, I haven't lost my -- my confidence in them. I think the testing that they did is validating the pieces of the equipment. What we've said since the launch is that we did not do adequate end-to-end testing.

JOHNSON: OK.

SEBELIUS: That was not the QSSI responsibility.

JOHNSON: All right. And in this new role as integrator, are you going to be paying QSSI more than they were to be paid under their original contract? I -- I would expect with this expanded role they're going to get paid more, right?

SEBELIUS: That discussion is under way in terms of what the role will entail, what the outlines are, yes, sir.

JOHNSON: OK. Well, hard-working American taxpayers have already paid for this implementation once. Do you think it's fair to ask taxpayers to pay more so that QSSI can now attempt to do something that Administrator Tavenner and her CMS team were unable to do right the first time?

SEBELIUS: Well, sir, I think the American taxpayers expect us to get the site up and running. As I told you earlier...

JOHNSON: Oh, I'm certain that they did. They expected it the first time.

SEBELIUS: I understand, and so did I. We have not expended the funds that have been encumbered for the contracts. We have not -- and we will monitor every dime we spend from here on in, and re-audit things that are going forward.

JOHNSON: Well, with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

UPTON: The gentleman yields back.

Mr. Long?

LONG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Secretary, for being here today and giving your testimony.

Earlier today, you said that "I'm responsible for the implementation of the Affordable Care Act." I've heard you referred to, and maybe yourself, as the point person for the rollout, the architect of implementing Affordable Care Act. So you are kind of the president's point person, are you not, for this rollout?

SEBELIUS: Yes, sir.

LONG: I -- earlier, you were asked, and there's a lot of things striking about the rollout of this and about the Affordable Care Act altogether. But the thing that's most striking to me is that when we have the point person for the rollout here, and you're not going in to the exchange.

Now, I've heard you say that, and you got some advice from the folks behind you, but I'm asking you today: Can you tell the American public, if your advisers behind you, that if they happen to have given you some wrong information, if it is possible for you to go into the exchange like all these millions of Americans that are going with the exchanges, will you commit to forego your government insurance plan that you're on now and join us in the pool? Come on in. The water's fine. All the congressmen, all of our staff have to go into the exchanges.

We have to go into the D.C. exchanges. And I will say that I tried to get on the website. I was successful during the hearing earlier, and I got to the D.C. exchange, which is where I have to buy from, I got part way through. And then when it got to the point to enter my Social Security number, I could not bring myself to do that, from what I've heard from people like John McAfee and folks about the security.

Will you tell, if your advisers are wrong, and it is possible for you -- I'm not saying it is -- but if it is, if it's possible for you to forego your government program you have now? Will you tell the American public that, "Yes, I will go into the exchanges next year like everyone else"?

SEBELIUS: Sir, the way the law is written... LONG: It's a yes or no -- I'm -- let's say that you're wrong on that. Yes or no, if -- if you're wrong, will you? Yes or no?

SEBELIUS: But I don't want to give misinformation to the American public...

LONG: You what?

SEBELIUS: ... who may be -- I don't want to give misinformation. If you have affordable coverage...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: I want you to go home and research it. If -- if you're wrong...

SEBELIUS: ... if you have affordable coverage...

LONG: ... will you go into the exchanges?

SEBELIUS: I -- if I'm...

LONG: If you can, will you? That's a yes or no. If you can, will you?

SEBELIUS: I will take a look at it. I don't have any idea...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: That's not an answer. That's not a yes or no.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

LONG: You're the architect of the whole program and you won't go into it with the rest of the American public.

SEBELIUS: I did not say that, sir. I think it's illegal for me to...

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: If it's not illegal. If it's legal, will you go in?

(CROSSTALK)

WAXMAN: Mr. Chairman? Mr. Chairman?

(CROSSTALK)

LONG: Come on in, the water's fine.

UPTON: The gentleman's time has expired.

WAXMAN: I have a unanimous consent request. I'd like to -- Madam Secretary, I'd like you to answer for the record. If you were able to do what the gentleman just suggested or follow the recommendation of Cory Gardner, our colleague from Colorado, and went into the bought -- to buy an individual policy, would you be able to find one that would protect you from cheap shots? Or do you think that has to be mandated for coverage?

(LAUGHTER)

I'll leave the record open for your response.

UPTON: Yeah, we'll wait for that response to come back.

SEBELIUS: I would gladly join the exchange if I didn't have affordable coverage in my workplace. I would gladly join it. And the D.C. market is an independent state-based market, even though D.C. is not a state. We do not run the D.C. market in the federal marketplace.

UPTON: The gentlelady from North Carolina, Ms. Ellmers?

ELLMERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I have a couple of questions. Thank you for being with us today, Madam Secretary.

I'd like to go to the issue that has been raised by my colleagues on the left here about accurate information. Number one, I've heard the issue of Medicare Part D brought up many, many times. Although my colleagues all voted no against it initially, now they're extolling the virtues of Medicare Part D.

Is Medicare Part D a mandate or is it voluntary?

SEBELIUS: It is voluntary.

ELLMERS: It is a voluntary program.

SEBELIUS: Yes.

ELLMERS: That's the first accurate -- piece of accurate information I would like to get.

You know, we're asking or we're actually forcing millions of Americans to go to find a health care premium in some way, whether it's to go to the exchange or whether they are to be insured.

ELLMERS: Many of my constituents are reaching out to me, those with individual policies, and they are saying to me that my -- my rates are going up 400 percent; my rates are going up 127 percent. These are my constituents.

Now, you know, we're talking about open enrollment, but it's forcing the issue, is it not, that if an American does not have health care coverage, they are essentially breaking the law. Is that not correct?

SEBELIUS: If someone can afford coverage and has that option and chooses not to buy coverage, they will pay a fee on their (inaudible) next year's tax.

(CROSSTALK)

ELLMERS: And it is a law, so therefore they are breaking the law.

(CROSSTALK)

ELLMERS: OK. You also brought up the issue when you were in Kansas, that you fought against discriminatory -- discriminatory issues. Now, I, you know, as far as the essential health benefits, correct me if I'm wrong, do men not have to buy maternity coverage?

SEBELIUS: Policies will cover maternity coverage for the young and healthy.

ELLMERS: Including men.

SEBELIUS: Under 30-year-olds will have a choice also of a catastrophic plan which has no maternity coverage.

ELLMERS: The catastrophic, but the men are required to purchase maternity...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Well, an insurance policy has a series of benefits whether you use them or not. And one of the benefits will be maternity coverage, mental health coverage...

(CROSSTALK)

ELLMERS: And that is why the health care premiums are increasing because we're forcing them to buy things that they will never need.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

SEBELIUS: The individual policies cover families. Men often do need maternity coverage for their spouses and for their families. Yes.

ELLMERS: Single male, age 32, does not need maternity coverage. To the best of your knowledge...

(CROSSTALK)

ELLMERS: ... has a man ever delivered a baby?

UPTON: The gentlelady's time has expired.

(LAUGHTER)

The gentlelady, Ms. Cathy McMorris Rodgers?

MCMORRIS RODGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And Madam Secretary, you know, although we were told repeatedly that if you liked your health insurance plan, you'd be able to keep it. We're now being told by the government that they have determined many existing plans to be lousy, sub-par.

In reality, this law is becoming quickly less about helping Americans purchase affordable coverage and more about compelling millions of Americans into a struggling Medicaid program.

In my home state of Washington, 90 percent of enrollees will be in Medicaid; 16,000 of them coming into a program that they were already eligible for; Colorado, 89 percent; Kentucky, two-thirds; Maryland, 97 percent. And this is -- these are states that are already struggling with their budgets, wondering how they're going to cover Medicaid, which is, as we all know, for the most vulnerable population.

So isn't it true that in states like Washington, they're going to have new, unexpected costs associated with a dramatic influx into Medicaid?

SEBELIUS: Well, Congresswoman, the Medicaid expansion provision of the Affordable Care Act is...

MCMORRIS RODGERS: Could you -- are states going to face new costs...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Federal government pays 100 percent of the costs of newly insured for the first three years, and gradually reduces...

(CROSSTALK) MCMORRIS RODGERS: These are existing -- these were people that were already eligible. And we know that two out of three doctors don't accept new Medicaid patients. We know

that current provider rates are going to drop at the end of 2014. So isn't it true that existing Medicare -- Medicaid enrollees are going to further compete for scarce resources in these states?

SEBELIUS: If the citizens of Washington who are signing up were eligible for Medicaid, they certainly will be entitled to enroll in Medicaid now. The newly insured will be fully paid for. The doctors have additional...

(CROSSTALK)

MCMORRIS RODGERS: I'm concerned that the most vulnerable in this country are going to lack access to the care that they think they're going to receive. And I know time is short...

(CROSSTALK)

SEBELIUS: Well, I think that's absolutely true. And in states that are choosing not to expand Medicaid, it's particularly dire. So I would love to work with you on that...

(CROSSTALK)

MCMORRIS: It's existing Medicaid. Finally, I just wanted to inform the secretary, you told us several hours ago when the hearing started, that the website was down. If you look at the screen several hours later, healthcare.gov is still down. You promised the system would be ready on October 1st. You're clearly wrong.

So before I leave you today, I would just impress upon you this is more than a broken website. This is a broken law. Millions of Americans are getting notices their plans are being canceled.

(CROSSTALK)

UPTON: The gentlelady's time is expired.

I just -- I would do a couple of things here. First, I'm going to ask unanimous consent that the written opening statements for any member on the committee be introduced into the record. And without objection, the documents will be there.

I also would ask unanimous consent to put the document binder and other documents presented to the secretary during questioning into the record. Without objection, so ordered.

Let me just say in conclusion, we do look forward to having you back in December to get an update on where we are. And we'll work with your schedule to find a right time and date early that -- that week.

I want you to know we're going to want real numbers. You'll have them by then. Is that right, in terms of the signup? You'll have them in the next couple of weeks.

SEBELIUS: That's correct. We'll have them by mid-November.

UPTON: We look forward to getting those done.

We appreciate -- we really do appreciate your time this morning to take questions. I apologize to all the members who we had to shorten the time, but those things happen when we have this much interest. And we look forward to continuing to get an update and look for your continued work.

WAXMAN: Mr. Chairman?

UPTON: Yes?

WAXMAN: From our side of the aisle, we want to work with you. And I would hope on the other side of the aisle, they would take that same approach. Let's do something constructive, not just negative attacks against a bill that I think is going to be a God-send for millions of Americans.

Thank you for being here.

SEBELIUS: Thank you.

UPTON: Thank you.

The hearing is adjourned.

END

LOAD-DATE: October 31, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 66535

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

JOURNAL-CODE: PTTW

Copyright 2013 ProQuest Information and Learning
All Rights Reserved
Copyright 2013 Roll Call, Inc.

States News Service

October 30, 2013 Wednesday

LUJAN QUESTIONS HHS SECRETARY SEBELIUS ON AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 892 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee participated in a hearing today in which Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius testified on the Affordable Care Act. Below is a transcript of **Lujan's** exchange with the Secretary, in which they discussed important consumer protections under the law and their commitment to preventing and combating fraud.

Lujan: Madam Secretary, I was intrigued by a line of questioning by Congressman [Gene] Green asking questions about the individual marketplace. How volatile was the individual marketplace before the Affordable Care Act became law?

Sebelius: I would say it wasn't a marketplace at all. It was unprotected, unregulated, and people were really on their own.

Lujan: Madam Secretary, the Kaiser Family Foundation reports that over 50 percent churn - out of individuals that have coverage in the individual market - churn out of coverage every year. They lose coverage, they are priced out, or drop it. Is that consistent with what you are aware of?

Sebelius: That is an accurate snapshot. About a third of the people are in for about 6 months and over half are in for a year or less.

Lujan: So individuals that were in the individual marketplace before the passage of the Affordable Care Act did not have the same protections as those that were in group coverage?

Sebelius: That's true.

Lujan: And would those individuals in the individual marketplace sometimes have higher copays?

Sebelius: Higher copays, unlimited out-of-pocket costs for often coverage that was medically underwritten or excluded whatever medical condition they had in the first place.

Lujan: So these were typically one-year contracts. If they use the plan because they got sick or in a car accident or a victim of domestic violence, sometimes they would be thrown off their plan or their rates would go up?

Sebelius: Yes.

Lujan: I think that's important to note, Madam Secretary. And I'm intrigued, as well, that my understanding is last month HHS conducted an analysis that found that nearly 6 out of 10 uninsured Americans getting coverage through the marketplace will pay less than $100 per month. Is that correct?

Sebelius: They will have a plan available for less than $100 if that's their choice, yes.

Lujan: And that number would be even higher - would be better - if more states chose the option of using federal funds to expand Medicaid to cover their low-income population?

Sebelius: Very definitely. That's just a marketplace snapshot. Those are people who will be in the marketplace.

Lujan: Madam Secretary, I don't think that I've heard anyone from the other side of the aisle today, my Republican colleagues, ask you, "How can Congress work with you and support you in fixing this website and fixing this problem." I hope that we all agree we want this website fixed. I would yield to anyone that would disagree. Seeing no one accepting that, I am glad to hear that we agree with this. Now Madam Secretary, what can Congress do to work with you to fix this website?

Sebelius: Well, I'm not sure that there is hands-on work that you can do; maybe we have some technical expertise. But I would say getting accurate information to constituents is helpful, letting people know that they can check out the facts in the law, that they may be entitled to some financial support, that cancelation of policies means that the policy they had may not exist but they have a lot of choices of new policies and a law that now says they must be insured in a new policy - that they don't have to be insured by their company at a higher price.

Lujan: I appreciate that Madam Secretary. Going back to the individual marketplace, Madam Secretary, did this Congress in previous years before the Affordable Care Act make it illegal for

health insurance companies to raise rates on someone after they submitted a claim for going to the hospital or becoming sick or getting rid of pre-existing conditions.

Sebelius: No sir.

Lujan: Madam Secretary, one last note here. It seems that we've received some horrible news that there are bad actors already taking place - fraudulent websites that imitate the health care exchange or misleading seniors into disclosing their personal information. I've signed onto a letter to you, led by my colleague Representative Raul Ruiz out of California, to request that you prioritize fraud prevention efforts. What has the administration done to prevent these fraudulent acts and protect personal information?

Sebelius: I can tell you, Congressman, that the President felt very strongly that that needed to be part of our outreach effort, which is why the Attorney General and I convened representatives of state Attorneys General, Insurance Commissioners, the U.S. Attorneys, and the Justice Department, and the Federal Trade Commission - which has jurisdiction - to make sure that we first got out ahead some of this, developing consumer outreach. No one should ever give personal health information because personal health information is not needed for these policies any longer. That is as red flag. We want to make sure that people turn over potential fraudulent acts. We have put training in place for navigators. We have our law enforcement folks doing outreach.

LOAD-DATE: November 14, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

Targeted News Service

October 30, 2013 Wednesday 10:33 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: New Mexico's Congressional Democrats Welcome President's Disaster Declaration for September Floods

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 673 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** and Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced that President Obama has declared a major disaster for the state of New Mexico and Santa Clara Pueblo for the severe storms and flooding from September 9-22.

The declaration means the president has ordered federal aid to help state and local recovery efforts. The assistance will be available on a cost-sharing basis for damage to public infrastructure in Catron,

Chaves, Cibola, Colfax, Eddy, Guadalupe, Los Alamos, McKinley, Mora, Sandoval, San Miguel, Santa Fe, Sierra, Socorro, and Torrance counties. Federal funding will also be made available on a cost-sharing basis to assist with hazard mitigation statewide. A similar declaration was made for Santa Clara Pueblo, which made its own request for public assistance.

New Mexico's lawmakers on Oct. 22 jointly urged the president to respond quickly to separate requests for disaster assistance for the state of New Mexico and Santa Clara Pueblo. Historic, record-breaking rain across New Mexico during the September storms caused catastrophic flooding and damage in about two-thirds of the state.

"I want to thank the president for responding to our requests on behalf of the state and Santa Clara Pueblo," said Senator Udall, who toured storm damage in hard-hit Catron County last week. "This assistance is badly needed in communities that sustained severe damage to roads, bridges, dams and other structures. I saw the damage firsthand, and I appreciate this quick action to assist the state and Santa Clara Pueblo. I'm going to keep working to ensure the federal government fulfills its obligations to help with restoration in New Mexico's communities."

"I am pleased that President Obama has taken action and quickly responded to our requests for federal disaster assistance for the state and Santa Clara Pueblo," Senator Heinrich said. "Last month's severe storms and devastating floods caused community evacuations, landslides, and damaged critical infrastructure around the state. I will continue to work with my colleagues and the president to ensure that every community across New Mexico affected by severe flooding receives the assistance they need to rebuild and recover."

"I am pleased the President acted to make a disaster declaration for the State of New Mexico and Santa Clara Pueblo. This important declaration will make New Mexico and Santa Clara Pueblo eligible for vital funds to assist with critical repairs in the wake of severe storms and flooding that impacted communities across our state, as well as efforts to prepare for future emergencies," Congressman **Lujan** said.

"This declaration will provide federal resources to supplement the efforts of those on the ground who have been working day and night to recover and rebuild following September's devastating storms," Congresswoman **Lujan** Grisham said. "I'm proud to have worked with my colleagues in New Mexico's congressional delegation to help secure this important aid."

Across the state, flooding and landslides washed out roads and bridges, and several communities in Catron, Eddy and Sierra counties were completely isolated. Water control facilities in numerous counties were damaged, including many historic acequias, as well as drinking water systems in McKinley and Cibola counties. Significant damage also occurred on federal properties, among them the Los Alamos National Lab site and the Catwalk Trail in the Gila National Forest, which was washed out.

The Santa Clara Pueblo, which is downstream of land damaged in the 2011 Las Conchas Fire, has experienced severe flooding caused by runoff over the burn scar on multiple occasions in the years following the fire. Rains in July and again September 13-16 exacerbated the damage. The Pueblo lost water control facilities in the Santa Clara Canyon, and roads, bridges and homes were damaged.

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage4psi-131031-30VitinMar-4533174

LOAD-DATE: October 31, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

October 30, 2013 Wednesday 1:30 AM EST

Lujan Questions HHS Secretary Sebelius on Affordable Care Act

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 901 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee participated in a hearing today in which Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius testified on the Affordable Care Act. Below is a transcript of **Lujan's** exchange with the Secretary, in which they discussed important consumer protections under the law and their commitment to preventing and combating fraud.

Lujan: Madam Secretary, I was intrigued by a line of questioning by Congressman [Gene] Green asking questions about the individual marketplace. How volatile was the individual marketplace before the Affordable Care Act became law?

Sebelius: I would say it wasn't a marketplace at all. It was unprotected, unregulated, and people were really on their own.

Lujan: Madam Secretary, the Kaiser Family Foundation reports that over 50 percent churn - out of individuals that have coverage in the individual market - churn out of coverage every year. They lose coverage, they are priced out, or drop it. Is that consistent with what you are aware of?

Sebelius: That is an accurate snapshot. About a third of the people are in for about 6 months and over half are in for a year or less.

Lujan: So individuals that were in the individual marketplace before the passage of the Affordable Care Act did not have the same protections as those that were in group coverage?

Sebelius: That's true.

Lujan: And would those individuals in the individual marketplace sometimes have higher copays?

Sebelius: Higher copays, unlimited out-of-pocket costs for often coverage that was medically underwritten or excluded whatever medical condition they had in the first place.

Lujan: So these were typically one-year contracts. If they use the plan because they got sick or in a car accident or a victim of domestic violence, sometimes they would be thrown off their plan or their rates would go up?

Sebelius: Yes.

Lujan: I think that's important to note, Madam Secretary. And I'm intrigued, as well, that my understanding is last month HHS conducted an analysis that found that nearly 6 out of 10 uninsured Americans getting coverage through the marketplace will pay less than $100 per month. Is that correct?

Sebelius: They will have a plan available for less than $100 if that's their choice, yes.

Lujan: And that number would be even higher - would be better - if more states chose the option of using federal funds to expand Medicaid to cover their low-income population?

Sebelius: Very definitely. That's just a marketplace snapshot. Those are people who will be in the marketplace.

Lujan: Madam Secretary, I don't think that I've heard anyone from the other side of the aisle today, my Republican colleagues, ask you, "How can Congress work with you and support you in fixing this website and fixing this problem." I hope that we all agree we want this website fixed. I would yield to anyone that would disagree. Seeing no one accepting that, I am glad to hear that we agree with this. Now Madam Secretary, what can Congress do to work with you to fix this website?

Sebelius: Well, I'm not sure that there is hands-on work that you can do; maybe we have some technical expertise. But I would say getting accurate information to constituents is helpful, letting people know that they can check out the facts in the law, that they may be entitled to some financial support, that cancelation of policies means that the policy they had may not exist but they have a lot of choices of new policies and a law that now says they must be insured in a new policy - that they don't have to be insured by their company at a higher price.

Lujan: I appreciate that Madam Secretary. Going back to the individual marketplace, Madam Secretary, did this Congress in previous years before the Affordable Care Act make it illegal for health insurance companies to raise rates on someone after they submitted a claim for going to the hospital or becoming sick or getting rid of pre-existing conditions.

Sebelius: No sir.

Lujan: Madam Secretary, one last note here. It seems that we've received some horrible news that there are bad actors already taking place - fraudulent websites that imitate the health care exchange or misleading seniors into disclosing their personal information. I've signed onto a letter to you, led by my colleague Representative Raul Ruiz out of California, to request that you prioritize fraud prevention efforts. What has the administration done to prevent these fraudulent acts and protect personal information?

Sebelius: I can tell you, Congressman, that the President felt very strongly that that needed to be part of our outreach effort, which is why the Attorney General and I convened representatives of state Attorneys General, Insurance Commissioners, the U.S. Attorneys, and the Justice Department, and the Federal Trade Commission - which has jurisdiction - to make sure that we first got out ahead some of this, developing consumer outreach. No one should ever give personal health information because personal health information is not needed for these policies any longer. That is as red flag. We want to make sure that people turn over potential fraudulent acts. We have put training in place for navigators. We have our law enforcement folks doing outreach.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TN 30VitinMar-131031-4533662 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: October 31, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

October 30, 2013 Wednesday

New Mexico Delegation Welcomes President's Disaster Declaration for September Floods

LENGTH: 729 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Martin Heinrich, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced that President Obama has declared a major disaster for the state of New Mexico and Santa Clara Pueblo for the severe storms and flooding from Sept. 9-22.

The declaration means the president has ordered federal aid to help state and local recovery efforts. The assistance will be available on a cost-sharing basis for damage to public infrastructure in Catron, Chaves, Cibola, Colfax, Eddy, Guadalupe, Los Alamos, McKinley, Mora, Sandoval, San Miguel, Santa Fe, Sierra, Socorro, and Torrance counties. Federal funding will also be made available on a cost-sharing basis to assist with hazard mitigation statewide. A similar declaration was made for Santa Clara Pueblo, which made its own request for public assistance.

New Mexico's lawmakers on Oct. 22 jointly urged the president to respond quickly to separate requests for disaster assistance for the state of New Mexico and Santa Clara Pueblo. Historic, record-breaking rain across New Mexico during the September storms caused catastrophic flooding and damage in about two-thirds of the state.

"I want to thank the president for responding to our requests on behalf of the state and Santa Clara Pueblo," said Udall, who toured storm damage in hard-hit Catron County last week. "This assistance is badly needed in communities that sustained severe damage to roads, bridges, dams and other structures. I saw the damage firsthand, and I appreciate this quick action to assist the state and Santa Clara Pueblo. I'm going to keep working to ensure the federal government fulfills its obligations to help with restoration in New Mexico's communities."

"I am pleased that President Obama has taken action and quickly responded to our requests for federal disaster assistance for the state and Santa Clara Pueblo," Heinrich said. "Last month's severe storms and devastating floods caused community evacuations, landslides, and damaged critical infrastructure around the state. I will continue to work with my colleagues and the president to

ensure that every community across New Mexico affected by severe flooding receives the assistance they need to rebuild and recover."

"Since the first days of the flooding, my office has been actively working with affected communities," said Pearce. "Today's declaration opens up key resources to help New Mexico recover and move forward. My office is continuing to offer support to communities and individuals impacted by the flooding, and I remain committed to assisting in any way I can."

"I am pleased the President acted to make a disaster declaration for the State of New Mexico and Santa Clara Pueblo. This important declaration will make New Mexico and Santa Clara Pueblo eligible for vital funds to assist with critical repairs in the wake of severe storms and flooding that impacted communities across our state, as well as efforts to prepare for future emergencies," **Luján** said.

"This declaration will provide federal resources to supplement the efforts of those on the ground who have been working day and night to recover and rebuild following September's devastating storms," **Lujan** Grisham said. "I'm proud to have worked with my colleagues in New Mexico's congressional delegation to help secure this important aid."

Across the state, flooding and landslides washed out roads and bridges, and several communities in Catron, Eddy and Sierra counties were completely isolated. Water control facilities in numerous counties were damaged, including many historic acequias, as well as drinking water systems in McKinley and Cibola counties. Significant damage also occurred on federal properties, among them the Los Alamos National Lab site and the Catwalk Trail in the Gila National Forest, which was washed out.

The Santa Clara Pueblo, which is downstream of land damaged in the 2011 Las Conchas Fire, has experienced severe flooding caused by runoff over the burn scar on multiple occasions in the years following the fire. Rains in July and again Sept. 13-16 exacerbated the damage. The Pueblo lost water control facilities in the Santa Clara Canyon, and roads, bridges and homes were damaged.

For further information please visit: http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/

LOAD-DATE: October 31, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 29, 2013

UDALL, HEINRICH, LUJAN CELEBRATE RESTORED ACCESS TO HISTORICAL CEMETERY FOR SAN JOAQUIN DEL RIO DE CHAMA LAND GRANT HEIR;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 946 words

SANTA FE, NM - U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** celebrated the restored access to the San Joaquin del Rio de Chama Land Grant's cemetery. On Saturday, October 26, **Lujan** along with staff from the two senators' offices joined the heirs to the land grant to mark the determination of the boundary for the cemetery that had inadvertently been considered part of Chama River Canyon Wildness Area since 1978.

"The history and culture of San Joaquin del Rio de Chama Land Grant are an important part of our state's heritage, and the land grant's cemetery was never intended to be a part of the Chama River Canyon Wilderness. I was proud to help facilitate an administrative agreement between the San Joaquin del Rio de Chama Land Grant heirs and the Forest Service, and I'm pleased that we were able to find a common-sense solution that respects and honors the land grant's history, culture and traditions," Senator Udall said. "This weekend, work on a path to the cemetery was begun, marking a historic moment for the San Joaquin del Rio de Chama Land Grant and the broader community. The gathering celebrated our collaboration, and it demonstrated what good can come when the federal government and our communities form partnerships and work for a common solution. I hope to continue to work with land grant communities and federal agencies to find sound solutions to historic conflicts."

"The San Joaquin del Rio de Chama Land Grant has a long and storied history in northern New Mexico and I am encouraged by this homegrown, collaborative effort to ensure that the community can better access the cemetery," said Senator Heinrich. "I am grateful to the members of the San Joaquin del Rio de Chama Land Grant, the U.S. Forest Service, and the local conservation community for working together to find this innovative solution."

"I am so pleased that years of hard work and cooperation have paid off as the heirs to the land grant will now be able to care for the cemetery and have increased access to land that has been a part of their history and heritage," said Congressman **Lujan**. "This was an historic moment that honors not only the past history of the San Joaquin del Rio de Chama Land Grant, but the present and future as well. The land grant heirs represent an important piece of the fabric of New Mexico and their culture and traditions are part of what make New Mexico such a special place. This was a collaborative effort and an example of what we can achieve when we all work together."

The San Joaquin del Rio de Chama Land Grant, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Wilderness Society also hailed the restored access of the cemetery to the land grant.

"Saturday was an historic day in the history of the land grant, as so many people came together to celebrate and contribute to the effort to construct a trail that will enable greater access to the cemetery," said Leonard Martinez, President of the San Joaquin del Rio de Chama Land Grant Association. "The widened path will allow the elderly of the merced to climb to the cemetery where their ancestors were buried over a century ago."

"The collaborative effort that took place to come to this win-win situation was unprecedented. The Forest Service looks forward to working with this and other land grants in the future on projects that help honor their rich history and traditions," said Maria Garcia, Forest Supervisor, Santa Fe National Forest.

"The Wilderness Society was proud to support this effort to clarify the status of the cemetery for the descendants of the San Joaquin del Rio de Chama Land Grant," said Michael Casaus, New Mexico State Director of The Wilderness Society. "This collaboration proves that when we focus on our shared values, we can work together to find solutions that result in protections for our land, culture and way of life."

The San Joaquin del Rio de Chama Land Grant is made up of descendants of the 39 original heirs to whom the land grant was given in 1806 by the Spanish Crown. The land grant is recognized as a

political subdivision by the State of New Mexico. In 2011, Rep. **Lujan** began working with the land grant in an effort to seek increased access to its traditional cemetery that, at the time, was assumed to lie inside of the Chama River Canyon Wilderness Area bordering the boundaries of the historic land grant. Senators Udall and Heinrich later joined the effort, providing critical assistance that resulted in successfully restoring access to the cemetery for the land grant heirs.

For more than three decades, the land grant could not make necessary changes and improvements to maintain the cemetery's old graves and religious sites, and did not have motorized access. As a result of discussions with the congressional offices, the land grant heirs, and the U.S. Forest Service, a review of the maps outlining the wilderness boundary was conducted, and it was discovered that the wilderness boundary was never fully completed and surveyed. As a result, the cemetery was improperly included in the wilderness area. After realizing the mapping error, the Forest Service agreed that the wilderness boundaries should exclude the cemetery from the area without the need for congressional legislation that would have slowed the process. On Saturday, the land grant heirs marked their expanded access to the cemetery and began work to establish a new path to the cemetery for the families of those who established the settlement generations ago.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/press-releases/udall-heinrich-luj%C3%A1n-celebrate-restored-access-to-historical-cemetery-for-san-joaquin-del-rio-de-chama-land-grant-heirs/

LOAD-DATE: October 30, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMA

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

US Official News

October 29, 2013 Tuesday

Washington: ESTABLISHING COMMISSION OR TASK FORCE TO EVALUATE BACKLOG OF DISABILITY CLAIMS -- (House of Representatives - October 28, 2013)

LENGTH: 856 words

DATELINE: Washington

The Library of Congress, The Government of USA has issued the following news release:

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2189) to establish a commission or task force to evaluate the backlog of

disability claims of the Department of Veterans Affairs, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. Miller) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were--yeas 404, nays 1, not voting 25, as follows:
[Roll No. 561]
YEAS--404

Amash

Amodei

Andrews

Bachmann

Bachus

Barber

Barletta

Barr

Barrow (GA)

Barton

Bass

Beatty

Becerra

Benishek

Bentivolio

Bera (CA)

Bilirakis

Bishop (GA)

Bishop (NY)

Bishop (UT)

Black

Blackburn

Blumenauer

Bonamici

Boustany

Brady (PA)

Brady (TX)

Braley (IA)

Bridenstine

Brooks (AL)

Brooks (IN)

Broun (GA)

Brown (FL)

Brownley (CA)

Buchanan

Bucshon

Burgess

Bustos

Calvert

Camp

Cantor

Capito

Capps

Capuano

Cárdenas

Carney

Carson (IN)

Carter

Cartwright

Cassidy

Castor (FL)

Castro (TX)

Chabot

Chaffetz

Chu

Cicilline

Clarke

Clay

Cleaver

Clyburn

Coble

Coffman

Cohen

Cole

Collins (GA)

Collins (NY)

Conaway

Conyers

Cook

Costa

Cotton

Courtney

Cramer

Crawford

Crenshaw

Crowley

Cuellar

Culberson

Cummings

Daines

Davis (CA)

Davis, Danny

Davis, Rodney

DeFazio

DeGette

Delaney

DeLauro

DelBene

Denham

Dent

DeSantis

DesJarlais

Deutch

Diaz-Balart

Dingell

Doggett

Doyle

Duckworth

Duffy

Duncan (SC)

Duncan (TN)

Edwards

Ellison

Ellmers

Engel

Enyart

Eshoo

Esty

Farenthold

Farr

Fattah

Fincher

Fitzpatrick

Fleischmann

Fleming

Flores

Forbes

Fortenberry

Foster

Foxx

Frankel (FL)

Franks (AZ)

Frelinghuysen

Fudge

Gabbard

Gallego

Garamendi

Garcia

Gardner

Garrett

Gerlach

Gibbs

Gibson

Gingrey (GA)

Gohmert

Goodlatte

Gosar

Gowdy

Granger

Graves (GA)

Grayson

Green, Al

Green, Gene

Griffin (AR)

Griffith (VA)

Guthrie

Hahn

Hall

Hanabusa

Hanna

Harper

Harris

Hartzler

Hastings (FL)

Hastings (WA)

Heck (NV)

Heck (WA)

Hensarling

Himes

Hinojosa

Holding

Holt

Honda

Horsford

Hoyer

Hudson

Huelskamp

Huffman

Huizenga (MI)

Hultgren

Hunter

Hurt

Israel

Issa

Jackson Lee

Jeffries

Jenkins

Johnson (GA)

Johnson (OH)

Johnson, E. B.

Johnson, Sam

Jones

Jordan

Joyce

Kaptur

Keating

Kelly (IL)

Kelly (PA)

Kennedy

Kildee

Kilmer

King (IA)

King (NY)

Kingston

Kinzinger (IL)

Kirkpatrick

Kline

Kuster

Labrador

LaMalfa

Lamborn

Lance

Langevin

Lankford

Larsen (WA)

Larson (CT)

Latham

Latta

Lee (CA)

Levin

Lewis

Lipinski

LoBiondo

Loebsack

Lofgren

Long

Lowenthal

Lowey

Lucas

Luetkemeyer

Lujan Grisham (NM)

Luján, Ben Ray (NM)

Lummis

Lynch

Maffei

Maloney, Carolyn

Maloney, Sean

Marchant

Marino

Massie

Matheson

Matsui

McCarthy (CA)

McClintock

McCollum

McDermott

McGovern

McHenry

McIntyre

McKeon

McKinley

McMorris Rodgers

McNerney

Meadows

Meehan

Meeks

Meng

Messer

Mica

Michaud

Miller (FL)

Miller (MI)

Miller, Gary

Miller, George

Moore

Mullin

Mulvaney

Murphy (FL)

Murphy (PA)

Nadler

Napolitano

Neal

Negrete McLeod

Neugebauer

Nolan

Nugent

Nunes

Nunnelee

O'Rourke

Olson

Palazzo

Pallone

Pascrell

Paulsen

Pearce

Pelosi

Perlmutter

Perry

Peters (CA)

Peters (MI)

Peterson

Petri

Pingree (ME)

Pittenger

Pitts

Pocan

Poe (TX)

Polis

Pompeo

Posey

Price (GA)

Price (NC)

Quigley

Radel

Rahall

Rangel

Reed

Reichert

Renacci

Ribble

Rice (SC)

Richmond

Rigell

Roby

Roe (TN)

Rogers (AL)

Rogers (KY)

Rogers (MI)

Rohrabacher

Rokita

Rooney

Ros-Lehtinen

Roskam

Ross

Rothfus

Roybal-Allard

Royce

Ruiz

Runyan

Ruppersberger

Ryan (OH)

Ryan (WI)

Salmon

Sánchez, Linda T.

Sanchez, Loretta

Sarbanes

Scalise

Schakowsky

Schiff

Schneider

Schock

Schrader

Schweikert

Scott (VA)

Scott, Austin

Scott, David

Sensenbrenner

Serrano

Sessions

Sewell (AL)

Shea-Porter

Sherman

Shimkus

Shuster

Simpson

Sinema

Sires

Slaughter

Smith (MO)

Smith (NE)

Smith (NJ)

Smith (TX)

Smith (WA)

Southerland

Stewart

Stivers

Stockman

Swalwell (CA)

Takano

Terry

Thompson (CA)

Thompson (MS)

Thompson (PA)

Thornberry

Tiberi

Tierney

Tipton

Titus

Tonko

Tsongas

Turner

Upton

Valadao

Van Hollen

Vargas

Veasey

Vela

Velázquez

Visclosky

Wagner

Walberg

Walden

Walorski

Walz

Wasserman Schultz

Waters

Watt

Waxman

Weber (TX)

Webster (FL)

Welch

Wenstrup

Westmoreland

Whitfield

Williams

Wilson (SC)

Wittman

Wolf

Womack

Woodall

Yarmuth

Yoder

Yoho

Young (IN)
NAYS--1

Sanford

NOT VOTING--25

Aderholt

Butterfield

Campbell

Connolly

Cooper

Graves (MO)

Grijalva

Grimm

Gutiérrez

Herrera Beutler

Higgins

Kind

McCarthy (NY)

McCaul

Moran

Noem

Owens

Pastor (AZ)

Payne

Rush

Schwartz

Speier

Stutzman

Wilson (FL)

Young (AK)

[Time: 18:54]

Messrs. ROHRABACHER and **BEN RAY LUJÁN** of New Mexico changed their vote from ``nay'' to ``yea.''

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: ``A bill to improve the processing of disability claims by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

For more information please visit: http://thomas.loc.gov

LOAD-DATE: October 29, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

437 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

October 25, 2013 Friday

NM delegation applauds push for immigration law; Members optimistic about compromise

BYLINE: Michael Coleman Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. A4

LENGTH: 493 words

WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama's call Thursday for a renewed congressional push to overhaul the nation's immigration laws drew strong support from New Mexico's congressional delegation, including its only Republican.

"He (Obama) said, 'Let's do it now ... and let's do it in a bipartisan fashion,' and he's right," said Rep. Steve Pearce, a New Mexico Republican who represents the state's border with Mexico. "We cannot afford to wait. We can act now on the aspects of immigration reform we can all agree on. Let's fix our legal immigration system so that it doesn't take years to get an answer. Let's find effective ways to secure the border. Let's provide answers for the millions living here in fear and confusion."

Pearce is among House Republicans who would prefer a series of smaller legislative fixes instead of the comprehensive approachObama is seeking.

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M. and a vice chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, also said the time is ripe to pass immigration reform. But he said it is up to House Republicans to make it happen.

"The Senate has passed a bill, House Democrats have introduced a bipartisan bill, and now it is up to Republican leaders in the House to give us a vote," **Luján** said. "This legislation is good for our economy, good for our families and good for our security. "

Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., said New Mexico would benefit significantly if Congress could move an immigration overhaul bill to the president's desk.

"In a border state like ours, we know how much we need meaningful reform to secure the border and keep our communities safe, bring the millions of undocumented people already living here out of the shadows, and provide a tough but fair path to earned citizenship that includes learning English and paying back taxes," Udall said. "Is it doable? Yes, I believe the House has a bipartisan majority in favor of comprehensive reform, and it can pass if House leaders are willing to put aside partisan politics."

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., also said she's optimistic about a compromise.

"Passingcomprehensive immigration reform is one of (Obama's) top priorities, and the same is true for many in Congress - both Democrats and Republicans," she said. "I am confident that the votes exist in the House of Representatives to pass this bill today - all that's left is for Speaker (of the House John) Boehner to allow a vote."

Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., said that the Senate has passed a reform bill and that now it's time for the Republican-controlled House to do the same.

"When it comes to fixing our nation's immigration system, the Senate has shown that compromise and bipartisanship are possible," Heinrich said. "Despite our differences, this is an issue on which both parties can come together and find common ground. With bipartisan support building in Congress and a president who is eager to solve the immigration problem, there is no reason we should not get this done this year."

LOAD-DATE: October 25, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Albuquerque Journal

Targeted News Service

October 25, 2013 Friday 10:36 PM EST

Rep. Grisham Introduces Bill to Abolish Limitation on Quantity of Authorized Veterans to Enroll in Veterans Affairs' Independent Living Services Programs

BYLINE: by KAREN NARAG, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 252 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Oct. 25 -- Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., has introduced legislation (H.R. 3330) to "repeal the limitation on the number of veterans authorized to be enrolled in programs of independent living services and assistance administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs."

The bill was introduced on Oct. 23 and has 16 co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., Kevin Yoder, R-Kan., Hakeen Jeffries, D-N.Y., Robert C. Scott, D-Va., Sheila Jackson-Lee, D-Texas, Bill Enyart, D-Ill., James P. McGovern, D-Mass., Alcee L Hastings, D-Fla., Matt Cartwright, D-Pa., Gloria Negrete McLeod, D-Calif., Adam B. Schiff, D-Calif., Beto O'Rourke, D-Texas, Ann McLane Kuster, D-N.H., Steven Horsford, D-Nev., Niki Tsongas, D-Mass., and Reid J. Ribble, R-Wis.

The legislation was referred to the House Veterans' Affairs Committee.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/LegislativeData.php?&n=BillText. For more information about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information about Targeted News Service products and services, please contact: Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://targetednews.com.

22Narag 1025-kn-1142173

LOAD-DATE: October 26, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

October 25, 2013 Friday 10:09 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: Congressman Ben Ray Lujan Backs Water Resources Bill that Enables Army Corps Projects

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 400 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted this week in support of H.R. 3080, the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-113hr3080ih/pdf/BILLS-113hr3080ih.pdf). The bipartisan legislation authorizes funding for the Army Corps of Engineers for improvements to America's ports, waterways, and projects tied to flood protection and environmental restoration.

"While I would have preferred a bill that reflected the Senate-passed version that better allows the Army Corps of Engineers to properly manage our critical habitat, assess flood damage caused by the destruction of wildfires, and meet the vital needs of water infrastructure in New Mexico, this legislation provides the House with an opportunity to move forward toward a conference committee with the Senate," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Moving through the regular order to address the differences between the bills will enable Congress to produce legislation that will authorize important improvements to New Mexico's dams, rivers, and water infrastructure. I will encourage the conference committee to support the Senate language that addresses critical priorities for New Mexico."

Lujan offered several amendments to improve the House legislation that were not made in order by the Republican-led Rules Committee, and he will continue to advocate for vital programs such as the Rio Grande Environmental Management Program.

"One aspect that was left out of this bill that would have been addressed by one of my amendments is the extension of the Rio Grande Environmental Management Program," **Lujan** added. "The Rio Grande watershed is the fifth largest in North America, covering the states of Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas. My amendment would have extended the life of the project to 2024 and allowed the Army Corps of Engineers to assess flood damage reduction measures for floods in the aftermath of wildfires - fires that have turned our watershed and Rio Grande black with soot and debris. Assessing the damage done by fires is critical for us to understand how to deal with future challenges. I am hopeful that when the House and Senate works out the differences on this bill that the reauthorization of this important program will be included."

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage4psi-131026-30VitinMar-4528912

LOAD-DATE: October 26, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

October 24, 2013 Thursday

Lujan Grisham seeks services for vets; Legislation covers assisted living

BYLINE: Michael Coleman Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: METRO & NEW MEXICO; Pg. C2

LENGTH: 462 words

WASHINGTON - Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., introduced bipartisan legislation Wednesday that would make assisted living services available to thousands more American veterans.

The Veterans Affairs administration's Independent Living Program serves severely disabled veterans who may not be able to work immediately and need additional rehabilitation to enable them to live more independently. The program's short-term focus is helping veterans to participate in family and community life, but it also aims to increase their ability to possibly return to work in the longer term.

The national cap for enrollment in the program is set at 2,700 veterans each year. Program participants can receive the assistance for two years, with a six-month extension granted in some cases. **Lujan** Grisham said she wants to remove the annual enrollment cap entirely.

"They created an arbitrary cap," the congresswoman said in a Journal interview. "I'm interested in removing the cap and allowing for them to serve, frankly, as many veterans as we can."

It's unclear how many additional veterans would qualify for the program nationally or in New Mexico, but **Lujan** Grisham said she expects the number of participants in New Mexico could grow by at least 25 percent.

A similar bill was introduced in Congress in 2009 by Sen. Daniel Akaka, D-Hawaii. The bill passed the Senate but stalled in the House.

A Congressional Budget Office report found that the bill would cost $181million over 10 years. **Lujan** Grisham said that's a bargain compared to the cost of treating sick and wounded soldiers indefinitely through traditional VA programs or even Medicaid. She said the program also helps make life more manageable for family members of veterans who need the services.

"It's a great support to families and caregivers who, without access to independent living center services, are sort of left on their own with their disabled family member and can't navigate that because there are no services that they are immediately eligible for," she said. "This stuff works it changes everybody's life."

Services provided by the program include access to assistive technology such as wheelchairs or electronic devices, specialized medical, health, and/or rehabilitation services, services to address any personal and/or family adjustment issues, independent living skills training, and connection with community-based support services.

Currently, two Republicans - Rep. Kevin Yoder, R-Kan., and Rep. Reid Ribble, R-Wisc. - have co-sponsored the legislation.

"This bill isn't about party politics; this bill is about helping those veterans who have sacrificed the most," Ribble said in an email to the Journal.

Fourteen Democrats, including Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico, are co-sponsors of the legislation.

LOAD-DATE: October 24, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Albuquerque Journal

Targeted News Service

October 24, 2013 Thursday 10:13 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: New Mexico's Congressional Democrats Request Disaster Declaration for September Floods

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 536 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** and Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced they have sent two joint, bipartisan letters to President Obama, urging him to respond quickly to separate requests for disaster assistance for the state of New Mexico and Santa Clara Pueblo.

The state and the Pueblo are asking the federal government for help with hazard mitigation and to repair public infrastructure damaged between Sept. 9 and Sept. 22. During that time, historic, record-breaking rain across New Mexico - which followed severe storms and floods in July - caused catastrophic flooding and damage in about two-thirds of the state. Two people were killed and numerous others evacuated during the rainstorms, and the Red Cross opened shelters in several counties.

Across the state, flooding and landslides washed out roads and bridges, and several communities in Catron, Eddy and Sierra counties were completely isolated. Water control facilities in numerous counties were damaged, including many historic acequias, as well as drinking water systems in McKinley and Cibola counties. Significant damage also occurred on federal facilities, among them the Los Alamos National Lab site and the Gila National Forest's Catwalk Trail, which was completely destroyed.

So far, 42 percent of the state's counties have already declared disasters or emergencies, and more are anticipated. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has spent the last several weeks evaluating the scope of the damage.

"In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from this extreme weather, we would request your expedited attention to the State of New Mexico's request for disaster designation and assistance," the delegation wrote. "The result of the September storms and flooding has been community evacuations, public infrastructure damage, landslides, and damaged homes throughout the state.... We appreciate this quick action to assist the state."

The lawmakers also urged prompt action for Santa Clara Pueblo, which made a separate disaster request. The Pueblo, which is downstream of land damaged in the 2011 Las Conchas Fire, has experienced severe flooding caused by runoff over the burn scar for several years. Rains in July and again Sept. 13-16 exacerbated the damage. The Pueblo lost water control facilities in the Santa Clara Canyon, and roads, bridges and homes were damaged.

"All of the safety infrastructure built to deal with monsoonal rains causing flooding off of the 2011 Las Conchas Fire burn scar was destroyed as a result of severe rain and the associated flood event," the lawmakers wrote. "Four dams acting as the primary means to control water in Santa Clara Creek leading to the Pueblo's residential area were completely destroyed, and roads, bridges, and community facilities experienced significant damage.... In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from these flooding events, we would request your expedited attention to the Santa Clara Pueblo's request for disaster designation and assistance."

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage4psi-131025-30VitinMar-4527474

LOAD-DATE: October 25, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

October 24, 2013 Thursday 10:12 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: Congresswoman Lujan Grisham Introduces Bipartisan Bill to Support Disabled Veterans

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 596 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01) has introduced the Veterans' Independent Living Enhancement Act, bipartisan legislation that would help disabled veterans live independently and participate in family and community life.

This bill removes the arbitrary cap on the number of veterans eligible to participate in the Independent Living Program, a part of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Program. The Independent Living Program provides services to maximize independence in daily living for veterans who are too severely disabled to pursue employment.

The Independent Living Program has been highly successful. It began as a pilot program for 500 disabled veterans in 1980. In 2001, the program was extended and the cap increased to allow up to 2,500 veterans to enroll in the program each year. The cap was increased to 2,600 in 2008 and 2,700 in 2010. Today, that arbitrary cap remains while thousands of veterans wait for the opportunity to enter the program and get the services and support they need.

"Throughout the last 12 years of continuous war, our nation's brave men and woman have borne a heavy burden, and many of them have returned home with severe disabilities that make daily activities a challenge," Rep. **Lujan** Grisham said. "These heroes deserve the best possible care, yet there are still impediments that prevent service members from accessing programs they need to enter civilian life. It is our responsibility to remove those barriers and ensure veterans are able to transition from military service to successful rehabilitation and fulfilling lives. That's why I am honored to introduce the Veterans' Independent Living Enhancement Act today."

Numerous Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) and health organizations have expressed support for the Veterans' Independent Living Enhancement Act. Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) Legislative Director Alex Nicholson said, "IAVA supports this strong bipartisan legislation which would help more disabled veterans get the care and services they need to live independent, successful, and fulfilling lives." The Disabled American Veterans added, "Thank you for introducing this legislation and for your continued support of America's wounded and injured veterans."

Easter Seals, an organization that helps people with disabilities, said, "Easter Seals is proud to support the Veterans' Independent Living Enhancement Act. This legislation would help to ensure eligible veterans with significant service-connected disabilities have access to independent living training and supports to help them live independently and participate fully in their communities."

Original Cosponsors: Reps. Matt Cartwright (PA-17), William Enyart (IL-12), Alcee Hastings (FL-20) Steven Horsford (NV-04), Shelia Jackson Lee (TX-18), Hakeem Jeffries (NY-08), Ann McLane Kuster (NH-02), **Ben Ray Lujan** (NM-03), Jim McGovern (MA-02), Gloria Negrete McLeod (CA-35), Beto O'Rourke (TX-16), Reid Ribble (WI-08) Adam Schiff (CA-28), Bobby Scott (VA-03), Niki Tsongas (MA-03), Kevin Yoder (KS-03)

Supporting Organizations: Disabled American Veterans; Vets First; Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA); The America Military Retirees Association; AMVETS; Easter Seals; Mental Health America; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); Association of American Medical Colleges; United Spinal Association

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage4psi-131025-30VitinMar-4527472

LOAD-DATE: October 25, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

October 24, 2013 Thursday

New Mexico Delegation Requests Disaster Declaration for September Floods

LENGTH: 540 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Martin Heinrich, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced they have sent two joint, bipartisan letters to President Obama, urging him to respond quickly to separate requests for disaster assistance for the state of New Mexico and Santa Clara Pueblo.

The state and the Pueblo are asking the federal government for help with hazard mitigation and to repair public infrastructure damaged between Sept. 9 and Sept. 22. During that time, historic, record-breaking rain across New Mexico - which followed severe storms and floods in July - caused catastrophic flooding and damage in about two-thirds of the state. Two people were killed and numerous others evacuated during the rainstorms, and the Red Cross opened shelters in several counties.

Across the state, flooding and landslides washed out roads and bridges, and several communities in Catron, Eddy and Sierra counties were completely isolated. Water control facilities in numerous counties were damaged, including many historic acequias, as well as drinking water systems in McKinley and Cibola counties. Significant damage also occurred on federal facilities, among them the Los Alamos National Lab site and the Gila National Forest's Catwalk Trail, which was completely destroyed.

So far, 42 percent of the state's counties have already declared disasters or emergencies, and more are anticipated. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has spent the last several weeks evaluating the scope of the damage.

"In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from this extreme weather, we would request your expedited attention to the State of New Mexico's request for disaster designation and assistance," the delegation wrote. "The result of the September storms and flooding has been community evacuations, public infrastructure damage, landslides, and damaged homes throughout the state.... We appreciate this quick action to assist the state."

The lawmakers also urged prompt action for Santa Clara Pueblo, which made a separate disaster request. The Pueblo, which is downstream of land damaged in the 2011 Las Conchas Fire, has

experienced severe flooding caused by runoff over the burn scar for several years. Rains in July and again Sept. 13-16 exacerbated the damage. The Pueblo lost water control facilities in the Santa Clara Canyon, and roads, bridges and homes were damaged.

"All of the safety infrastructure built to deal with monsoonal rains causing flooding off of the 2011 Las Conchas Fire burn scar was destroyed as a result of severe rain and the associated flood event," the lawmakers wrote. "Four dams acting as the primary means to control water in Santa Clara Creek leading to the Pueblo's residential area were completely destroyed, and roads, bridges, and community facilities experienced significant damage.... In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from these flooding events, we would request your expedited attention to the Santa Clara Pueblo's request for disaster designation and assistance."

For further information please visit: http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/

LOAD-DATE: October 25, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

444 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal: Blogs (New Mexico)

October 23, 2013 Wednesday

Rep. Lujan Grisham to introduce assisted living legislation for military veterans

BYLINE: Michael Coleman, JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: INSIDE THE BELTWAY

LENGTH: 436 words

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham will introduce bipartisan legislation today that would make assisted living services available to thousands more American veterans.

The Veterans Affairs administration's Independent Living Program serves severely disabled veterans who may not be able to work immediately and need additional rehabilitation to enable them to live more independently. The program's short-term focus is helping veterans to participate in family and community life, but it also aims to increase their ability to possibly return to work in the longer term.

The national cap for enrollment in the program is set at 2,700 veterans. **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., said she wants to remove the cap entirely.

"They created an arbitrary cap," the congresswoman said in a Journal interview. "I'm interested in removing the cap and allowing for them to serve, frankly as many veterans as we can."

It's unclear how many additional veterans would qualify for the program nationally or in New Mexico, but **Lujan** Grisham said she expects the number of participants in New Mexico could grow by at least 25 percent.

A similar bill was introduced in Congress in 2009 by Sen. Daniel Akaka, D-Hawaii. The bill passed the Senate but stalled in the House. A Congressional Budget Office report found that the bill would cost $181 million over 10 years. **Lujan** Grisham said that's a bargain compared to the cost of treating sick and wounded soldiers indefinitely through traditional VA programs or even Medicaid. She said the program also helps make life more manageable for family members of veterans who need the services.

"It's a great support to families and caregivers who, without access to independent living center services, are sort of left on their own with their disabled family member and can't navigate that because there are no services that they are immediately eligible for," she said. "This stuff works it changes everybody's life."

Services provided by the program include:

· Assistive technology

· Specialized medical, health, and/or rehabilitation services

· Services to address any personal and/or family adjustment issues

· Independent living skills training

· Connection with community-based support services

Currently, two Republicans - Rep. Kevin Yoder, R-Kan., and Reid Ribble, R-Wisc. - have co-sponsored the legislation.

"This bill isn't about party politics; this bill is about helping those veterans who have sacrificed the most," Ribble said in an email to the Journal.

Fourteen Democrats, including Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico, are also co-sponsors of the legislation.

LOAD-DATE: October 24, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2013 Albuquerque Journal.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 23, 2013

Lujan Grisham Introduces Bipartisan Bill to Support Disabled Veterans;
Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 603 words

WASHINGTON, DC - U.S. Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham (NM-01) today introduced the Veterans' Independent Living Enhancement Act, bipartisan legislation that would help disabled veterans live independently and participate in family and community life.

This bill removes the arbitrary cap on the number of veterans eligible to participate in the Independent Living Program, a part of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VRandE) Program. The Independent Living Program provides services to maximize independence in daily living for veterans who are too severely disabled to pursue employment.

The Independent Living Program has been highly successful. It began as a pilot program for 500 disabled veterans in 1980. In 2001, the program was extended and the cap increased to allow up to 2,500 veterans to enroll in the program each year. The cap was increased to 2,600 in 2008 and 2,700 in 2010. Today, that arbitrary cap remains while thousands of veterans wait for the opportunity to enter the program and get the services and support they need.

"Throughout the last 12 years of continuous war, our nation's brave men and woman have borne a heavy burden, and many of them have returned home with severe disabilities that make daily activities a challenge," Rep. **Lujan** Grisham said. "These heroes deserve the best possible care, yet there are still impediments that prevent service members from accessing programs they need to enter civilian life. It is our responsibility to remove those barriers and ensure veterans are able to transition from military service to successful rehabilitation and fulfilling lives. That's why I am honored to introduce the Veterans' Independent Living Enhancement Act today."

Numerous Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) and health organizations have expressed support for the Veterans' Independent Living Enhancement Act. Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) Legislative Director Alex Nicholson said, "IAVA supports this strong bipartisan legislation which would help more disabled veterans get the care and services they need to live independent, successful, and fulfilling lives." The Disabled American Veterans added, "Thank you for introducing this legislation and for your continued support of America's wounded and injured veterans."

Easter Seals, an organization that helps people with disabilities, said, "Easter Seals is proud to support the Veterans' Independent Living Enhancement Act. This legislation would help to ensure eligible veterans with significant service-connected disabilities have access to independent living training and supports to help them live independently and participate fully in their communities."

Original Cosponsors: Reps. Matt Cartwright (PA-17), William Enyart (IL-12), Alcee Hastings (FL-20) Steven Horsford (NV-04), Shelia Jackson Lee (TX-18), Hakeem Jeffries (NY-08), Ann McLane Kuster (NH-02), **Ben Ray Lujan** (NM-03), Jim McGovern (MA-02), Gloria Negrete McLeod (CA-35), Beto O'Rourke (TX-16), Reid Ribble (WI-08) Adam Schiff (CA-28), Bobby Scott (VA-03), Niki Tsongas (MA-03), Kevin Yoder (KS-03)

Supporting Organizations: Disabled American Veterans; Vets First; Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA); The America Military Retirees Association; AMVETS; Easter Seals; Mental Health America; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); Association of American Medical Colleges; United Spinal Association

Read this original document at: http://lujangrisham.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/lujan-grisham-introduces-bipartisan-bill-to-support-disabled-veterans

LOAD-DATE: October 24, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMA

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 23, 2013

New Mexico Delegation Requests Disaster Declaration for September Floods; 'Quick action' urged to help state and Santa Clara Pueblo recover from widespread storm damage; Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 594 words

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced they have sent two joint, bipartisan letters to President Obama, urging him to respond quickly to separate requests for disaster assistance for the state of New Mexico and Santa Clara Pueblo.

The state and the Pueblo are asking the federal government for help with hazard mitigation and to repair public infrastructure damaged between Sept. 9 and Sept. 22. During that time, historic, record-breaking rain across New Mexico - which followed severe storms and floods in July - caused catastrophic flooding and damage in about two-thirds of the state. Two people were killed and numerous others evacuated during the rainstorms, and the Red Cross opened shelters in several counties.

Across the state, flooding and landslides washed out roads and bridges, and several communities in Catron, Eddy and Sierra counties were completely isolated. Water control facilities in numerous counties were damaged, including many historic acequias, as well as drinking water systems in McKinley and Cibola counties. Significant damage also occurred on federal facilities, among them the Los Alamos National Lab site and the Gila National Forest's Catwalk Trail, which was completely destroyed.

So far, 42 percent of the state's counties have already declared disasters or emergencies, and more are anticipated. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has spent the last several weeks evaluating the scope of the damage.

"In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from this extreme weather, we would request your expedited attention to the State of New Mexico's request for disaster designation and assistance," the delegation wrote. "The result of the September storms and flooding has been community evacuations, public infrastructure damage, landslides, and damaged homes throughout the state.... We appreciate this quick action to assist the state."

The lawmakers also urged prompt action for Santa Clara Pueblo, which made a separate disaster request. The Pueblo, which is downstream of land damaged in the 2011 Las Conchas Fire, has experienced severe flooding caused by runoff over the burn scar for several years. Rains in July and again Sept. 13-16 exacerbated the damage. The Pueblo lost water control facilities in the Santa Clara Canyon, and roads, bridges and homes were damaged.

"All of the safety infrastructure built to deal with monsoonal rains causing flooding off of the 2011 Las Conchas Fire burn scar was destroyed as a result of severe rain and the associated flood event," the lawmakers wrote. "Four dams acting as the primary means to control water in Santa Clara Creek leading to the Pueblo's residential area were completely destroyed, and roads, bridges, and community facilities experienced significant damage.... In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from these flooding events, we would request your expedited attention to the Santa Clara Pueblo's request for disaster designation and assistance."

The full text of the letters regarding the disaster assistance requests from the state and the Santa Clara Pueblo can be found HERE http://www.scribd.com/doc/178400521/10-22-Delegation-letter-to-NM-re-Sept-floods and HERE http://www.scribd.com/doc/178413615/10-22-Delegation-Letter-re-SC-Sept-Floods.

Read this original document at: http://lujangrisham.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/new-mexico-delegation-requests-disaster-declaration-for-september-floods

LOAD-DATE: October 24, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMA

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

October 23, 2013 Wednesday

Delegation appeals for area flood relief; Disaster Letter sent to Obama

BYLINE: The Staff

SECTION: TODAY'S NEWS

LENGTH: 503 words

Today, U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham announced they have sent two joint, bipartisan letters to President Obama, urging him to respond quickly to separate requests for disaster assistance for the state of New Mexico and Santa Clara Pueblo.

The state and the Pueblo are asking the federal government for help with hazard mitigation and to repair public infrastructure damaged between Sept. 9 and Sept. 22. During that time, historic, record-breaking rain across New Mexico - which followed severe storms and floods in July - caused catastrophic flooding and damage in about two-thirds of the state. Two people were killed and numerous others evacuated during the rainstorms, and the Red Cross opened shelters in several counties.

Los Alamos County was one of the counties appealing for relief from the government. The county estimated it had more than $5 million in damage.

Across the state, flooding and landslides washed out roads and bridges, and several communities in Catron, Eddy and Sierra counties were completely isolated. Water control facilities in numerous counties were damaged, including many historic acequias, as well as drinking water systems in McKinley and Cibola counties. Significant damage also occurred on federal facilities, among them the Los Alamos National Lab site and the Gila National Forest's Catwalk Trail, which was completely destroyed.

So far, 42 percent of the state's counties have already declared disasters or emergencies, and more are anticipated. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has spent the last several weeks evaluating the scope of the damage.

"In light of the ongoing losses and possible long-term impacts from this extreme weather, we would request your expedited attention to the State of New Mexico's request for disaster designation and assistance," the delegation wrote. "The result of the September storms and flooding has been community evacuations, public infrastructure damage, landslides, and damaged homes throughout the state.... We appreciate this quick action to assist the state."

The lawmakers also urged prompt action for Santa Clara Pueblo, which made a separate disaster request. The Pueblo, which is downstream of land damaged in the 2011 Las Conchas Fire, has experienced severe flooding caused by runoff over the burn scar for several years. Rains in July and again Sept. 13-16 exacerbated the damage. The Pueblo lost water control facilities in the Santa Clara Canyon, and roads, bridges and homes were damaged.

"All of the safety infrastructure built to deal with monsoonal rains causing flooding off of the 2011 Las Conchas Fire burn scar was destroyed as a result of severe rain and the associated flood event," the lawmakers wrote.

"Four dams acting as the primary means to control water in Santa Clara Creek leading to the Pueblo's residential area were completely destroyed, and roads, bridges, and community facilities experienced significant damage."

LOAD-DATE: October 24, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

October 23, 2013 Wednesday 1:16 AM EST

Lujan Supports Water Resources Bill that Enables Army Corps Projects

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 388 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted today in support of H.R. 3080, the Water Resources Reform and Development Act. The bipartisan legislation authorizes funding for the Army Corps of Engineers for improvements to America's ports, waterways, and projects tied to flood protection and environmental restoration.

"While I would have preferred a bill that reflected the Senate-passed version that better allows the Army Corps of Engineers to properly manage our critical habitat, assess flood damage caused by the destruction of wildfires, and meet the vital needs of water infrastructure in New Mexico, this legislation provides the House with an opportunity to move forward toward a conference committee with the Senate," Congressman **Lujan** said. "Moving through the regular order to address the differences between the bills will enable Congress to produce legislation that will authorize important improvements to New Mexico's dams, rivers, and water infrastructure. I will encourage the conference committee to support the Senate language that addresses critical priorities for New Mexico."

Lujan offered several amendments to improve the House legislation that were not made in order by the Republican-led Rules Committee, and he will continue to advocate for vital programs such as the Rio Grande Environmental Management Program.

"One aspect that was left out of this bill that would have been addressed by one of my amendments is the extension of the Rio Grande Environmental Management Program," **Lujan** added. "The Rio Grande watershed is the fifth largest in North America, covering the states of Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas. My amendment would have extended the life of the project to 2024 and allowed the Army Corps of Engineers to assess flood damage reduction measures for floods in the aftermath of wildfires - fires that have turned our watershed and Rio Grande black with soot and debris. Assessing the damage done by fires is critical for us to understand how to deal with future challenges. I am hopeful that when the House and Senate works out the differences on this bill that the reauthorization of this important program will be included."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131030-4531945 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: November 3, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

October 18, 2013 Friday 11:49 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: Pass Immigration Reform Now

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 346 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

While the work of the nation has been stalled by the Republicans' government shutdown, most of the the critical work of the nation has been left unfinished--including immigration reform.

It's been more than 100 days since the U.S. Senate passed a bipartisan immigration reform bill. House Democrats, including New Mexico's Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** and Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, have sponsored similar legislation in Congress (http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-113hr15ih/pdf/BILLS-113hr15ih.pdf). With the end of the shutdown, it's time for the House of Representatives to get back to business and pass the immigration reform bill now.

President Obama agrees. In an interview with Univision, the President named immigration as his next priority, "Once that's done [the shutdown]... the day after, I'm going to be pushing to say, call a vote on immigration reform." Yesterday, in his statement on the end of the government shutdown, the President doubled down, saying, "We should finish the job of fixing our broken immigration system."

Immigration reform is long overdue, and enactment of the bill would be good for all Americans. According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, enactment of the bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform bill would reduce the deficit by $850 billion. CBO also estimates that immigration reform would increase economic growth by 3.3 percent in 2023 and 5.4 percent in 2033.

That's one of the best things about immigration reform: It's going to make the economy a lot better. This video breaks down exactly how that works (http://youtu.be/mSYR6Z-RTT0)--how fixing our broken system will create jobs, boost wages, cut the deficit, and foster innovation. Not enough people are talking about this fact, so watch it, then share it (http://youtu.be/mSYR6Z-RTT0)! It's time for Congress to get back to work.

View video here : (http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=mSYR6Z-RTT0)

Copyright Targeted News Services

CC AutoTriage4psi 131019-30VitinMar-4522237

LOAD-DATE: October 19, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

450 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

October 17, 2013 Thursday

NM delegation glad shutdown over, hopes for better

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 499 words

The members of New Mexico's Congressional delegation said they were pleased federal agencies were back in business today and that the threat of a national default had passed.

But they expressed concern that the deal reached Wednesday night may or may not denote a turning point in Republican-Democrat cooperation.

Under the legislation passed Wednesday, the shutdown will end and the government will be funded until Jan. 15. The debt ceiling will be lifted until February 7. House and Senate negotiators will form a conference committee aimed at hammering out a compromise on a budget plan by Dec. 13.

"While I would have preferred legislation that extends the debt limit for a longer period of time and that funds the government at a higher level, this represents a compromise that will finally end the government shutdown that has hurt families in New Mexico and protect the full faith and credit of our nation by ensuring we do not default for the first time in history," said Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District.

Rep. Steve Pearce from the Second District, and the delegation's sole Republican, voted against the agreement, but was pleased that it ended fears of further furloughs.

"The good news is that this challenging time for New Mexicans seems to be over," Pearce said. "The bad news is that the agreement does not end the double standard for Washington, nor does it change our nation's dangerous course of reckless spending. While I am happy that furloughed employees can go back to work, I will not be able to support tonight's legislation, which does nothing to address the problems we were elected to solve"

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham from the First District said she hopes the crisis has taught fellow members of Congress a lesson.

"The last few weeks have proven beyond a doubt that recklessly shutting down the government and sabotaging the economy is simply not a responsible way to govern," she said. "New Mexicans expect and deserve a Congress where Democrats and Republicans respect and value each other's ideas - even if they are vastly different - and want to work together."

Sen. Martin Heinrich echoed that sentiment. "Our economy desperately needs long-term stability," Heinrich said. "I hope that today's agreement, and the willingness shown by reasonable minds to work together, will mark the end of governing by manufactured crises and open the door to broader budget discussions and long-term solutions."

Sen. Tom Udall agreed. "I hope we've reached a turning point for Congress that will result in greater bipartisan cooperation," Udall said. "No matter who is in charge, no party should hold the country hostage to make a political point. I'm relieved to return to focusing on strengthening our country and our economy, and finding a sustainable, long-term solution to our nation's finances."

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: October 17, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

October 17, 2013 Thursday

Fed workers could be back on job today; NM Democrats back funding bill

BYLINE: Michael Coleman Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. A2

LENGTH: 769 words

WASHINGTON - Democrats in New Mexico's congressional delegation voted Wednesday for a bill to re-open the federal government after a 16-day shutdown, while Rep. Steve Pearce, the delegation's lone Republican, opposed the legislation.

Votes in the U.S. House and Senate to end the shutdown came as thousands of workers at Los Alamos and Sandia national laboratories awaited furlough notices - notices that now will not come.

Federal workers already furloughed could be back on the job as soon as today.

"Now that the bill has passed the United States Senate and the House of Representatives, the president plans to sign it tonight and employees should expect to return to work in the morning," Sylvia Mathews Burwell, director of the Office of Management and Budget, said in a statement released by the White House Press Office late Wednesday.

"Employees should be checking the news and OPM's (Office of Personnel Management) website for further updates," the statement said.

The bill Congress approved Wednesday night would provide back pay for federal workers who were furloughed during the shutdown.

Pearce, of New Mexico's 2nd Congressional District, said he couldn't support the legislation Congress approved to re-open the government on Wednesday.

"The good news is this giant mess is over," Pearce said in a conference call with reporters. "The bad news is that we're doing nothing substantial. We really are doing nothing to lower the debt, to get spending under control, nothing about entitlements."

Pearce said he could have supported a bill to re-open government if it also barred members of Congress and their staffs from receiving federal assistance for their health care under the Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare. A bill under consideration Tuesday would have done so, but the measure never came to a vote.

"That was a disappointment," Pearce said.

Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., voiced relief that the impasse appeared to be over. He said House Republicans, who had refused to accept legislation that didn't postpone or de-fund Obamacare before backing down on Wednesday, hurt New Mexico.

"Obviously those tactics didn't work, but New Mexico pays a huge economic price for those irresponsible, completely reckless negotiating tactics," Heinrich said.

Heinrich said repeated Washington fiscal crises are hampering the U.S. economy.

"This economy wants to take off," Heinrich said. "There are a lot of positive signs in the economy that are being held back by this shutdown and brinksmanship over the debt ceiling. If we can take that out of the equation and show some predictability I think we would have an opportunity to get this economy moving in the right direction again."

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, like other New Mexico delegation Democrats, said he would have preferred a longer-term deal to keep the government open.

"This legislation, while not perfect, will ensure that New Mexico's national labs stay open, furloughed employees can get back on the job, and that services for the most vulnerable will no longer be delayed," **Lujan** said. "It puts an end to the political games that have gone on too long."

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., said a provision in the bill that will force bipartisan budget negotiations was a positive addition.

"This agreement puts us on a path to negotiate a longer-term budget that replaces sequestration's damaging cuts with a balanced approach to deficit reduction and that reflects the priorities that matter most to New Mexicans: creating good-paying jobs and growing the economy," she said. "The last few weeks have proven beyond a doubt that recklessly shutting down the government and sabotaging the economy is simply not a responsible way to govern.

Sen Tom Udall, D-N.M., voiced relief about the deal.

"Reason has finally prevailed in Congress, and we have a bipartisan agreement that will enable us to re-open the government, pay our bills and begin to restore the damage the shutdown caused to our economy," Udall said. "I hope that we've reached a turning point for Congress that will result in greater bipartisan cooperation. No matter who is in charge, no party should hold the country hostage to make a political point."

The deal comes as Sandia and Los Alamos national laboratories were on the verge of shutting their doors. Run by federal contractors, the nuclear weapons laboratories continued to operate using carryover funding. Los Alamos was preparing to shut down at the end of the day Friday if no agreement was reached, and Sandia was preparing to shut its doors at the end of the day Monday.

Staff writers John Fleck and Jim

Monteleone contributed to this

report.

LOAD-DATE: October 17, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: PEARCE: Wanted Congress ban on assistance
HEINRICH: "This economy wants to take off"

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Albuquerque Journal

Alamogordo Daily News (New Mexico)

October 16, 2013 Wednesday

NM Democratic delegation: Government shutdown was painful, preventable

BYLINE: By Milan Simonich msimonich@tnmnp.com @MilansNMreport on Twitter

SECTION: NEWS

LENGTH: 741 words

Government shutdown was painful, preventable, NM Democratic delegation says

SANTA FE >> All four Democrats in New Mexico's congressional delegation on Wednesday night planned to vote for a bill to reopen the federal government.

The state's only Republican in Congress, Rep. Steve Pearce of Hobbs, said he would oppose the measure because it would mean more borrowing and more deficit spending.

"Tonight, the House and Senate are expected to vote on an agreement to end the shutdown. The good news is that this challenging time for New Mexicans seems to be over. The bad news is that the agreement does not end the double standard for Washington, nor does it change our nation's dangerous course of reckless spending," Pearce said in a statement.

"While I am happy that furloughed employees can go back to work, I will not be able to support tonight's legislation, which does nothing to address the problems we were elected to solve."

U.S. Sen. Martin Heinrich said the bill ending the government shutdown offered a short-term solution that should have been achieved long ago without any disruption in government services.

In a telephone interview, Heinrich, D-Albuquerque, said nothing in the proposed deal was groundbreaking. He said each component was available previously, but House Republicans pressed for the shutdown as leverage to defund President Obama's health care law.

"New Mexico has paid a large price for this game of chicken. It was completely reckless" Heinrich said.

Standard & Poor's, financial ratings company, estimated Wednesday that said the shutdown had removed $24 billion from the U.S. economy in 16 days.

Heinrich said he hoped that the compromise would be a building block for cooperation between the House and Senate in agreeing on a budget.

Doing so would put Congress in a practical position to make the government function more smoothly, he said.

Even with a deal seemingly close at hand, Heinrich said there was no cause for celebration.

"I agree with the sentiment that there are no winners here," he said.

New Mexico's senior senator, Democrat Tom Udall, was more upbeat.

"Reason has finally prevailed in Congress, and we have a bipartisan agreement that will enable us to reopen the government, pay our bills and begin to restore the damage the shutdown caused to our economy. I'm also pleased the agreement includes a provision I fought for that will ensure retroactive pay for those federal workers in New Mexico and across the country who were furloughed through no fault of their own."

Udall said he hoped that Congress had reached a turning point that would lead to more bipartisan cooperation.

The compromise bill would reopen the government, fund it through Jan. 15 and raise the debt ceiling on federal borrowing until Feb. 7.

U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-Santa Fe, said the deal was imperfect, but essential.

"While I would have preferred legislation that extends the debt limit for a longer period and that funds the government at a higher level, this represents a compromise that will finally end the government shutdown that has hurt families in New Mexico," **Lujan** said.

He said the compromise would "protect the full faith and credit of our nation by ensuring we do not default for the first time in history."

Like Heinrich, **Lujan** said the shutdown was unnecessary and needlessly hurt people.

He said the compromise "puts an end to the political games that have gone on too long. It is deeply disappointing that, once again, manufactured crises have taken a toll on our economy and on the

day-to-day lives of people in New Mexico who have had to go without a paycheck or the benefits they count on."

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-Albuquerque, said she was eager to end the shutdown.

"I look forward to voting for the Senate's bipartisan agreement that will reopen the government, put furloughed New Mexicans back to work, prevent furloughs at Sandia and Los Alamos national labs and avert a catastrophic debt default," she said.

She said the compromise would be valuable in another sense.

"This agreement puts us on a path to negotiate a longer-term budget that replaces sequestration's damaging cuts with a balanced approach to deficit reduction and that reflects the priorities that matter most to New Mexicans: creating good-paying jobs and growing the economy," **Lujan** Grisham said.

Milan Simonich, Santa Fe Bureau chief of Texas-New Mexico Newspapers, can be reached at (505) 820-6898. His blog is atnmcapitolreport.com .

LOAD-DATE: October 17, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: Rep. Steve Pearce
Sen. Tom Udall
Sen. Martin Heinrich

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Alamogordo Daily News, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

States News Service

October 16, 2013 Wednesday

LUJAN VOTES TO END SHUTDOWN, AVOID GOVERNMENT DEFAULT, AND KEEP LABS OPEN

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 339 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted tonight for compromise legislation that will end the government shutdown, raise the debt ceiling so the government can pay its bills,

and establishes a conference committee for the House and Senate to negotiate on a budget for the coming year.

"While I would have preferred legislation that extends the debt limit for a longer period of time and that funds the government at a higher level, this represents a compromise that will finally end the government shutdown that has hurt families in New Mexico and protect the full faith and credit of our nation by ensuring we do not default for the first time in history," Congressman **Lujan** said.

Under the legislation, the shutdown will end and the government will be funded until January 15. The debt ceiling will be lifted until February 7. House and Senate negotiators will form a conference committee aimed at hammering out a compromise on a budget plan by December 13.

"This legislation, while not perfect, will ensure that New Mexico's national labs stay open, furloughed employees can get back on the job, and that services for the most vulnerable will no longer be delayed. It puts an end to the political games that have gone on too long," **Lujan** added. "It is deeply disappointing that once again, manufactured crises have taken a toll on our economy and on the day-to-day lives of people in New Mexico who have had to go without a paycheck or the benefits they count on. For too long, the extreme elements of one party let the pursuit of ideological gains trump common sense. I am hopeful that we can move forward, having learned a lesson that holding the country hostage over government funding and the threat of default is reckless and irresponsible. It is now time to get to work on a budget that addresses the arbitrary cuts of the sequester and puts our country on a path forward that will grow our economy and lead to job creation."

LOAD-DATE: October 18, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

Targeted News Service

October 16, 2013 Wednesday 11:23 PM EST

Lujan Votes to End Shutdown, Avoid Government Default, and Keep Labs Open

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 349 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District voted tonight for compromise legislation that will end the government shutdown, raise the debt ceiling so the government can pay its bills, and establishes a conference committee for the House and Senate to negotiate on a budget for the coming year.

"While I would have preferred legislation that extends the debt limit for a longer period of time and that funds the government at a higher level, this represents a compromise that will finally end the government shutdown that has hurt families in New Mexico and protect the full faith and credit of our nation by ensuring we do not default for the first time in history," Congressman **Lujan** said.

Under the legislation, the shutdown will end and the government will be funded until January 15. The debt ceiling will be lifted until February 7. House and Senate negotiators will form a conference committee aimed at hammering out a compromise on a budget plan by December 13.

"This legislation, while not perfect, will ensure that New Mexico's national labs stay open, furloughed employees can get back on the job, and that services for the most vulnerable will no longer be delayed. It puts an end to the political games that have gone on too long," **Lujan** added. "It is deeply disappointing that once again, manufactured crises have taken a toll on our economy and on the day-to-day lives of people in New Mexico who have had to go without a paycheck or the benefits they count on. For too long, the extreme elements of one party let the pursuit of ideological gains trump common sense. I am hopeful that we can move forward, having learned a lesson that holding the country hostage over government funding and the threat of default is reckless and irresponsible. It is now time to get to work on a budget that addresses the arbitrary cuts of the sequester and puts our country on a path forward that will grow our economy and lead to job creation."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131018-4520607 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: October 18, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 15, 2013

Lujan and Energy and Commerce Committee Democrats Call for an End to Government Shutdown; Shutdown Causing Widespread Disruption; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 800 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District joined with Democratic members of the Energy and Commerce Committee today to send a letter to House Speaker John Boehner on the impact the Republicans' government shutdown is having on programs

within the Committee's jurisdiction. The shutdown is causing widespread disruptions in federal programs relating to health, consumer and product safety, energy and the environment, and telecommunications.

In the letter the members write, "We urge you to immediately allow a vote on a clean bill to reopen the entire federal government. The Republican-led government shutdown is having serious negative impacts on our nation."

The full text of the letter is available below and online here http://democrats.energycommerce.house.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Boehner-Shutdown-Effects-2013-10-15.pdf.

October 15, 2013

The Honorable John Boehner

Speaker of the House

United States House of Representatives

H-232 The Capitol

Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

We urge you to immediately allow a vote on a clean bill to reopen the entire federal government. The Republican-led government shutdown is having serious negative impacts on our nation.

As members of the Energy and Commerce Committee, we have responsibility for federal programs relating to health, consumer and product safety, energy and the environment, and telecommunications. In all of these areas, the shutdown is causing widespread disruption.

Here are just a few examples:

* The shutdown's impact on food safety. The Food and Drug Administration cannot "support the majority of its food safety, nutrition, and cosmetics activities." The agency has ceased "safety activities such as routine establishment inspections, some compliance and enforcement activities, monitoring of imports, notification programs (e.g., food contact substances, infant formula), and the majority of the laboratory research necessary to inform public health decision-making."

* The shutdown's impact on public health and medical research. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is able to provide only "minimal support" to protect public health in other areas and has halted key programs. The National Institutes of Health has ceased accepting new patients for clinical trials and has stopped action on grant applications and awards.

* The shutdown's impact on consumers and product safety. The Federal Trade Commission cannot investigate and prosecute perpetrators of fraudulent actions against U.S. citizens. The vehicle safety activities of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration are entirely shut down, preventing agency officials from investigating highway crashes to determine if they are caused by auto defects. The Consumer Product Safety Commission is almost entirely shut down, leaving it unable to investigate potential consumer product hazards.

* The shutdown's impact on the energy and the environment. The Environmental Protection Agency has halted most Superfund cleanups and furloughed virtually all of its civil enforcement staff. The Chemical Safety Board has halted its investigation into the causes of the West, Texas fertilizer explosion and frozen its investigations into 14 other sites located in California, Washington, Utah, and Texas. The authority of the Department of Homeland Security to enforce the Chemical Facility

Antiterrorism Standards (CFATS) program, which protects the nation from terrorist attacks on chemical facilities, has expired.

* The shutdown's impact on spectrum supply and funding for first responder communications network. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) may be forced to postpone the first spectrum auction for mobile broadband in six years scheduled for January 2014. Neither the National Telecommunications Information Administration nor the FCC is able to work with federal, regional, and local agencies to investigate possible communications system failures for first responders during the shooting at the Navy Yard last month.

These are just a few examples of the broad impacts the Republican government shutdown is having on our nation's federal programs relating to health, consumer and product safety, energy and the environment, and telecommunications.

We urge you to end the government shutdown and allow the federal government to resume full operations.

Sincerely,

Henry A. Waxman Bobby L. Rush

Frank Pallone, Jr. Jan Schakowsky

Bruce Braley

John Yarmuth Peter Welch

Lois Capps Ben R. **Lujan**

Jim Matheson John Barrow

Jerry McNerney Diana DeGette

John Sarbanes Gene Green

Donna Christensen Anna G. Eshoo

Doris O. Matsui Paul D. Tonko

Kathy Castor Mike Doyle

John D. Dingell Eliot L. Engel

G.K. Butterfield

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/index.php?option=com_contentandtask=viewandid=1131andItemid=125

LOAD-DATE: October 16, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMA

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 15, 2013

Lujan: Piecemeal Funding Bill Hurts Native American Communities;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 261 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement after voting against piecemeal legislation last night that locks in sequestration funding levels on tribal programs and fails to restore many critical services for Native American communities.

"This piecemeal approach to fund the government fails to meet our trust responsibility to our Native American brothers and sisters. Not one tribe or tribal organization supports this course of action because it would lock in sequestration cuts that are devastating tribal programs.

"Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly called this approach 'insulting' and said tribal nations want a comprehensive resolution as well as an end to the sequester. By taking piecemeal steps to fund our government, this bill fails to restore many critical services that are important to tribal communities, and in fact, makes the problems facing Indian Country worse, not better. With this bill, Republicans have ignored the role that other federal departments play in providing services to tribal communities. Tribes rely on services from the Department of Housing, the Department of Justice, and many other parts of our federal government, which are not covered through this piecemeal legislation.

"It is time to act on a clean continuing resolution that reopens the entire federal government and then get to work on a solution that undoes the deep cuts of the sequester."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/index.php?option=com_contentandtask=viewandid=1130andItemid=125

LOAD-DATE: October 16, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMA

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

October 15, 2013 Tuesday

LUJAN: PIECEMEAL FUNDING BILL HURTS NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 252 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement after voting against piecemeal legislation last night that locks in sequestration funding levels on tribal programs and fails to restore many critical services for Native American communities.

"This piecemeal approach to fund the government fails to meet our trust responsibility to our Native American brothers and sisters. Not one tribe or tribal organization supports this course of action because it would lock in sequestration cuts that are devastating tribal programs.

"Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly called this approach "insulting' and said tribal nations want a comprehensive resolution as well as an end to the sequester. By taking piecemeal steps to fund our government, this bill fails to restore many critical services that are important to tribal communities, and in fact, makes the problems facing Indian Country worse, not better. With this bill, Republicans have ignored the role that other federal departments play in providing services to tribal communities. Tribes rely on services from the Department of Housing, the Department of Justice, and many other parts of our federal government, which are not covered through this piecemeal legislation.

"It is time to act on a clean continuing resolution that reopens the entire federal government and then get to work on a solution that undoes the deep cuts of the sequester."

LOAD-DATE: October 15, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

Targeted News Service

October 15, 2013 Tuesday 2:04 AM EST

Lujan and Energy and Commerce Committee Democrats Call for an End to Government Shutdown

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 799 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District joined with Democratic members of the Energy and Commerce Committee today to send a letter to House Speaker John Boehner on the impact the Republicans' government shutdown is having on programs within the Committee's jurisdiction. The shutdown is causing widespread disruptions in federal programs relating to health, consumer and product safety, energy and the environment, and telecommunications.

In the letter the members write, "We urge you to immediately allow a vote on a clean bill to reopen the entire federal government. The Republican-led government shutdown is having serious negative impacts on our nation."

The full text of the letter is available below and online here (http://democrats.energycommerce.house.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Boehner-Shutdown-Effects-2013-10-15.pdf).

October 15, 2013

The Honorable John Boehner

Speaker of the House

United States House of Representatives

H-232 The Capitol

Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

We urge you to immediately allow a vote on a clean bill to reopen the entire federal government. The Republican-led government shutdown is having serious negative impacts on our nation.

As members of the Energy and Commerce Committee, we have responsibility for federal programs relating to health, consumer and product safety, energy and the environment, and telecommunications. In all of these areas, the shutdown is causing widespread disruption.

Here are just a few examples:

* The shutdown's impact on food safety. The Food and Drug Administration cannot "support the majority of its food safety, nutrition, and cosmetics activities." The agency has ceased "safety activities such as routine establishment inspections, some compliance and enforcement activities, monitoring of imports, notification programs (e.g., food contact substances, infant formula), and the majority of the laboratory research necessary to inform public health decision-making."

* The shutdown's impact on public health and medical research. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is able to provide only "minimal support" to protect public health in other areas and has

halted key programs. The National Institutes of Health has ceased accepting new patients for clinical trials and has stopped action on grant applications and awards.

* The shutdown's impact on consumers and product safety. The Federal Trade Commission cannot investigate and prosecute perpetrators of fraudulent actions against U.S. citizens. The vehicle safety activities of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration are entirely shut down, preventing agency officials from investigating highway crashes to determine if they are caused by auto defects. The Consumer Product Safety Commission is almost entirely shut down, leaving it unable to investigate potential consumer product hazards.

* The shutdown's impact on the energy and the environment. The Environmental Protection Agency has halted most Superfund cleanups and furloughed virtually all of its civil enforcement staff. The Chemical Safety Board has halted its investigation into the causes of the West, Texas fertilizer explosion and frozen its investigations into 14 other sites located in California, Washington, Utah, and Texas. The authority of the Department of Homeland Security to enforce the Chemical Facility Antiterrorism Standards (CFATS) program, which protects the nation from terrorist attacks on chemical facilities, has expired.

* The shutdown's impact on spectrum supply and funding for first responder communications network. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) may be forced to postpone the first spectrum auction for mobile broadband in six years scheduled for January 2014. Neither the National Telecommunications Information Administration nor the FCC is able to work with federal, regional, and local agencies to investigate possible communications system failures for first responders during the shooting at the Navy Yard last month.

These are just a few examples of the broad impacts the Republican government shutdown is having on our nation's federal programs relating to health, consumer and product safety, energy and the environment, and telecommunications.

We urge you to end the government shutdown and allow the federal government to resume full operations.

Sincerely,

Henry A. Waxman

Frank Pallone, Jr.

Bruce Braley

John Yarmuth

Lois Capps

Jim Matheson

Jerry McNerney

John Sarbanes

Donna Christensen

Doris O. Matsui

Kathy Castor

John D. Dingell

G.K. Butterfield

Bobby L. Rush

Jan Schakowsky

Peter Welch

Ben R. **Lujan**

John Barrow

Diana DeGette

Gene Green

Anna G. Eshoo

Paul D. Tonko

Mike Doyle

Contact:

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131017-4519793 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: October 17, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

October 15, 2013 Tuesday 2:04 AM EST

Lujan: Piecemeal Funding Bill Hurts Native American Communities

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 262 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement after voting against piecemeal legislation last night that locks in sequestration funding levels on tribal programs and fails to restore many critical services for Native American communities.

"This piecemeal approach to fund the government fails to meet our trust responsibility to our Native American brothers and sisters. Not one tribe or tribal organization supports this course of action because it would lock in sequestration cuts that are devastating tribal programs.

"Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly called this approach 'insulting' and said tribal nations want a comprehensive resolution as well as an end to the sequester. By taking piecemeal steps to fund our government, this bill fails to restore many critical services that are important to tribal communities, and in fact, makes the problems facing Indian Country worse, not better. With this bill, Republicans have ignored the role that other federal departments play in providing services to tribal communities. Tribes rely on services from the Department of Housing, the Department of Justice, and many other parts of our federal government, which are not covered through this piecemeal legislation.

"It is time to act on a clean continuing resolution that reopens the entire federal government and then get to work on a solution that undoes the deep cuts of the sequester."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131017-4519795 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: October 17, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

460 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal: Blogs (New Mexico)

October 14, 2013 Monday

New Mexico's congressional offices open for business

BYLINE: Michael Coleman, JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: INSIDE THE BELTWAY

LENGTH: 502 words

The federal government shutdown remains in effect with no apparent solution at the ready, but New Mexico's congressional offices in Washington and in New Mexico are open for business.

When the shutdown began on Oct. 1, Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich both closed each of their six offices, including the ones in Washington, and furloughed about 75 percent of their staffs. But as of today, the offices are once-again fully staffed and open for business.

"Senator Udall is working hard to find consensus so we can re-open the government," said Udall spokeswoman Jennifer Talhelm. "He believes it is unconscionable that important federal agencies have had to shut their doors because of dysfunction in Washington. The House has passed a bill unanimously to pay federal workers furloughed through no fault of their own, and Senator Udall is a strong supporter of the bill. Negotiations in the Senate on the bill have been positive, and Tom believes it has a strong chance of passing the Senate and being signed into law. With that in mind, he believes that his staff should be working and helping New Mexicans to the best of their abilities, especially while other federal offices are unable to. "

Whitney Potter, spokeswoman for Heinrich said legislation to restore pay to federal employees has passed the House and stands a good chance of passage in the Senate, which factored into his decision to bring his full staff back on the job. Congressional staffers are working but will not get paid unless Congress writes that into law.

"Though the offices will be open, the federal government will still be shutdown, which means there will be limitations on office operations," Potter said. "Having all staff return to work will provide needed help to the senator as he fulfills his responsibilities in D.C. and in New Mexico and continues his work to reopen the government.

"Senator Heinrich is a co-sponsor of the Federal Employee Retroactive Pay Fairness Act, which is identical to the bill that passed the House last weekend. The Senate has yet to take up the legislation, but negotiations to do so are both ongoing and constructive. While the government shutdown continues and a resolution remains elusive, the events surrounding retroactive pay for all federal workers that transpired recently helped lead to the decision to open the Senator's offices.

"Given that this continues to be a fluid situation, scenarios exist where we could close the offices and have some staff go back into furlough status once again," Potter added.

New Mexico's three U.S. House offices also are staffed and open for business this week. Sen. Steve Pearce initially furloughed his entire staff but brought most of them back on last week and re-opened his district offices and Washington. Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham had planned to implement rotating furloughs for her staff, but is now fully staffed with all offices open. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., has kept his staff working and offices open since the beginning of the shutdown.

LOAD-DATE: October 15, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2013 Albuquerque Journal.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

461 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal: Blogs (New Mexico)

October 14, 2013 Monday

New Mexico's congressional offices open for business

BYLINE: Michael Coleman, JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: INSIDE THE BELTWAY

LENGTH: 502 words

The federal government shutdown remains in effect with no apparent solution at the ready, but New Mexico's congressional offices in Washington and in New Mexico are open for business.

When the shutdown began on Oct. 1, Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich both closed each of their six offices, including the ones in Washington, and furloughed about 75 percent of their staffs. But as of today, the offices are once-again fully staffed and open for business.

"Senator Udall is working hard to find consensus so we can re-open the government," said Udall spokeswoman Jennifer Talhelm. "He believes it is unconscionable that important federal agencies have had to shut their doors because of dysfunction in Washington. The House has passed a bill unanimously to pay federal workers furloughed through no fault of their own, and Senator Udall is a strong supporter of the bill. Negotiations in the Senate on the bill have been positive, and Tom believes it has a strong chance of passing the Senate and being signed into law. With that in mind, he believes that his staff should be working and helping New Mexicans to the best of their abilities, especially while other federal offices are unable to. "

Whitney Potter, spokeswoman for Heinrich said legislation to restore pay to federal employees has passed the House and stands a good chance of passage in the Senate, which factored into his decision to bring his full staff back on the job. Congressional staffers are working but will not get paid unless Congress writes that into law.

"Though the offices will be open, the federal government will still be shutdown, which means there will be limitations on office operations," Potter said. "Having all staff return to work will provide needed help to the senator as he fulfills his responsibilities in D.C. and in New Mexico and continues his work to reopen the government.

"Senator Heinrich is a co-sponsor of the Federal Employee Retroactive Pay Fairness Act, which is identical to the bill that passed the House last weekend. The Senate has yet to take up the legislation, but negotiations to do so are both ongoing and constructive. While the government shutdown continues and a resolution remains elusive, the events surrounding retroactive pay for all federal workers that transpired recently helped lead to the decision to open the Senator's offices.

"Given that this continues to be a fluid situation, scenarios exist where we could close the offices and have some staff go back into furlough status once again," Potter added.

New Mexico's three U.S. House offices also are staffed and open for business this week. Sen. Steve Pearce initially furloughed his entire staff but brought most of them back on last week and re-opened his district offices and Washington. Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham had planned to implement rotating furloughs for her staff, but is now fully staffed with all offices open. Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., has kept his staff working and offices open since the beginning of the shutdown.

LOAD-DATE: October 23, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2013 Albuquerque Journal.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Carlsbad Current-Argus (New Mexico)

October 13, 2013 Sunday

Voting record for New Mexico's congressional delegation

BYLINE: The voting record for New Mexico's congressional delegation for the week of Oct. 6-12.

SECTION: NEWS

LENGTH: 340 words

U.S. House

HJ RES 77 Making continuing appropriations for the Food and Drug Administration for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes. (Passed 235-162) Steve Pearce yes, **Ben Ray Lujan** no, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham no.

HJ RES 84 Making continuing appropriations for Head Start for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes. (Passed 248-168) Pearce yes, **Lujan** no, **Lujan** Grisham no.

HR 3273 Making appropriations for the salaries and related expenses of certain federal employees during a lapse in funding authority for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes. (Passed 420-0) Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HJ RES 90 Making continuing appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes. (Passed 252-172) Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HJ RES 91 (Passed 425-0) Making continuing appropriations for death gratuities and related survivor benefits for survivors of deceased military service members of the Department of Defense for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes. Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HJ RES 79 Making continuing appropriations for certain components of the Department of Homeland Security for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes. (Passed 249-175) Pearce yes, **Lujan** yes, **Lujan** Grisham yes.

HJ RES 76 Making continuing appropriations for the National Nuclear Security Administration for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes. (Passed 248-176) Pearce yes, **Lujan** no, **Lujan** Grisham no.

H RES 380 Relating to consideration of the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 2642, the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act, and for consideration of H.Res. 378 and H.Res. 379, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding certain provisions of the Senate amendment to H.R. 2642. (Passed 223-189) Pearce yes, **Lujan** no, **Lujan** Grisham no.
U.S. Senate

Confirmation Colin Stirling Bruce, of Illinois, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of Illinois. (Confirmed 96-0) Tom Udall yes, Martin Heinrich yes.

LOAD-DATE: October 14, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Carlsbad Current-Argus, a MediaNews Group Newspaper
All Rights Reserved

463 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

October 12, 2013 Saturday

Funding cuts loom at labs; Reductions possible even if a shutdown is averted

BYLINE: Copyright © 2013 Albuquerque Journal By John Fleck Journal Staff Writer

SECTION: FRONT PAGE; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 899 words

Beyond the federal government shutdown, Congress is lurching toward what could be substantial budget cuts for nuclear weapons work at New Mexico's nuclear weapons laboratories.

The budget problems extend past the near-term question of a shutdown at Los Alamos and Sandia national laboratories, which are both preparing to mothball their operations and send most of their nearly 20,000 employees home by the end of next week

While near-term attention is focused on whether Congress will act in time to prevent lab shutdowns, Los Alamos and Sandia face a longer-term problem that could reduce federal nuclear weapons spending in New Mexico by hundreds of millions of dollars in the coming year, even if the shutdowns are avoided.

That is because longer-term spending plans for small agencies like the National Nuclear Security Administration have largely been relegated to budgeting on autopilot.

Those autopilot measures, a combination of "continuing resolutions" to fund work at last year's levels and the automatic "sequester" cuts approved in a 2011 budget deal, would lead to significant cuts for the National Nuclear Security Administration's nuclear weapons budget.

One such bill, passed Friday by the House, would cut the weapons budget 8 percent, according to an analysis by the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office. If those cuts are applied evenly across the agency for the next 12 months, they would translate to a $240 million reduction in federal spending in New Mexico over the next 12 months.

Ironically, the congressional gridlock could soon accomplish what arms control activists have repeatedly failed to do, curbing the rapid growth of the U.S. nuclear weapons budget. The result could force the labs and the National Nuclear Security Administration to seriously consider steps nuclear weapons opponents have long advocated, including less emphasis on large nuclear weapon design and remanufacturing projects and multibillion dollar buildings to do the work, said Greg Mello of the Albuquerque-based Los Alamos Study Group. "They're going to have to change their paradigm," Mello said.

While Friday's bill, part of a House Republican strategy to reopen the government one agency at a time, appears to be dead in the Senate, similar approaches to settling the spending arguments have already won general support from both Republicans and Democrats in both houses of Congress. The cuts, if they go into effect, would wipe out budget increases pushed by the Obama administration, often with congressional objection, as part of a bargain to win support for a 2010 arms control deal with the Russians.

Members of Congress and the Obama administration have in recent years overridden the budget autopilot and protected the weapons program from the cuts sweeping the federal government, allowing steady increases in recent years to fund what defense officials say are needed upgrades to our nuclear arsenal, and the laboratory infrastructure and personnel needed to carry out the work.

A similar intervention now would be needed to prevent the cuts. But the administration and Congress have shown little willingness to support continued increases this time around, said Tom Collina, research director at the Arms Control Association, a Washington, D.C., think tank.

Work upgrading the nation's B61 nuclear bombs, much of it done at Sandia, is especially vulnerable, Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., told reporters in a telephone news conference last month. "The future of the B61 program, which keeps our nuclear weapons stockpile safe and protects our national security, depends on gettingadditional money," Udall said.

To fund the B61 and other work it says is necessary to maintain the U.S. arsenal, the Obama administration asked Congress for $7.9 billion for the National Nuclear Security Administration's nuclear weapons work in fiscal year 2014. But Congress, unable to come to agreement on a 2014 spending plan, is on a path to instead approve some sort of "continuing resolution," a path of least resistance that simply continues spending at last year's levels.

Compounding the difficulties, all current versions of the continuing resolution legislation, including the one passed Friday by the House, would then impose automatic cuts on last year's number as part of the "sequester" budget-cutting deal Congress and the White House agreed to in the summer of 2011. Those cuts were at the time viewed as so draconian that they would force the warring political parties to come to some sort of broad budget deal, but that so far has not happened.

Friday's temporary spending bill for the National Nuclear Security Administration passed the House 248-176, with New Mexico's congressional delegation splitting along party lines. Rep. Steve Pearce, a Republican from southern New Mexico, voted "yes," issuing a statement saying the bill "is key to the security of our nation, and assures that the hard-working employees of Los Alamos and Sandia National Labs will continue to have jobs."

Democratic Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, whose districts include Los Alamos and Sandia, respectively, voted against it. **Lujan**, in a floor speech Friday, said the NNSA budget is critical to New Mexico, but he pointed to the fact that the bill would actually cut lab budgets. He called the bill a "shame and a sham."

Journal Washington D.C.

correspondent Michael Coleman contributed to this report

LOAD-DATE: October 14, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: JOURNAL Source: National Nuclear Security Administration, Congressional Budget Office

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Albuquerque Journal

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

October 12, 2013 Saturday

Pearce lauds GOP effort to fund labs; Dems blast it as 'charade'

BYLINE: The Santa Fe New Mexican

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 386 words

Oct. 12--Dueling news releases by members of New Mexico's congressional delegation on Friday typified the partisan fight to shape public perceptions of who is responsible for negative consequences of the ongoing partial government shutdown.

Southern New Mexico Congressman Steve Pearce, the only Republican in the state's delegation, issued a statement trumpeting his vote for a House bill that "provides critical funding to our nation's labs, including Sandia and Los Alamos" and "assures that the hard-working employees at Sandia and Los Alamos will continue to have jobs."

However, Democrats in Congress, including Northern New Mexico's Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham of Albuquerque and Sen. Tom Udall, issued statements that characterized the legislation, H.J. Res. 76, as the latest example of the Republican-controlled House passing piecemeal bills that the president has said he would veto while he pushes for legislation to fully fund the government.

The New Mexico Democrats also said the proposal to provide partial funding to the National Nuclear Security Administration would actually represent a major cut in funding for the national laboratories.

In remarks on the House floor, **Lujan**, who along with **Lujan** Grisham voted against the bill, called it a "Republican charade" and an attempt at "picking winners and losers" with regard to worker furloughs.

Los Alamos National Laboratory, a major player in Northern New Mexico's economy, has warned that thousands of employees will be sent home at the end of the day Friday, Oct. 18, if the budget impasse in Washington, D.C., continues through next week.

However, Udall expressed optimism that a deal may be in the works: "There are indications that the House Republicans are moving past this piecemeal strategy and are working on a realistic plan to re-open the government. I hope that is true. In the meantime, the Senate has twice passed a bill to fund the NNSA, Veterans Affairs, national parks, the military and everything else -- in the form of a clean bill to fund the entire government. I'm willing to work with anyone to get the whole government back up and running."

___ (c)2013 The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) Visit The Santa Fe New Mexican (Santa Fe, N.M.) at www.santafenewmexican.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: October 12, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20131012-SF-Pearce-lauds-GOP-effort-to-fund-labs-Dems-blast-it-as-charade-1012-20131012

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: SF

Copyright 2013 The Santa Fe New Mexican

States News Service

October 12, 2013 Saturday

LUJAN SIGNS PETITION TO FORCE A VOTE THAT WOULD END GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 268 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he has signed a petition to reopen the government. This effort launched by House Democrats would force an up or down vote on a clean continuing resolution which would end the government shutdown when a majority of the House, 218 members, sign on to the petition.

Despite the fact that 200 hundred Democrats have said they would compromise on the clean continuing resolution passed by the Senate and more than 20 Republicans have said they too would vote for the bill, Speaker John Boehner has repeatedly refused to allow a vote. The discharge petition would allow an up or down vote on a clean continuing resolution, providing funding through November 15 at a level requested by Speaker Boehner.

"For nearly two weeks, I have called on Speaker Boehner to allow a vote on a clean bill that will end the government shutdown, put New Mexicans back to work, and make sure that our communities receive the vital services that for too long have been delayed," Congressman **Lujan** said. "These calls have fallen on deaf ears as Speaker Boehner has ignored the impact that the shutdown is having on families across the country. As the shutdown has dragged on, we've heard more and more moderate Republicans who are fed up with the extreme elements of their party that have caused this shutdown. It is time for them to stand up, back up their words with action, and join Democrats in this effort to force a vote on legislation that will reopen the government."

LOAD-DATE: October 15, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

Targeted News Service

October 12, 2013 Saturday 2:06 AM EST

Lujan Signs Petition to Force a Vote that Would End Government Shutdown

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 309 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District announced today that he has signed a petition to reopen the government. This effort launched by House Democrats would force an up or down vote on a clean continuing resolution which would end the government shutdown when a majority of the House, 218 members, sign on to the petition.

Despite the fact that 200 hundred Democrats (http://1.usa.gov/1gdTnlK) have said they would compromise on the clean continuing resolution passed by the Senate and more than 20 Republicans (http://wapo.st/1fIQVG3) have said they too would vote for the bill, Speaker John Boehner has repeatedly refused to allow a vote. The discharge petition would allow an up or down vote on a clean continuing resolution, providing funding through November 15 at a level requested by Speaker Boehner.

"For nearly two weeks, I have called on Speaker Boehner to allow a vote on a clean bill that will end the government shutdown, put New Mexicans back to work, and make sure that our communities receive the vital services that for too long have been delayed," Congressman **Lujan** said. "These calls have fallen on deaf ears as Speaker Boehner has ignored the impact that the shutdown is having on families across the country. As the shutdown has dragged on, we've heard more and more moderate Republicans who are fed up with the extreme elements of their party that have caused this shutdown. It is time for them to stand up, back up their words with action, and join Democrats in this effort to force a vote on legislation that will reopen the government."

A list of members who have signed the petition can be found here: http://1.usa.gov/19z2ASC, and will be updated as more members sign on.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131017-4519799 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: October 20, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

467 of 500 DOCUMENTS

US Official News

October 12, 2013 Saturday

Members of the N.M. Delegation Working to Protect Federal & Lab Workers Hurt by Shutdown

LENGTH: 995 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Martin Heinrich, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham are working to ensure that federal workers in New Mexico are not financially hurt in the long-term by the federal government shutdown.

New Mexico is home to roughly 27,000 federal workers, and Sandia National Laboratories (SNL) and Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) employ an additional 18,000 New Mexicans.

All four lawmakers are strong supporters of the Federal Employee Retroactive Pay Fairness Act to ensure federal employees, furloughed through no fault of their own during the government shutdown, will be paid when the government reopens. **Luján** and **Lujan** Grisham voted for the bill, which passed unanimously in the U.S. House of Representatives on Saturday. In the Senate, Udall and Heinrich are cosponsors of the same measure. All four lawmakers also supported a bill, which has been signed into law, ensuring members of the military will be paid during the shutdown.

Additionally, the N.M. lawmakers sent a letter to Department of Energy (DOE) Secretary Ernest Moniz, urging him to ensure employees at New Mexico's national laboratories are compensated if they are furloughed as a result of the government shutdown.

In their letter to Moniz, the lawmakers note that although workers at SNL and LANL are contract employees, "they are subject to much of the same uncertainties as their colleagues in the federal workforce."

"Congress clearly intends that those workers who provide such vital services for our nation should be insulated from the effects of a protracted shutdown," the lawmakers wrote.

"The Department of Energy can certify to the labs that it is an 'allowable cost' for them to use their appropriated dollars to compensate their employees for back pay due to any furloughs caused by a shutdown," the lawmakers continued. "Due to the tremendous economic uncertainty currently faced by the laboratories' workforce, we urge you to certify as soon as possible that back pay will be allowable upon the restoration of government functions. The employees of our nation's national laboratories deserve to know that they will be fully compensated for their service to our nation."

Sandia officials announced today that they will be forced to begin to shut down and furlough much of the lab's workforce by Oct. 21 if the budget impasse is not resolved. LANL officials also have told employees that the lab has a limited ability to stay open in the government shutdown.

Udall and Heinrich both voted for a clean funding compromise bill, which has twice passed the Senate. If the House of Representatives were to pass this bill, the president would sign it and the government would reopen, preventing thousands of lab employees from being furloughed. **Luján** and **Lujan** Grisham have signed a letter to Speaker John Boehner calling on him to immediately allow a vote on the Senate-passed clean funding compromise.

The following is the text of the lawmakers' letter to Moniz:

Secretary Moniz:

We write today to call your attention to the many New Mexicans who work at Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories who have been adversely affected by the continuing budget impasse in Congress and the resulting shutdown. As you know, these labs are essential to our nation's national security as well as its scientific and research capabilities. Their workforce is comprised of many of the smartest scientists, engineers, and researchers in our country, all of whom have devoted their careers to serving and protecting our nation.

This government shut down risks betraying these men and women who have made personal sacrifices for our collective security and technological advancement. While lab employees work for the contractors who manage the labs, they are subject to much of the same uncertainty as their colleagues in the federal workforce. While neither of the New Mexico NNSA laboratories have yet announced a need to furlough their workforce, a number of my constituents have written to our offices or contacted us directly to share the stress of potentially being furloughed from the labs and missing out on a needed paycheck.

The House of Representatives has passed H.R. 3223, the Federal Employee Retroactive Pay Fairness Act, which would compensate all federal employees who would not otherwise receive their full salaries due to the shutdown. President Obama has declared that he supports the legislation and his office writes,

"Federal workers keep the Nation safe and secure and provide vital services that support the economic security of American families. The Administration appreciates that the Congress is acting promptly to move this bipartisan legislation and looks forward to the bill's swift passage."

The overwhelming bipartisan support for this legislation demonstrates the clear Congressional desire that the federal workforce should not be adversely impacted by the shutdown nor should they shoulder the burden of its resulting uncertainty. While the employees of New Mexico's national laboratories are not included within the bill's specific terms, Congress clearly intends that those workers who provide such vital services for our nation should be insulated from the effects of a protracted shutdown.

It is our understanding that the Department of Energy can certify to the labs that it is an "allowable cost" for them to use their appropriated dollars to compensate their employees for back pay due to any furloughs caused by a shutdown. Due to the tremendous economic uncertainty currently faced by the laboratories' workforce, we urge you to certify as soon as possible that back pay will be allowable upon the restoration of government functions. The employees of our nation's national laboratories deserve to know that they will be fully compensated for their service to our nation.

For further information please visit: http://www.heinrich.senate.gov/

LOAD-DATE: October 12, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

US Official News

October 12, 2013 Saturday

Members of the N.M. Delegation Working to Protect Federal & Lab Workers Hurt by Shutdown

LENGTH: 511 words

DATELINE: Washington

Office of the Senator Tom Udall, U.S Government has issued the following news release:

U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham are working to ensure that federal workers in New Mexico are not financially hurt in the long-term by the federal government shutdown.

New Mexico is home to roughly 27,000 federal workers, and Sandia National Laboratories (SNL) and Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) employ an additional 18,000 New Mexicans.

All four lawmakers are strong supporters of the Federal Employee Retroactive Pay Fairness Act to ensure federal employees, furloughed through no fault of their own during the government shutdown, will be paid when the government reopens. **Luján** and **Lujan** Grisham voted for the bill, which passed unanimously in the U.S. House of Representatives on Saturday. In the Senate, Udall and Heinrich are cosponsors of the same measure. All four lawmakers also supported a bill, which has been signed into law, ensuring members of the military will be paid during the shutdown.

Additionally, the N.M. lawmakers sent a letter to Department of Energy (DOE) Secretary Ernest Moniz, urging him to ensure employees at New Mexico's national laboratories are compensated if they are furloughed as a result of the government shutdown.

In their letter to Moniz, the lawmakers note that although workers at SNL and LANL are contract employees, "they are subject to much of the same uncertainties as their colleagues in the federal workforce."

"Congress clearly intends that those workers who provide such vital services for our nation should be insulated from the effects of a protracted shutdown," the lawmakers wrote.

"The Department of Energy can certify to the labs that it is an 'allowable cost' for them to use their appropriated dollars to compensate their employees for back pay due to any furloughs caused by a shutdown," the lawmakers continued. "Due to the tremendous economic uncertainty currently faced by the laboratories' workforce, we urge you to certify as soon as possible that back pay will be allowable upon the restoration of government functions. The employees of our nation's national laboratories deserve to know that they will be fully compensated for their service to our nation."

Sandia officials announced today that they will be forced to begin to shut down and furlough much of the lab's workforce by Oct. 21 if the budget impasse is not resolved. LANL officials also have told employees that the lab has a limited ability to stay open in the government shutdown.

Udall and Heinrich both voted for a clean funding compromise bill, which has twice passed the Senate. If the House of Representatives were to pass this bill, the president would sign it and the government would reopen, preventing thousands of lab employees from being furloughed. **Luján** and **Lujan** Grisham have signed a letter to Speaker John Boehner calling on him to immediately allow a vote on the Senate-passed clean funding compromise.

For further information please visit: http://www.tomudall.senate.gov

LOAD-DATE: October 12, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Plus Media Solutions Private Limited
All Rights Reserved

469 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal: Blogs (New Mexico)

October 11, 2013 Friday

U.S. House approves bill to fund NM's national laboratories

BYLINE: Michael Coleman, JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: INSIDE THE BELTWAY

LENGTH: 617 words

The U.S. House voted 248-176 Friday to approve funding for weapons programs at the National Nuclear Security Administration and New Mexico's national laboratories through mid-December, but the bill's fate in the Democratic-controlled Senate is uncertain at best.

Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., voted for the spending bill. Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham voted against it. The GOP-led house has passed a series of partial government funding bills in recent days, but Senate Democrats have opposed that approach, arguing that Congress shouldn't pick and choose which federal agencies have their budgets restored.

Meanwhile, the government shutdown is its 12th day with no clear path to a legislative agreeement. Pearce said he had lobbied this week to get the NNSA bill to the House floor.

"Today's vote to fund the NNSA is key to the security of our nation, and assures that the hard-working employees of Los Alamos and Sandia National Labs will continue to have jobs," said Pearce. "Our contractors and employees at Sandia and Los Alamos provide a vital service to our nation, which must continue without interruption - this legislation ensures that."

"With Los Alamos and Sandia announcing furloughs in the near future, I urge the Senate to quickly act on this legislation, not only for the thousands of New Mexico jobs it saves, but also for the security this bill provides," Pearce added.

Los Alamos and Sandia National Labs receive roughly half of their yearly operating budgets from the NNSA's budget. Both labs are preparing to furlough employees on Oct. 21 if the federal budget impasse is not resolved.

In a floor speech Friday, **Lujan** said the NNSA budget is critical to New Mexico, but he said the bill approved Friday would actually cut lab budgets because it retains sequester-level funding. He called the bill approved Friday a "shame and a sham."

"This bill denies these national security labs the funding they need as it locks in the deep cuts of sequester for two more months.

"There is not a member of this body, Democrat or Republican, that says they likethe sequester, but my Republican colleagues refuse to lift it. And they say they want to keep the government open, but they place conditions on it.

"This piecemeal approach in this bill to the Department of Energy and the NNSA is picking winners and losers with employees that are going to be furloughed. This is a shame and it's a sham. This Republican charade that is going to go home to my state of New Mexico and direct the directors of the lab to tell employees who is going to go home without a paycheck and who will not, because there is still not assurance that the Secretary of Energy, through the Department of Energy, will make these employees whole through an allowable cost that will be accepted. Enough is enough."

Lujan Grisham sounded a similar theme.

"To serve their critical national security mission, New Mexico's national laboratories require the certainty and stability of a full funding bill," she said in a statement. "Unfortunately, House Republicans' piecemeal approach falls short. In fact, this bill would actually cut Sandia National Labs' funding by 46 percent.

"In addition, with nearly all of Sandia's employees and many of Los Alamos's employees facing furloughs, the drastic cuts in this bill guarantee that a large number of those dedicated employees would be unable to continue working.

"New Mexico's national labs need and deserve to be made whole again. The best way to do that is to immediately pass the Senate's short-term government funding compromise that would reopen the entire federal government until November 15 while we work together on a long-term budget solution."

LOAD-DATE: October 12, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2013 Albuquerque Journal.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal: Blogs (New Mexico)

October 11, 2013 Friday

U.S. House approves bill to fund NM's national laboratories

BYLINE: Michael Coleman, JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: INSIDE THE BELTWAY

LENGTH: 617 words

The U.S. House voted 248-176 Friday to approve funding for weapons programs at the National Nuclear Security Administration and New Mexico's national laboratories through mid-December, but the bill's fate in the Democratic-controlled Senate is uncertain at best.

Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., voted for the spending bill. Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham voted against it. The GOP-led house has passed a series of partial government funding bills in recent days, but Senate Democrats have opposed that approach, arguing that Congress shouldn't pick and choose which federal agencies have their budgets restored.

Meanwhile, the government shutdown is its 12th day with no clear path to a legislative agreeement. Pearce said he had lobbied this week to get the NNSA bill to the House floor.

"Today's vote to fund the NNSA is key to the security of our nation, and assures that the hard-working employees of Los Alamos and Sandia National Labs will continue to have jobs," said Pearce. "Our contractors and employees at Sandia and Los Alamos provide a vital service to our nation, which must continue without interruption - this legislation ensures that."

"With Los Alamos and Sandia announcing furloughs in the near future, I urge the Senate to quickly act on this legislation, not only for the thousands of New Mexico jobs it saves, but also for the security this bill provides," Pearce added.

Los Alamos and Sandia National Labs receive roughly half of their yearly operating budgets from the NNSA's budget. Both labs are preparing to furlough employees on Oct. 21 if the federal budget impasse is not resolved.

In a floor speech Friday, **Lujan** said the NNSA budget is critical to New Mexico, but he said the bill approved Friday would actually cut lab budgets because it retains sequester-level funding. He called the bill approved Friday a "shame and a sham."

"This bill denies these national security labs the funding they need as it locks in the deep cuts of sequester for two more months.

"There is not a member of this body, Democrat or Republican, that says they likethe sequester, but my Republican colleagues refuse to lift it. And they say they want to keep the government open, but they place conditions on it.

"This piecemeal approach in this bill to the Department of Energy and the NNSA is picking winners and losers with employees that are going to be furloughed. This is a shame and it's a sham. This Republican charade that is going to go home to my state of New Mexico and direct the directors of

the lab to tell employees who is going to go home without a paycheck and who will not, because there is still not assurance that the Secretary of Energy, through the Department of Energy, will make these employees whole through an allowable cost that will be accepted. Enough is enough."

Lujan Grisham sounded a similar theme.

"To serve their critical national security mission, New Mexico's national laboratories require the certainty and stability of a full funding bill," she said in a statement. "Unfortunately, House Republicans' piecemeal approach falls short. In fact, this bill would actually cut Sandia National Labs' funding by 46 percent.

"In addition, with nearly all of Sandia's employees and many of Los Alamos's employees facing furloughs, the drastic cuts in this bill guarantee that a large number of those dedicated employees would be unable to continue working.

"New Mexico's national labs need and deserve to be made whole again. The best way to do that is to immediately pass the Senate's short-term government funding compromise that would reopen the entire federal government until November 15 while we work together on a long-term budget solution."

LOAD-DATE: October 23, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2013 Albuquerque Journal.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

October 11, 2013 Friday

House passes bill to fund Sandia, Los Alamos labs

BYLINE: Dan Mayfield

LENGTH: 341 words

The U.S. House of Representatives voted 248-176 Friday morning to temporarily fund the National Nuclear Security Administration, the agency that oversees Sandia and Los Alamos National Laboratories.

The House vote on Friday morning would temporarily fund the agency through Dec. 15. The funding bill will go next to the U.S. Senate for a vote, which could be scheduled as early as today.

Democrats in the Senate have defeated similar bills proposed by the House this week.

"As this shutdown drags on and New Mexicans continue to suffer, House Republicans find time to hold votes to restore funding for a select group of government functions, instead of holding the one

vote that would reopen the entire government. Rather than picking winners and losers, House Republicans should allow a vote on the Senate-passed funding bill to end the shutdown once and for all," Said Sen. Martin Heinrich on Friday.

"Today's vote to fund the NNSA is key to the security of our nation, and assures that the hardworking employees of Los Alamos and Sandia National Labs will continue to have jobs," said Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., in a statement. "Our contractors and employees at Sandia and Los Alamos provide a vital service to our nation, which must continue without interruption - this legislation ensures that."

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M, and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., both voted against the measure to fund the agency without reopening the rest of the government.

"To serve their critical national security mission, New Mexico's national laboratories require the certainty and stability of a full funding bill," **Lujan** Grisham said in a statement. "Unfortunately, House Republicans' piecemeal approach falls short. In fact, this bill would actually cut Sandia National Labs' funding by 46 percent."

Los Alamos and Sandia National Labs get about half their annual operating budgets from the NNSA.

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: October 11, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 11, 2013

Lujan: Republican Piecemeal Funding Bill Picks Winners and Losers, Would Still Leave Lab Employees Furloughed; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 283 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke today on the House floor on the importance of swiftly passing a clean funding bill that will end the government shutdown, fund the national laboratories, and ensure that lab employees are not furloughed. House Republicans are bringing up piecemeal bills that fund portions of the federal government, but fail to provide full funding to end the shutdown. Below are **Lujan's** remarks on the floor.

"Mr. Speaker, funding for the NNSA is critically important to my state of New Mexico, where we are home to both Los Alamos and Sandia National Labs. However, this bill denies these national security labs the funding they need as it locks in the deep cuts of sequester for two more months.

"There is not a member of this body, Democrat or Republican, that says they like the sequester, Mr. Speaker, but my Republican colleagues refuse to lift it. And they say they want to keep the government open, but they place conditions on it.

"This piecemeal approach in this bill to the Department of Energy and the NNSA is picking winners and losers with employees that are going to be furloughed. This is a shame and it's a sham. This Republican charade that is going to go home to my state of New Mexico and direct the directors of the lab to tell employees who is going to go home without a paycheck and who will not, because there is still not assurance that the Secretary of Energy, through the Department of Energy, will make these employees whole through an allowable cost that will be accepted. Enough is enough."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/index.php?option=com_contentandtask=viewandid=1128andItemid=125

LOAD-DATE: October 14, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMA

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

473 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

October 11, 2013 Friday

NNSA bill passes House, dies in Senate

SECTION: LOCAL NEWS

LENGTH: 468 words

The House of Representatives voted 248-176 to provide funds for nuclear arms research and security including the National Nuclear Security Administration despite the shutdown. It was the latest GOP bill aimed at reviving popular programs during the shutdown and the latest to die in the Senate, where Senate majority leader Harry Reid has rejected bills that fall short of fully reopening the government.

The New Mexico delegation voted along party lines with Republican Steve Pearce voting for it and Democrats **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham voting against it.

"Today's vote to fund the NNSA is key to the security of our nation, and assures that the hard-working employees of Los Alamos and Sandia National Labs will continue to have jobs," Pearce said.

"Our contractors and employees at Sandia and Los Alamos provide a vital service to our nation, which must continue without interruption - this legislation ensures that."

"I thank Chairman Frelinghuysen and Leader Cantor for working with me to bring this legislation to the House floor," Pearce continued. "With Los Alamos and Sandia announcing furloughs in the near future, I urge the Senate to quickly act on this legislation, not only for the thousands of New Mexico jobs it saves, but also for the security this bill provides."

Luman, meanwhile, spoke on the House floor on the importance of swiftly passing a clean funding bill that will end the government shutdown, fund the national laboratories, and ensure that lab employees are not furloughed.

Lujan said House Republicans are bringing up piecemeal bills that fund portions of the federal government, but fail to provide full funding to end the shutdown.

"Mr. Speaker, funding for the NNSA is critically important to my state of New Mexico, where we are home to both Los Alamos and Sandia National Labs. However, this bill denies these national security labs the funding they need as it locks in the deep cuts of sequester for two more months," **Lujan** said..

"There is not a member of this body, Democrat or Republican, that says they like the sequester, Mr. Speaker, but my Republican colleagues refuse to lift it. And they say they want to keep the government open, but they place conditions on it.

"This piecemeal approach in this bill to the Department of Energy and the NNSA is picking winners and losers with employees that are going to be furloughed. This is a shame and it's a sham. This Republican charade that is going to go home to my state of New Mexico and direct the directors of the lab to tell employees who is going to go home without a paycheck and who will not, because there is still not assurance that the Secretary of Energy, through the Department of Energy, will make these employees whole through an allowable cost that will be accepted. Enough is enough."

LOAD-DATE: October 12, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

October 11, 2013 Friday 8:36 PM EST

Lujan: Republican Piecemeal Funding Bill Picks Winners and Losers, Would Still Leave Lab Employees Furloughed

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 284 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke today on the House floor on the importance of swiftly passing a clean funding bill that will end the government shutdown, fund the national laboratories, and ensure that lab employees are not furloughed. House Republicans are bringing up piecemeal bills that fund portions of the federal government, but fail to provide full funding to end the shutdown. Below are **Lujan's** remarks on the floor.

"Mr. Speaker, funding for the NNSA is critically important to my state of New Mexico, where we are home to both Los Alamos and Sandia National Labs. However, this bill denies these national security labs the funding they need as it locks in the deep cuts of sequester for two more months.

"There is not a member of this body, Democrat or Republican, that says they like the sequester, Mr. Speaker, but my Republican colleagues refuse to lift it. And they say they want to keep the government open, but they place conditions on it.

"This piecemeal approach in this bill to the Department of Energy and the NNSA is picking winners and losers with employees that are going to be furloughed. This is a shame and it's a sham. This Republican charade that is going to go home to my state of New Mexico and direct the directors of the lab to tell employees who is going to go home without a paycheck and who will not, because there is still not assurance that the Secretary of Energy, through the Department of Energy, will make these employees whole through an allowable cost that will be accepted. Enough is enough."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131012-4516357 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: October 11, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

475 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

October 9, 2013 Wednesday

DOE urged to repay workers if NM labs shut down

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 261 words

Four members of New Mexico's Congressional delegation have sent a letter to Department of Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz urging him to ensure employees at the state's national laboratories are compensated if they are furloughed as a result of the government shutdown.

The letter was sent Tuesday evening after it was announced that Sandia National Laboratories and Los Alamos National Laboratory had told workers to prepare for furloughs by Oct. 21 if a funding deal wasn't worked out by the federal government.

The letter was signed by Sen. Tom Udall, Sen. Martin Heinrich and Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham.

In their letter to Moniz, the lawmakers note that although workers at SNL and LANL are contract employees, "they are subject to much of the same uncertainties as their colleagues in the federal workforce."

"The Department of Energy can certify to the labs that it is an 'allowable cost' for them to use their appropriated dollars to compensate their employees for back pay due to any furloughs caused by a shutdown," the four wrote. "Due to the tremendous economic uncertainty currently faced by the laboratories' workforce, we urge you to certify as soon as possible that back pay will be allowable upon the restoration of government functions. The employees of our nation's national laboratories deserve to know that they will be fully compensated for their service to our nation."

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: October 9, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

476 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

October 9, 2013 Wednesday

Sandia to shut down Oct. 21; Sandia shut-down Oct. 21

BYLINE: The Staff

SECTION: TODAY'S NEWS

LENGTH: 585 words

Sandia National Laboratory officials announced Tuesday that they will be forced to begin to shut down and furlough much of the lab's workforce by Oct. 21 if the budget impasse is not resolved.

Los Alamos National Laboratory officials, meanwhile, have told employees that the lab has a limited ability to stay open in the government shutdown.

LANL released the following statement Tuesday.

"The Administration strongly believes that Congress can quickly come to a resolution to fund the work necessary to American people. This lapse in appropriations has serious impacts on the Department's ability to carry out its mission, including at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). While the Department was able to fund some continued activity for a short period following September 30, 2013, the continued lapse in appropriations is having a significant impact on Departmental operations," the statement said.

"LANL has now reached the point where we need to begin standing down certain operations where there is no longer funding available to maintain full operations. Protecting Special Nuclear Material, national security information, workers, the public and the environment remains an essential function."

LANL also announced it was suspending TRU-Waste shipments to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in Carlsbad beginning Monday.

The New Mexico Congressional delegation, meanwhile, is working to ensure that federal workers in New Mexico are not financially hurt in the long-term by the federal government shutdown.

New Mexico is home to roughly 27,000 federal workers, and Sandia National Laboratories and LANL employ an additional 18,000 New Mexicans.

All four lawmakers are strong supporters of the Federal Employee Retroactive Pay Fairness Act to ensure federal employees, furloughed through no fault of their own during the government shutdown, will be paid when the government reopens. Reps. **Ben Ray Luján** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham voted for the bill, which passed unanimously in the U.S. House of Representatives on Saturday. In the Senate, Udall and Heinrich are co-sponsors of the same measure. All four lawmakers, including Senators Martin Heinrich and Tom Udall also supported a bill, which has been signed into law; ensuring members of the military will be paid during the shutdown.

Additionally, the N.M. lawmakers sent a letter to Department of Energy (DOE) Secretary Ernest Moniz, urging him to ensure employees at New Mexico's national laboratories are compensated if they are furloughed as a result of the government shutdown.

In their letter to Moniz, the lawmakers note that although workers at SNL and LANL are contract employees, "they are subject to much of the same uncertainties as their colleagues in the federal workforce."

"Congress clearly intends that those workers who provide such vital services for our nation should be insulated from the effects of a protracted shutdown," the lawmakers wrote.

"The Department of Energy can certify to the labs that it is an 'allowable cost' for them to use their appropriated dollars to compensate their employees for back pay due to any furloughs caused by a shutdown," the lawmakers continued. "Due to the tremendous economic uncertainty currently faced by the laboratories' workforce, we urge you to certify as soon as possible that back pay will be allowable upon the restoration of government functions. The employees of our nation's national laboratories deserve to know that they will be fully compensated for their service to our nation."

LOAD-DATE: October 10, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

The Portales, News-Tribune (New Mexico)

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

October 9, 2013 Wednesday

Farm bill limbo all too familiar

BYLINE: Christina Calloway, The Portales News-Tribune, N.M.

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 558 words

Oct. 09--New Mexico farmers are in limbo as they await movement on a farm bill during the federal government shutdown, according to a New Mexico Farm Bureau official, a position they are all too familiar with.

Agricultural producers say they are in need of the bill because it includes disaster assistance programs but the bill failed to make Congress' floor last year, causing the existing farm bill to be extended.

Once again, New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau Vice President Matt Rush said farmers fear the bill won't get any traction, especially with the partial government shutdown in effect.

"We know that the farm bill isn't going anywhere," Rush said. "We were supposed to go to Washington D.C. this week and we had meetings with the American Farm Bureau and our Congressional delegation, but until they get past this budget block, absolutely nothing will happen."

The future of insurance for farmers is a nebulous one, according to Rush. If there isn't a farm bill complete by the end of the year, the current farm bill will revert back to an outdated 1940's version.

"Everyone in agriculture is completely left in limbo, all of our crop insurance is done through the feds," Rush said.

Rush adds even if producers are able to jump the shutdown hurdle, he believes that the farm bill the House passed in July prior to the shutdown has its share of problems because SNAP, a federal food assistance program tied to the farm bill, was cut by $40 billion.

He said it's unlikely the Senate would pass that version.

"I understand what they're trying to do but at the same time there are so few people in production and agriculture that the reason they put (SNAP in the bill) is to get it passed," Rush said. "If you think about it from the standpoint of farmers and ranchers, that's the one reason they tie nutritional programs to it. Now (ag producers) are 1.5 percent of the population. If you're a politician, (ag producers) are not a big priority and we're seeing that now."

U.S. Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., said the House farm bill not only removed provisions to fund nutrition programs, but did nothing to support New Mexico's dairy producers.

"The Republican-passed bill stripped out the Dairy Stabilization Program, a key component to dairy policy reform that would have helped producers across New Mexico," **Lujan** said.

He opposed the deep cuts to the food assistance program, calling them damaging to New Mexico families.

"The next step in the legislative process is for the House and the Senate to go to conference committee to work out the differences between the legislation passed in both chambers," **Lujan** said. "Right now in (Washington D.C.), ending the government shutdown and avoiding a default on the nation's debt are the top priorities, making the fate of the farm bill unclear."

Rush sees that the divide on the nutritional program will be a problem but he's hoping both houses can compromise so that ag producers can continue to produce food for the nation.

"It's the importance of groups like ours because we're trying to keep this in front of elected officials," Rush said. "We've been full in this country so long that no one knows where the food comes from anymore."

___ (c)2013 The Portales News-Tribune (Clovis, N.M.) Visit The Portales News-Tribune (Clovis, N.M.) at www.pntonline.com Distributed by MCT Information Services

LOAD-DATE: October 10, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 20131009-PV-Farm-bill-limbo-all-too-familiar-1009-20131009

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: PV

Copyright 2013 The Portales

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 8, 2013

Kirkpatrick, Lujan condemn House GOP piecemeal games with Head Start, Impact Aid that is critical to tribes; Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick (D-AZ) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 315 words

WASHINGTON - U.S. Reps. Ann Kirkpatrick, D-Ariz., and **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-NM, offered the following statements on House Republicans' piecemeal bills for Head Start and Impact Aid. Kirkpatrick and **Lujan** each represent part of the Navajo Nation, which is the largest land-based tribe in the United States, and they are members of the Congressional Native American Caucus.

Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick, Arizona District One:

"If House leaders were genuinely concerned about Impact Aid and Head Start, they would allow a vote to reopen the government. Piecemeal games only prolong the shutdown rather than solve it. Schools on tribal land have already taken a massive hit with sequestration cuts to Impact Aid and Head Start. And sequestration has cut many other programs, such as the Violence Against Women Act, that help the 12 Native American tribes in Arizona's District One. Congress should stop picking winners and losers - this is not a game. Speaker Boehner, let the House vote on a clean funding bill so we can restart our government."

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, New Mexico District Three:

"It's time for House Republicans to stop playing political games and allow a vote on a clean funding bill that will reopen the government. Their cynical piecemeal approach picks winners and losers while failing to fund all of the areas that are critical to families in Indian Country. Voting on short-term funding for Impact Aid and Head Start ignore the fact that sequester cuts to vital education programs have seriously harmed Native American students. Rather than take steps to end the shutdown and find a solution that ends the sequester, House Republicans continue to bend to the extreme elements in their party, leaving tribal communities to pay the price."

Read this original document at: http://kirkpatrick.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/kirkpatrick-**lujan**-condemn-house-gop-piecemeal-games-with-head-start

LOAD-DATE: October 9, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMA

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 8, 2013

NM Delegation Working to Protect Federal and Lab Workers Hurt by Shutdown;
Urges DOE to compensate national lab employees for back pay if furloughed because of shutdown;
Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 996 words

WASHINGTON - U.S. Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan** and Michelle **Lujan** Grisham are working to ensure that federal workers in New Mexico are not financially hurt in the long-term by the federal government shutdown.

New Mexico is home to roughly 27,000 federal workers, and Sandia National Laboratories (SNL) and Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) employ an additional 18,000 New Mexicans.

All four lawmakers are strong supporters of the Federal Employee Retroactive Pay Fairness Act to ensure federal employees, furloughed through no fault of their own during the government shutdown, will be paid when the government reopens. **Lujan** and **Lujan** Grisham voted for the bill, which passed unanimously in the U.S. House of Representatives on Saturday. In the Senate, Udall and Heinrich are cosponsors of the same measure. All four lawmakers also supported a bill, which has been signed into law, ensuring members of the military will be paid during the shutdown.

Additionally, the NM lawmakers sent a letter to Department of Energy (DOE) Secretary Ernest Moniz, urging him to ensure employees at New Mexico's national laboratories are compensated if they are furloughed as a result of the government shutdown.

In their letter to Moniz, the lawmakers note that although workers at SNL and LANL are contract employees, "they are subject to much of the same uncertainties as their colleagues in the federal workforce."

"Congress clearly intends that those workers who provide such vital services for our nation should be insulated from the effects of a protracted shutdown," the lawmakers wrote.

"The Department of Energy can certify to the labs that it is an 'allowable cost' for them to use their appropriated dollars to compensate their employees for back pay due to any furloughs caused by a shutdown," the lawmakers continued. "Due to the tremendous economic uncertainty currently faced by the laboratories' workforce, we urge you to certify as soon as possible that back pay will be allowable upon the restoration of government functions. The employees of our nation's national laboratories deserve to know that they will be fully compensated for their service to our nation."

Sandia officials announced today that they will be forced to begin to shut down and furlough much of the lab's workforce by Oct. 21 if the budget impasse is not resolved. LANL officials also have told employees that the lab has a limited ability to stay open in the government shutdown.

Udall and Heinrich both voted for a clean funding compromise bill, which has twice passed the Senate. If the House of Representatives were to pass this bill, the president would sign it and the government would reopen, preventing thousands of lab employees from being furloughed. **Lujan** and **Lujan** Grisham have signed a letter to Speaker John Boehner calling on him to immediately allow a vote on the Senate-passed clean funding compromise.

The following is the text of the lawmakers' letter to Moniz:

Secretary Moniz:

We write today to call your attention to the many New Mexicans who work at Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories who have been adversely affected by the continuing budget impasse in Congress and the resulting shutdown. As you know, these labs are essential to our nation's national security as well as its scientific and research capabilities. Their workforce is comprised of many of the smartest scientists, engineers, and researchers in our country, all of whom have devoted their careers to serving and protecting our nation.

This government shut down risks betraying these men and women who have made personal sacrifices for our collective security and technological advancement. While lab employees work for the contractors who manage the labs, they are subject to much of the same uncertainty as their colleagues in the federal workforce. While neither of the New Mexico NNSA laboratories have yet announced a need to furlough their workforce, a number of my constituents have written to our

offices or contacted us directly to share the stress of potentially being furloughed from the labs and missing out on a needed paycheck.

The House of Representatives has passed H.R. 3223, the Federal Employee Retroactive Pay Fairness Act, which would compensate all federal employees who would not otherwise receive their full salaries due to the shutdown. President Obama has declared that he supports the legislation and his office writes,

"Federal workers keep the Nation safe and secure and provide vital services that support the economic security of American families. The Administration appreciates that the Congress is acting promptly to move this bipartisan legislation and looks forward to the bill's swift passage."

The overwhelming bipartisan support for this legislation demonstrates the clear Congressional desire that the federal workforce should not be adversely impacted by the shutdown nor should they shoulder the burden of its resulting uncertainty. While the employees of New Mexico's national laboratories are not included within the bill's specific terms, Congress clearly intends that those workers who provide such vital services for our nation should be insulated from the effects of a protracted shutdown.

It is our understanding that the Department of Energy can certify to the labs that it is an "allowable cost" for them to use their appropriated dollars to compensate their employees for back pay due to any furloughs caused by a shutdown. Due to the tremendous economic uncertainty currently faced by the laboratories' workforce, we urge you to certify as soon as possible that back pay will be allowable upon the restoration of government functions. The employees of our nation's national laboratories deserve to know that they will be fully compensated for their service to our nation.

Read this original document at: http://lujangrisham.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/nm-delegation-working-to-protect-federal-lab-workers-hurt-by-shutdown

LOAD-DATE: October 9, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMA

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 8, 2013

Lujan, Kirkpatrick Condemn House GOP Piecemeal Games with Head Start, Impact Aid;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 317 words

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Reps. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-NM, and Ann Kirkpatrick, D-Ariz., offered the following statements on House Republicans' piecemeal bills for Head Start and Impact Aid. **Lujan** and Kirkpatrick each represent part of the Navajo Nation, which has the highest tribal population and is the largest land-based tribe in the United States, and are members of the Congressional Native American Caucus.

From Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, New Mexico District Three:

"It's time for House Republicans to stop playing political games and allow a vote on a clean funding bill that will reopen the government. Their cynical piecemeal approach picks winners and losers while failing to fund all of the areas that are critical to families in Indian Country. Voting on short-term funding for Impact Aid and Head Start ignore the fact that sequester cuts to vital education programs have seriously harmed Native American students. Rather than take steps to end the shutdown and find a solution that ends the sequester, House Republicans continue to bend to the extreme elements in their party, leaving tribal communities to pay the price."

From Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick, Arizona District One:

"If House leaders were genuinely concerned about Impact Aid and Head Start, they would allow a vote to reopen the government. Piecemeal games only prolong the shutdown rather than solve it. Schools on tribal land have already taken a massive hit with sequestration cuts to Impact Aid and Head Start. And sequestration has cut many other programs, such as the Violence Against Women Act, that help the 12 Native American tribes in Arizona's District One. Congress should stop picking winners and losers - this is not a game. Speaker Boehner, let the House vote on a clean funding bill so we can restart our government."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/index.php?option=com_contentandtask=viewandid=1127andItemid=125

LOAD-DATE: October 9, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMA

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

October 8, 2013 Tuesday

KIRKPATRICK, LUJAN CONDEMN HOUSE GOP PIECEMEAL GAMES WITH HEAD START, IMPACT AID THAT IS CRITICAL TO TRIBES

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 302 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of Arizona Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick:

U.S. Reps. Ann Kirkpatrick, D-Ariz., and **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-NM, offered the following statements on House Republicans' piecemeal bills for Head Start and Impact Aid. Kirkpatrick and **Lujan** each represent part of the Navajo Nation, which is the largest land-based tribe in the United States, and they are members of the Congressional Native American Caucus.

Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick, Arizona District One:

"If House leaders were genuinely concerned about Impact Aid and Head Start, they would allow a vote to reopen the government. Piecemeal games only prolong the shutdown rather than solve it. Schools on tribal land have already taken a massive hit with sequestration cuts to Impact Aid and Head Start. And sequestration has cut many other programs, such as the Violence Against Women Act, that help the 12 Native American tribes in Arizona's District One. Congress should stop picking winners and losers - this is not a game. Speaker Boehner, let the House vote on a clean funding bill so we can restart our government."

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, New Mexico District Three:

"It's time for House Republicans to stop playing political games and allow a vote on a clean funding bill that will reopen the government. Their cynical piecemeal approach picks winners and losers while failing to fund all of the areas that are critical to families in Indian Country. Voting on short-term funding for Impact Aid and Head Start ignore the fact that sequester cuts to vital education programs have seriously harmed Native American students. Rather than take steps to end the shutdown and find a solution that ends the sequester, House Republicans continue to bend to the extreme elements in their party, leaving tribal communities to pay the price."

###

LOAD-DATE: October 8, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

Targeted News Service

October 8, 2013 Tuesday 11:09 PM EST

Rep. Garcia Introduces Bill to Provide for Broad Immigration Reform

BYLINE: by GEMA VIANA, Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 736 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, Oct. 8 -- Rep. Joe Garcia, D-Fla., has introduced legislation (H.R. 15) to "provide for comprehensive immigration reform."

The bill was introduced on Oct. 2 and has 121 co-sponsors. Co-sponsors include Reps. Judy Chu, D-Calif., Steven Horsford, D-Nev., Jared Polis, D-Colo., Suzan DelBene, D-Wash., Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., Steny H. Hoyer, D-Md., James E. Clyburn, D-S.C., Xavier Becerra, D-Calif., Joseph Crowley, D-N.Y., Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., Steve Israel, D-N.Y., Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill., Gene Green, D-Texas, Jackie Speier, D-Calif., Dina Titus, D-Nev., Linda T. Sanchez, D-Calif., David Scott, D-Ga., John Delaney, D-Md., Rick Larsen, D-Wash., Beto O'Rourke, D-Texas, Sheila Jackson-Lee, D-Texas, Scott Peters, D-Calif., Pete Gallego, D-Texas, Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., Ruben Hinojosa, D-Texas, Gerald E. Connolly, D-Va., James A. Himes, D-Conn., Julia Brownley, D-Calif., Eliot L. Engel, D-N.Y., Ed Perlmutter, D-Colo., Brad Sherman, D-Calif., Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., Juan C. Vargas, D-Calif., Tony Cardenas, D-Calif., Dan Kildee, D-Mich., Grace F. Napolitano, D-Calif., Raul Ruiz, D-Calif., Alan Lowenthal, D-Calif., Mark Takano, D-Calif., Lloyd Doggett, D-Texas, Mike Quigley, D-Ill., Ron Barber, D-Ariz., Joaquin Castro, D-Texas, **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., Bill Foster, D-Ill., Lucille Roybal-Allard, D-Calif., Ann McLane Kuster, D-N.H., Frederica S. Wilson, D-Fla., Gregorio Sablan, D-M.P., Albio Sires, D-N.J., Carolyn McCarthy, D-N.Y., Loretta Sanchez, D-Calif., Allyson Y. Schwartz, D-Pa., Theodore Deutch, D-Fla., Dan Maffei, D-N.Y., Jared Huffman, D-Calif., Kurt Schrader, D-Ore., James P. Moran, D-Va., Adam B. Schiff, D-Calif., Patrick Murphy, D-Fla., Gloria Negrete McLeod, D-Calif., Denny Heck, D-Wash., Mark Pocan, D-Wis., Adam Smith, D-Wash., Robin Kelly, D-Ill., Colleen W. Hanabusa, D-Hawaii, Jose E. Serrano, D-N.Y., Bill Owens, D-N.Y., Elizabeth Esty, D-Conn., Lois Frankel, D-Fla., Ron Kind, D-Wis., Sean Patrick Maloney, D-N.Y., Derek Kilmer, D-Wash., Michael M. Honda, D-Calif., Mike Thompson, D-Calif., Anna G. Eshoo, D-Calif., Brad Schneider, D-Ill., Henry Cuellar, D-Texas, Eni F.H. Faleomavaega, D-A.S., Betty McCollum, D-Minn., Grace Meng, D-N.Y., Charles B. Rangel, D-N.Y., Doris Matsui, D-Calif., Carolyn B. Maloney, D-N.Y., Janice Hahn, D-Calif., Kathy Castor, D-Fla., Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., Marc Veasey, D-Texas, Ann Kirkpatrick, D-Ariz., Gwen Moore, D-Wis., David N. Cicilline, D-R.I., Matt Cartwright, D-Pa., Gregory W. Meeks, D-N.Y., Diana DeGette, D-Colo., Alcee L Hastings, D-Fla., Steve Cohen, D-Tenn., Wm.

Lacy Clay Jr., D-Mo., John Conyers Jr., D-Mich., Janice D. Schakowsky, D-Ill., Jim McDermott, D-Wash., Robert E. Andrews, D-N.J., Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., John D. Dingell, D-Mich., John Garamendi, D-Calif., James R. Langevin, D-R.I., Paul Tonko, D-N.Y., Ed Pastor, D-Ariz., Nydia M. Velazquez, D-N.Y., Sam Farr, D-Calif., Jim Costa, D-Calif., David E. Price, D-N.C., Suzanne Bonamici, D-Ore., John B. Larson, D-Conn., Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz., Joe Courtney, D-Conn., Frank Pallone Jr., D-N.J., John Lewis, D-Ga., Alan Grayson, D-Fla., and Del. Pedro Pierluisi, D-P.R.

The legislation was referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary; House Committee on Foreign Affairs; House Committee on Homeland Security; House Committee on Ways and Means; House Committee on Armed Services; House Committee on Natural Resources; House Committee on Agriculture; House Committee on Education and the Workforce; House Committee on Energy and Commerce; House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform; House Committee on the Budget; House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology; House Committee on Financial Services; and House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

The full text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress Thomas legislative website. To access the bill, go to http://thomas.loc.gov/home/LegislativeData.php?&n=BillText. For more information about congressional legislation and services offered by Targeted News Service to track issues, key words or members of Congress who introduce or co-sponsor legislation, please contact editor@targetednews.com or call 703/304-1897.

For more information about Targeted News Service products and services, please contact: Myron Struck, editor, Targeted News Service, Springfield, Va., 703/304-1897; editor@targetednews.com; http://targetednews.com.

30VianaGem10052013-db-1140293

LOAD-DATE: October 8, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

483 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Los Alamos Monitor (New Mexico)

October 5, 2013 Saturday

Lujan supports backpay law for furloughed workers

SECTION: LOCAL NEWS

LENGTH: 260 words

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** (D-N.M.) spoke Saturday on the House floor in support of H.R. 3223, legislation that ensures furloughed federal employees retroactively receive their pay.

During his remarks, **Luján** highlighted that it is the intent of Congress to also support contract employees at the national laboratories.

In addition, he submitted into the Congressional Record a letter he is sending Department of Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz to emphasize that fact.

"This bill ensures that furloughed employees will be made whole. It is also important for contract employees who work at our national labs.

"It is clear that Congress intends to insulate those workers who provide vital services to our nation from the effects of the shutdown. In the past, DOE has sought to treat lab employees the same as federal employees. This legislation sets the precedent for how those employees will be treated.

"We are sending the message that DOE should certify back pay for lab employees as an allowable cost, so they will be made whole if they are furloughed."

In the letter to Moniz, **Lujan** expressed how important the labs were to the nation's security.

"Their workforce is comprised of many of the smartest scientists, engineers, and researchers in our country, all of whom have devoted their careers to serving and protecting our nation," he wrote.

"This government shut down risks betraying these men and women.

" While lab employees work for the contractors who manage the labs, they are subject to much of the same uncertainty as their colleagues in the federal workforce.

LOAD-DATE: October 6, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Los Alamos Monitor, Landmark Community Newspapers LLC (LCNI).
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

October 5, 2013 Saturday 1:50 AM EST

Lujan Works to See that Lab Employees are Made Whole if Furloughed Due to Shutdown

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 771 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District spoke today on the House floor in support of H.R. 3223, legislation that ensures furloughed federal employees retroactively receive their pay. During his remarks, **Lujan** highlighted that it is the intent of Congress to also support contract employees at the national laboratories. In addition, he submitted into the Congressional Record a letter he is sending Department of Energy Secretary Moniz to emphasize that fact. Below are **Lujan's** remarks as well as his letter to Secretary Moniz.

"Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill, which is important to all the federal employees in New Mexico. This bill ensures that furloughed employees will be made whole. It is also important for contract employees who work at our national labs.

"It is clear that Congress intends to insulate those workers who provide vital services to our nation from the effects of the shutdown. In the past, DOE has sought to treat lab employees the same as federal employees. This legislation sets the precedent for how those employees will be treated. We are sending the message that DOE should certify back pay for lab employees as an allowable cost, so they will be made whole if they are furloughed.

"Mr. Speaker, I request unanimous consent to submit into the record my letter to Secretary Moniz expressing Congressional intent to insulate those workers who provide vital services to our nation from the effects of a shutdown, which includes contract employees at our national labs."

* * *

October 5, 2013

Dr. Ernest Moniz

Secretary of Energy

1000 Independence Ave, SW

Washington, DC 20585

Secretary Moniz:

I write today to call your attention to the many New Mexicans who work at Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories who have been adversely affected by the continuing budget impasse in Congress and the resulting shutdown. As you know, these labs are essential to our nation's national security as well as its scientific and research capabilities. Their workforce is comprised of many of the smartest scientists, engineers, and researchers in our country, all of whom have devoted their careers to serving and protecting our nation.

This government shut down risks betraying these men and women who have made personal sacrifices for our collective security and technological advancement. While lab employees work for the contractors who manage the labs, they are subject to much of the same uncertainty as their colleagues in the federal workforce. While neither of the New Mexico NNSA laboratories have yet announced a need to furlough their workforce, a number of my constituents have written to my office or contacted me directly to share the stress of potentially being furloughed from the labs and missing out on a needed paycheck.

Today, the House of Representatives will pass H.R. 3223, the Federal Employee Retroactive Pay Fairness Act, which would compensate all federal employees who would not otherwise receive their full salaries due to the shutdown. President Obama has declared that he supports the legislation and his office writes,

"Federal workers keep the Nation safe and secure and provide vital services that support the economic security of American families. The Administration appreciates that the Congress is acting promptly to move this bipartisan legislation and looks forward to the bill's swift passage."

The overwhelming bipartisan support for this legislation demonstrates the clear Congressional desire that the federal workforce should not be adversely impacted by the shutdown nor should they shoulder the burden of its resulting uncertainty. While the employees of New Mexico's national laboratories are not included within the bill's specific terms, Congress clearly intends that those workers who provide such vital services for our nation should be insulated from the effects of a protracted shutdown.

It is my understanding that the Department of Energy can certify to the labs that it is an "allowable cost" for them to use their appropriated dollars to compensate their employees for back pay due to any furloughs caused by a shutdown. Due to the tremendous economic uncertainty currently faced by the laboratories' workforce, I urge you to certify as soon as possible that back pay will be allowable upon the restoration of government functions. The employees of our nation's national laboratories deserve to know that they will be fully compensated for their service to our nation.

Sincerely,

Ben Ray Lujan

Member of Congress

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131009-4513465

LOAD-DATE: October 13, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

October 4, 2013 Friday

NM delegation was safe during car chase, shooting; Sen. Udall says police officers yelled, 'Get in your offices'

BYLINE: Michael Coleman Journal Washington Bureau

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. A3

LENGTH: 317 words

WASHINGTON - Sen. Tom Udall was on his way to a meeting Thursday afternoon when he heard shots ring out through the windows of the Hart Senate Office Building.

The New Mexico Democrat told the Journal after the shooting that U.S. Capitol police officers immediately started barking orders at about eight people standing near the security checkpoint in the Hart Building.

"There were about eight of us around there, and they said, 'Get in your offices! Get in your offices!" Udall said.

"We were headed over to the hearing in the adjacent Dirksen Office Building," Udall said. "We were probably four feet from the guard station, and then you could hear this (noise) and it was gunshots. The guards got really alerted. We went back into our office and locked the office and waited for instructions from security people.

"But (before returning to the office) I heard those sounds and looked out into the street and there was what looked like a Capitol Police car with its sirens on in some kind of a chase right in front of our building."

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., was in her office on the other side of the Capitol complex with staff at the time of the incident, as was Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M. Members and staff who were in their offices were directed to "shelter in place," which means to lock the doors, gather in a secure place and don't come out.

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., said he was in the U.S. Capitol at the time of the shooting.

Sen. Martin Heinrich was also in his office at the time of the incident.

"The senator and the few staffers who are working today quickly followed procedure, locking the doors and gathering in the designated secure place in the office, while the police worked quickly to

secure the area," according to a statement released by Heinrich's office. "Unaccounted-for staff were contacted and told to stay away from the building. Everyone is safe and accounted for."

LOAD-DATE: October 4, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Albuquerque Journal

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 4, 2013

Lujan: It's Time for House Republicans to End the Political Games, Allow a Vote to End the Shutdown; Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 383 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement on the government shutdown and House Republicans' refusal to allow a vote on the Senate-passed Continuing Resolution.

"Enough is enough. New Mexico families are hurting as workers have been off the job for days and critical services have been delayed. It is long past time for Congress to act to end the government shutdown and make sure that the employees who have been furloughed through no fault of their own are made whole. It is long past time to make sure that our veterans, seniors, and all those who count on the benefits they have earned, receive what they deserve.

"There is only one way that Congress can end this shutdown today, and that is if Speaker John Boehner would stop appeasing the Tea Party wing of his party, stop holding the government hostage to end the Affordable Care Act, and bring up the compromise bill that has passed the Senate and would get bipartisan support in the House. That legislation contains a spending level that most House Democrats don't like, including me. But Democrats are willing to compromise and accept a lower funding level in the short term to put an end to the shutdown.

"Some Tea Party Republicans don't seem to know what they're even fighting for. Republican Representative Marlin Stutzman recently said, 'We're not going to be disrespected. We have to get something out of this. And I don't know what that even is.' How about opening the government and helping our communities?

"The political games need to stop. The piecemeal attempts to pit different groups against each other need to stop. Funding one piece of one department, as many of these Republicans bills do, will not get all our workers back on the job or ensure that New Mexicans have access to all the services they need.

"Every day, we hear more moderate Republicans speak out against the extreme elements in their party. I encourage them to stand with House Democrats who are ready to end the Tea Party shutdown, demand a vote on the one piece of legislation that can put a stop to this, and help the many New Mexicans and Americans who are hurting right now."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/index.php?option=com_contentandtask=viewandid=1125andItemid=125

LOAD-DATE: October 7, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMA

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

States News Service

October 4, 2013 Friday

LUJAN: IT'S TIME FOR HOUSE REPUBLICANS TO END THE POLITICAL GAMES, ALLOW A VOTE TO END THE SHUTDOWN

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 375 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement on the government shutdown and House Republicans' refusal to allow a vote on the Senate-passed Continuing Resolution.

"Enough is enough. New Mexico families are hurting as workers have been off the job for days and critical services have been delayed. It is long past time for Congress to act to end the government shutdown and make sure that the employees who have been furloughed through no fault of their own are made whole. It is long past time to make sure that our veterans, seniors, and all those who count on the benefits they have earned, receive what they deserve.

"There is only one way that Congress can end this shutdown today, and that is if Speaker John Boehner would stop appeasing the Tea Party wing of his party, stop holding the government hostage to end the Affordable Care Act, and bring up the compromise bill that has passed the Senate and would get bipartisan support in the House. That legislation contains a spending level that most House Democrats don't like, including me. But Democrats are willing to compromise and accept a lower funding level in the short term to put an end to the shutdown.

"Some Tea Party Republicans don't seem to know what they're even fighting for. Republican Representative Marlin Stutzman recently said, "We're not going to be disrespected. We have to get something out of this. And I don't know what that even is.' How about opening the government and helping our communities?

"The political games need to stop. The piecemeal attempts to pit different groups against each other need to stop. Funding one piece of one department, as many of these Republicans bills do, will not get all our workers back on the job or ensure that New Mexicans have access to all the services they need.

"Every day, we hear more moderate Republicans speak out against the extreme elements in their party. I encourage them to stand with House Democrats who are ready to end the Tea Party shutdown, demand a vote on the one piece of legislation that can put a stop to this, and help the many New Mexicans and Americans who are hurting right now."

LOAD-DATE: October 6, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

Targeted News Service

October 4, 2013 Friday 3:04 AM EST

Lujan: It's Time for House Republicans to End the Political Games, Allow a Vote to End the Shutdown

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 384 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement on the government shutdown and House Republicans' refusal to allow a vote on the Senate-passed Continuing Resolution.

"Enough is enough. New Mexico families are hurting as workers have been off the job for days and critical services have been delayed. It is long past time for Congress to act to end the government shutdown and make sure that the employees who have been furloughed through no fault of their own are made whole. It is long past time to make sure that our veterans, seniors, and all those who count on the benefits they have earned, receive what they deserve.

"There is only one way that Congress can end this shutdown today, and that is if Speaker John Boehner would stop appeasing the Tea Party wing of his party, stop holding the government hostage

to end the Affordable Care Act, and bring up the compromise bill that has passed the Senate and would get bipartisan support in the House. That legislation contains a spending level that most House Democrats don't like, including me. But Democrats are willing to compromise and accept a lower funding level in the short term to put an end to the shutdown.

"Some Tea Party Republicans don't seem to know what they're even fighting for. Republican Representative Marlin Stutzman recently said, 'We're not going to be disrespected. We have to get something out of this. And I don't know what that even is.' How about opening the government and helping our communities?

"The political games need to stop. The piecemeal attempts to pit different groups against each other need to stop. Funding one piece of one department, as many of these Republicans bills do, will not get all our workers back on the job or ensure that New Mexicans have access to all the services they need.

"Every day, we hear more moderate Republicans speak out against the extreme elements in their party. I encourage them to stand with House Democrats who are ready to end the Tea Party shutdown, demand a vote on the one piece of legislation that can put a stop to this, and help the many New Mexicans and Americans who are hurting right now."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131005-4511371 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: October 5, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Journal: Blogs (New Mexico)

October 3, 2013 Thursday

Journal D.C. correspondent: NM delegation safe after Capitol shooting

BYLINE: Michael Coleman, JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

SECTION: INSIDE THE BELTWAY

LENGTH: 451 words

Members of New Mexico's U.S. House delegation were either in their offices or in the U.S. Capitol Thursday when shots were fired - except Sen. Tom Udall who outside his office near a security checkpoint in the Hart Building and heard the gunshots.

The U.S. Capitol has re-opened and members and staff have resumed their normal operations. A U.S. Capitol police officer was injured in the incident.

Udall told me in a telephone interview that he was headed to a Foreign Relations subcommittee hearing he was supposed to chair on nominees for ambassadorships in Latin America when he heard the gunshots outside his office at the Hart Senate Building.

"We were headed over to" the hearing in the adjacent Dirksen Office Building, Udall said. "We exited the front entrance and you walk out toward Constitution Avenue toward the guard station and you head through a narrow corridor to Dirksen. We were probably four feet from the guard station and then you could hear this (noise) and it was gunshots. The guards got really alerted. There were about eight of us around there, and they said, 'Get in your offices! Get in your offices.'

"We went back into our office and locked the office and waited for instructions from security people," Udall continued. "But (before returning to the office) I heard those sounds and looked out into the street and there was what looked like a Capitol police car with its sirens on in some kind of a chase right in front of our building."

"I had walked that same route 20 minutes earlier," Udall added. "I had left the Capitol to come back and pick up my materials and prepare for the hearing, and I came right in that entrance right about 2 o'clock."

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, D-N.M., was in her office with staff at the time of the incident, as was Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M. A staffer for Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., tells me **Luján** was in the U.S. Capitol at the time of the shooting.

Sen. Martin Heinric was in his office at the time of the incident. His office issued the following statement:

"Senator Heinrich was in his office in the Hart Senate Building when the gunshots were reported. The Senator and the few staffers who are working today quickly followed procedure, locking the doors and gathering in designated secure place in the office, while the police worked quickly to secure the area. Unaccounted for staff were contacted and told to stay away from the building. Everyone is safe and accounted for.

Here's a quote from Heinrich himself:

"On behalf of everyone in my office, I want to thank the Capitol Police and our first responders for the risks that they take everyday to keep us safe. My thoughts and prayers are with the injured officer and his family."

LOAD-DATE: October 8, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Web Blog

Copyright 2013 Albuquerque Journal.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

The Arizona Republic (Phoenix)

October 3, 2013 Thursday
Final Chaser Edition

AMENDMENT MAY END A GOOD DEAL FOR ARIZ.

SECTION: OPINIONS; Pg. B9

LENGTH: 287 words

The effort to open a copper mine near Superior ran into two large roadblocks.

The first was the government shutdown. That will pass.

The second was an innocuous-sounding amendment that could scuttle the entire project.

Resolution Copper wants to swap 5,344 acres of land around Arizona for 2,422 acres of ore-rich federal land. The swap requires congressional action, and it appeared to be headed for House approval until Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M., offered an amendment to allow the secretary of Interior to remove any areas he considers sacred or cultural.

Such vague wording delegates an incredible amount of discretion, allowing an administration official to unilaterally stop a deal. It could set a precedent enabling Indian tribes to stop public works and other projects around the country with the signature of a sympathetic Interior secretary.

It's much too arbitrary, particularly because there are any number of laws on the books that require formal consultation between the government and Indian tribes to identify sites for protection. The Resolution land-swap bill requires that work be done before the exchange takes place.

It also brings the 110-acre Apache Leap, a tract of particular sacred interest to the San Carlos Apache Tribe, under federal protection.

If protection of sacred sites in

the Resolution exchange is the only purpose, the **Lujan** amendment is superfluous. It can only be described as a poison pill.

This land exchange would protect environmentally sensitive land currently owned by Resolution. It is expected to generate 3,700 jobs and $61billion in economic activity. And it protects the sacred site of Apache Leap.

The House should reject **Lujan's** amendment and advance a bill that does so much good.

LOAD-DATE: October 4, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: pho

Copyright 2013 The Arizona Republic
All Rights Reserved

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 3, 2013

Lujan Cosponsors Comprehensive Immigration Reform Bill; Rep. Ben R. **Lujan** (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 420 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and First Vice Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus announced that he is an original cosponsor of a comprehensive immigration reform bill that was introduced in the House of Representatives yesterday.

"It is clear that we need to fix our broken immigration system and pass comprehensive reform that is good for our economy, good for our families, and good for our security. This legislation is tough but fair and reflects the contributions immigrants make to our community every day," Congressman **Lujan** said. "There is a growing coalition - from the high tech sector to the law enforcement, from the agricultural sector to the faith community - demanding reform and it is long past time that House Republicans get serious about immigration reform and allow a vote on this legislation that should earn bipartisan support. Americans have been coming together on this issue and it's time for the House to act."

The House bill is comprised of elements that have all garnered bipartisan support. It contains provisions of the comprehensive immigration reform bill that passed the Senate in June by a bipartisan vote of 68 to 32, with one important change. The House bill replaces border security provisions that were added in the Corker-Hoeven amendment with the bipartisan provisions of the McCaul-Thompson border security bill that was passed out of the House Homeland Security Committee with unanimous support in May.

"Throughout the immigration debate, I have had the opportunity to speak with DREAMers in New Mexico and Washington, D.C. who represent the promise of America. Brought here by no fault of their own to the only home they have known, so many have worked hard with the goal of building a better life for themselves, their families, and their communities," **Lujan** added. "Their determination and enduring spirit are an inspiration and an example of just how important it is for Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform that provides them with an opportunity to succeed and make our country stronger."

According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, enactment of the bipartisan Senate-passed comprehensive immigration reform bill would reduce the deficit by $850 billion. CBO also estimates that the Senate-passed bill would increase economic growth by 3.3 percent in 2023 and 5.4 percent in 2033.

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/index.php?option=com_contentandtask=viewandid=1124andItemid=125

LOAD-DATE: October 4, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMA

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

The Gallup Independent (New Mexico)

October 3, 2013 Thursday

Luj án scolds Republicans over shutdown

BYLINE: Richard Reyes; biz@gallupindependent.com, STAFF WRITER

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 374 words

GALLUP - U.S. Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**, D-N.M., is deeply disappointed that House Republicans continued efforts to undermine the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, and forced the government shutdown, according to a news release from his Washington office.

Luján released a statement Tuesday in which he scolds Republicans and expresses support for the Affordable Care Act, which he refers to as the law of the land, explaining it was upheld by the Supreme Court and accepted by the American people.

"It is clear that House Republicans would rather see the government shut down, New Mexico workers furloughed, and services halted and delayed for many in our communities than allow millions of Americans access to affordable health care," **Luján** stated.

He said Congressional Democrats have called for a conference committee to move the budget process forward, but House Republicans refused. **Luján** calls on them to stop playing games and pass a clean bill to fund the government.

"The longer the Tea Party shutdown lasts, the longer the people of New Mexico will pay the price and the greater toll it will take on our economy," he stated.

In the meantime, **Luján** encourages uninsured residents to sign up for coverage through the New Mexico Health Insurance Exchange that opened Tuesday.

Individuals can start signing up immediately for coverage that will go into effect Jan. 1. In order to guarantee coverage by Jan. 1, the deadline to sign up is Dec. 1. Small businesses with less than 50 employees can start comparing plans immediately and can sign up beginning Nov. 1. "Through the exchange, individuals without insurance, or those who want to find a better option, will be able to compare plans side-by-side and find out if they qualify for tax credits to help them afford the costs of health insurance," **Luján** stated. "Since the Affordable Care Act became law, people across New Mexico have already benefited from it, with many of the benefits still to come as they are phased in. Now all Americans with pre-existing conditions can get affordable coverage even if they change jobs or lose a job."

New Mexicans can sign up through the exchange, also called a marketplace, online or by phone.

Information: 855-996-6449 Online: www.bewellnm.com

LOAD-DATE: October 8, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 The Gallup Independent.
Distributed by Newsbank, Inc. All Rights Reserved

States News Service

October 3, 2013 Thursday

LUJAN COSPONSORS COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM BILL

BYLINE: States News Service

LENGTH: 412 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

The following information was released by the office of New Mexico Rep. Ben R. **Lujan**:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and First Vice Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus announced that he is an original cosponsor of a comprehensive immigration reform bill that was introduced in the House of Representatives yesterday.

"It is clear that we need to fix our broken immigration system and pass comprehensive reform that is good for our economy, good for our families, and good for our security. This legislation is tough but fair and reflects the contributions immigrants make to our community every day," Congressman **Lujan** said. "There is a growing coalition - from the high tech sector to the law enforcement, from the agricultural sector to the faith community - demanding reform and it is long past time that House Republicans get serious about immigration reform and allow a vote on this legislation that should earn bipartisan support. Americans have been coming together on this issue and it's time for the House to act."

The House bill is comprised of elements that have all garnered bipartisan support. It contains provisions of the comprehensive immigration reform bill that passed the Senate in June by a bipartisan vote of 68 to 32, with one important change. The House bill replaces border security provisions that were added in the Corker-Hoeven amendment with the bipartisan provisions of the McCaul-Thompson border security bill that was passed out of the House Homeland Security Committee with unanimous support in May.

"Throughout the immigration debate, I have had the opportunity to speak with DREAMers in New Mexico and Washington, D.C. who represent the promise of America. Brought here by no fault of their own to the only home they have known, so many have worked hard with the goal of building a better life for themselves, their families, and their communities," **Lujan** added. "Their determination and enduring spirit are an inspiration and an example of just how important it is for Congress to pass

comprehensive immigration reform that provides them with an opportunity to succeed and make our country stronger."

According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, enactment of the bipartisan Senate-passed comprehensive immigration reform bill would reduce the deficit by $850 billion. CBO also estimates that the Senate-passed bill would increase economic growth by 3.3 percent in 2023 and 5.4 percent in 2033.

# # #

LOAD-DATE: October 4, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 States News Service

Targeted News Service

October 3, 2013 Thursday 1:23 AM EST

Lujan Cosponsors Comprehensive Immigration Reform Bill

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 421 words

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

Rep. **Ben Ray Lujan**, D-N.M. (3rd CD), issued the following news release:

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District and First Vice Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus announced that he is an original cosponsor of a comprehensive immigration reform bill that was introduced in the House of Representatives yesterday.

"It is clear that we need to fix our broken immigration system and pass comprehensive reform that is good for our economy, good for our families, and good for our security. This legislation is tough but fair and reflects the contributions immigrants make to our community every day," Congressman **Lujan** said. "There is a growing coalition - from the high tech sector to the law enforcement, from the agricultural sector to the faith community - demanding reform and it is long past time that House Republicans get serious about immigration reform and allow a vote on this legislation that should earn bipartisan support. Americans have been coming together on this issue and it's time for the House to act."

The House bill is comprised of elements that have all garnered bipartisan support. It contains provisions of the comprehensive immigration reform bill that passed the Senate in June by a bipartisan vote of 68 to 32, with one important change. The House bill replaces border security provisions that were added in the Corker-Hoeven amendment with the bipartisan provisions of the

McCaul-Thompson border security bill that was passed out of the House Homeland Security Committee with unanimous support in May.

"Throughout the immigration debate, I have had the opportunity to speak with DREAMers in New Mexico and Washington, D.C. who represent the promise of America. Brought here by no fault of their own to the only home they have known, so many have worked hard with the goal of building a better life for themselves, their families, and their communities," **Lujan** added. "Their determination and enduring spirit are an inspiration and an example of just how important it is for Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform that provides them with an opportunity to succeed and make our country stronger."

According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, enactment of the bipartisan Senate-passed comprehensive immigration reform bill would reduce the deficit by $850 billion. CBO also estimates that the Senate-passed bill would increase economic growth by 3.3 percent in 2023 and 5.4 percent in 2033.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS 30VitinMar-131004-4510003 30VitinMar

LOAD-DATE: October 4, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Targeted News Service

October 2, 2013 Wednesday 9:36 PM EST

New Mexico Dems: House Republicans Continue to Play Political Games with Government Funding

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 646 words

DATELINE: SANTA FE, N.M.

The New Mexico Democratic Party issued the following news release:

Stung by public outrage expressed by the general public and sinking poll numbers, caused by their manufactured shut down crisis, House Republicans tried and failed to pass three partial funding bills into the U.S. House of Representatives. New Mexico's Democrats responded by demanding that Republicans stop playing games and pass a clean funding bill which would reopen the government.

Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after House Republicans again refused to allow a vote on the Senate-passed continuing resolution, and instead brought the three bills to the floor to fund only select parts of the government:

"There is a clear path forward that would swiftly end the government shutdown. It would ensure that our veterans have the resources they deserve, get furloughed New Mexico workers back on the job, and make our public lands available for all. Unfortunately, rather than allow a vote on a clean continuing resolution that could gain bipartisan support, the House Republican leaders and members of the Tea Party are continuing to play political games.

"Bringing up piecemeal bills to fund various aspects of the government while leaving other areas to remain shuttered is no way to responsibly govern. Many in the Tea Party have talked about their desire to defund and get rid of certain government agencies and federal departments. A piecemeal approach gives them that opportunity to deny funding for any area - from health care to education - that they oppose.

"The bills brought up tonight would continue to leave New Mexico's workers furloughed. The Republican bills included funding for national parks, but left out vital funding for the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service. Proper management of our National Forests and public lands are critical after recent fires and flooding. Adding insult to injury, with New Mexico in the middle of hunting season, sportsmen would continue to lose access to public land, and communities would continue to lose vital business.

"In addition, the Republican bill to fund the VA for six weeks is a step backward. If House Republicans were serious about giving our veterans the resources they need, they wouldn't support a short-term bill at sequester levels, but would instead go to conference on the veterans' appropriations bill and send a full-year funding bill to the President. Earlier this year the House passed, with my support, legislation to fund the VA for a full year - and not at the lower sequester level House Republicans proposed this evening."

Commenting on the ongoing Republican government shut down, and the Congresswoman Michelle **Lujan** Grisham of New Mexico's First District, a member of the House Budget Committee, released the following statement:

"Since House Republicans shut down the government, and they have yet to offer a single reasonable, responsible proposal to end the shutdown. While I want nothing more than to provide relief to everyone in New Mexico and across the nation suffering from House Republicans' irresponsibility, a piecemeal approach is not the answer. The only answer is a clean continuing resolution.

"It is absolutely unacceptable that House Republicans attempted to use veterans as a pawn in order to continue their government shutdown. In fact, the House has already passed a year-long veterans' appropriations bill, which I voted for, that would provide a higher level of funding for the VA than the temporary fix proposed by House Republicans this evening. If House Republicans truly wanted to protect vital services for veterans, they would allow a vote on the Senate-passed clean continuing resolution so we could end this reckless government shutdown tonight."

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS C-PreetiSi 97 131003-30VitinMar-4508340

LOAD-DATE: October 3, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

Copyright 2013 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved

Albuquerque Business First (New Mexico)

October 1, 2013 Tuesday

NM representatives agree: Shutdown is other party's fault

BYLINE: Gary Gerew

LENGTH: 632 words

Members of New Mexico's Congressional delegation wasted no time in pointing fingers in blaming their opposing parties for the shutdown of the federal government.

"A small minority of extremists in the Republican party is now holding the entire country hostage over a law that has cleared the Congress and the Supreme Court, and survived a presidential election. Insisting on a government shutdown to prove a point isn't leadership, it's a temper tantrum, and the American people are rightly disgusted," said Sen. Tom Udall (D-N.M.). "In New Mexico, the impacts of a shutdown will be felt immediately as our civilian employees are sent home from military installations, national parks and forests close to tourists, and countless other services are halted. If the shutdown lasts several days or weeks, the impacts will ripple through our state's economy, hurting thousands of people in communities from Lordsburg to Los Alamos. The House could end this stalemate at any time. If there were a vote in the House on the bill that has twice cleared the Senate, it would pass in the House. I urge House Republicans to pass the Senate bill so we can focus on our priorities: rebuilding our economy and getting the American people back to work."

Rep. Steve Pearce, the state's lone Republican in Congress, also called on residents to contact their representatives. Only he wants the Senate to pass the House bill.

"I have always believed that Congress should be held to the same standards as everyone else," Pearce said. "As a result, I have made the difficult decision that my staff will be furloughed. And, though the Constitution requires that members of Congress must be paid, I will pay back to the U.S. Treasury the salary I am paid during the shutdown. I had hoped that a shutdown could be avoided: I encourage all New Mexicans to contact their senators and urge them to pass the House Continuing Resolution and end the shutdown."

Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.) was brief but also found the Republicans to be at fault.

"Closing down the government strikes at the heart of New Mexico's economy and our middle-class families," Heinrich said. "And that was the decision Republicans made tonight."

Rep. **Ben Ray Luján** of New Mexico's Third District, said he didn't see why Republicans continue to tie the spending bill to the Affordable Care Act.

"I am deeply disappointed that House Republicans' continued efforts to undermine the Affordable Care Act have forced a government shutdown," **Luján** said. "The Affordable Care Act is the law of the land - upheld by the Supreme Court and accepted by the American people in the last election. It is clear that House Republicans would rather see the government shut down, New Mexico workers

furloughed, and services halted and delayed for many in our communities than allow millions of Americans access to affordable health care."

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham of New Mexico's First District, also blamed House Republicans.

"Make no mistake, House Republicans have shut down the government," **Lujan** Grisham said. "The Senate repeatedly sent the House a clean funding bill to keep the government open while we work on the significant fiscal issues facing our country. The choice House Republicans faced was simple: pass the Senate's commonsense continuing resolution, or cave into the extremist faction of their party and shut down the government.

"Now, many of New Mexico's 27,000 federal civilian employees will be forced to stay home without pay, vital services for veterans and seniors are at risk, and our economic recovery hangs in the balance."

For more related to the government shutdown, click here.

Did you find this article useful? Why not subscribe to Albuquerque Business First for more articles and leads? Visit bizjournals.com/subscribe or call 1-866-853-3661.

LOAD-DATE: October 1, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 American City Business Journal, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

497 of 500 DOCUMENTS

Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

October 1, 2013 Tuesday

State braces for shutdown; National parks could be closed, federal employees affected

BYLINE: Dan Boyd, Michael Coleman and John Fleck Journal Staff Writers

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. A3

LENGTH: 665 words

New Mexico was keeping a close eye on Washington, D.C., on Monday, preparing for a federal government shutdown that, starting today, could close national parks and lead to furloughs and pay freezes for federal employees in the state.

At Carlsbad Caverns National Park, one of the state's 11 national parks or monuments, employees were planning to show up for work this morning - and then be sent home in the case of a government shutdown.

All roads to the iconic caverns in southeastern New Mexico, along with the park's visitor center, would be closed to the public in the case of a shutdown.

"When it is resolved, we would return to work the next day," said Valerie Gohlke, a National Park Service public affairs officer at Carlsbad Caverns.

As Congress debated possible last-minute deals that could end a budget impasse, state budget officials in Santa Fe were hoping to minimize disruptions to state services.

Highway workers, Medicaid administrators and other state employees funded by federal dollars will stay on the job - with their pay uninterrupted - at least through Dec. 31, officials in Gov. Susa-na Martinez's administration said Monday.

A total of 1,804 state government jobs are paid entirely with federal funds, and budget analysts were looking at ways to temporarily pay salaries for those positions.

Overall, they were confident that state agencies, "could carry forward by using appropriations that would get them through the end of the calendar year," Finance and Administration Secretary Tom Clifford said.

In addition, Senate Finance Committee Chairman John Arthur Smith, a Deming Democrat, pointed out that lawmakers set aside $17 million in this year's state budget to offset possible federal funding gaps.

A shutdown could also slow the federal judicial system in New Mexico, as civil lawsuits would be largely put on hold and court secretaries, receptionists and translators might be temporarily out of work.

However, criminal cases would still proceed, though possibly at a slower pace, according to the U.S. Department of Justice.

New Mexico's congressional delegation braced for a government shutdown in widely divergent ways. All members will remain on the job, but their staffs face different fates. Republican Rep. Steve Pearce plans to shut all of his offices and furlough all his staff during the shutdown while Democratic Rep. **Ben Ray Luján**plans to keep all staff working and all offices open.

Rep. Michelle **Lujan** Grisham, a Democrat, is putting her staff on a rotating furlough schedule, with the number of people furloughed depending on the length of the shutdown. **Lujan** Grisham's Albuquerque and Washington, D.C., offices will remain open to constituents.

Lujan Grisham also announced she will donate any pay she receives during the shutdown to a charity that helps military veterans avoid homelessness. Pearce said he would reimburse the federal Treasury for the amount of any pay he receives during the shutdown.

Sens. Martin Heinrich and Tom Udall, both Democrats, are furloughing 32 and 31 employees, respectively, and closing all offices in the state and in D.C., but all meetings previously scheduled for their D.C. offices will happen as planned. Both senators are keeping a skeleton crew of staffers on duty during the shutdown.

Meanwhile, about 20,000 workers at Sandia and Los Alamos national laboratories, the state's two largest federally funded employers, have been instructed to report to work today even if the federal government shuts down.

Independent contractors run the labs for the government, and in both cases they have carry-over funding left from previous years' budgets to keep working for at least a short period of time, management of both labs said last week in memos distributed to their staffs.

The shutdown could also affect paychecks for roughly 2,100 Pentagon-funded civilian employees at Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque. Workers at White Sands Missile Range and Holloman Air Force Base near Alamogordo could feel a similar pinch.

LOAD-DATE: October 1, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

GRAPHIC: CHICAGO TRIBUNE An asphalt trail leads into Carlsbad Caverns. The national park near Carlsbad is among 11 national parks or monuments in New Mexico that will be closed today in the event of a federal government shutdown.

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

Copyright 2013 Albuquerque Journal

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 1, 2013

House Republicans Continue to Play Political Games with Government Funding;
Rep. Ben R. Lujan (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 387 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement today after House Republicans again refused to allow a vote on the Senate-passed continuing resolution, and instead brought three bills to the floor to fund select parts of the government.

"There is a clear path forward that would swiftly end the government shutdown. It would ensure that our veterans have the resources they deserve, get furloughed New Mexico workers back on the job, and make our public lands available for all. Unfortunately, rather than allow a vote on a clean continuing resolution that could gain bipartisan support, the House Republican leaders and members of the Tea Party are continuing to play political games.

"Bringing up piecemeal bills to fund various aspects of the government while leaving other areas to remain shuttered is no way to responsibly govern. Many in the Tea Party have talked about their desire to defund and get rid of certain government agencies and federal departments. A piecemeal approach gives them that opportunity to deny funding for any area - from health care to education - that they oppose.

"The bills brought up tonight would continue to leave New Mexico's workers furloughed. The Republican bills included funding for national parks, but left out vital funding for the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service. Proper management of our National Forests and public lands are critical after recent fires and flooding. Adding insult to injury, with New Mexico in the

middle of hunting season, sportsmen would continue to lose access to public land, and communities would continue to lose vital business.

"In addition, the Republican bill to fund the VA for six weeks is a step backward. If House Republicans were serious about giving our veterans the resources they need, they wouldn't support a short-term bill at sequester levels, but would instead go to conference on the veterans' appropriations bill and send a full-year funding bill to the President. Earlier this year the House passed, with my support, legislation to fund the VA for a full year - and not at the lower sequester level House Republicans proposed this evening."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/index.php?option=com_contentandtask=viewandid=1123andItemid=125

LOAD-DATE: October 2, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMA

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 1, 2013

Lujan Encourages Uninsured New Mexicans to Sign Up for Health Care on the New Exchange; Rep. Ben R. **Lujan** (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 300 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District encourages uninsured New Mexicans, those with insurance who are seeking a more affordable plan, and small businesses with less than 50 employees to sign up for coverage through the new health care exchange that opened today. As of October 1, individuals can sign up for health insurance that will begin on January 1, 2014. Small businesses can start comparing plans today and can sign up beginning November 1.

New Mexicans can sign up through the exchange, also called a marketplace, online at www.bewellnm.com or by calling 1-855-99-NMHIX (66449). They have until December 1 to sign up to guarantee coverage on January 1.

"Today, a key component of the Affordable Care Act begins, as New Mexico's health care exchange comes online, offering tens of thousands of our friends, family, and neighbors an easy way to make informed choices about the quality health care plan that is right for them," Congressman **Lujan** said.

"Through the exchange, individuals without insurance, or those who want to find a better option, will be able to compare plans side-by-side and find out if they qualify for tax credits to help them afford the costs of health insurance."

"Since the Affordable Care Act became law, people across New Mexico have already benefited from it, with many of the benefits still to come as they are phased in," **Lujan** added. "Now all Americans with pre-existing conditions can get affordable coverage even if they change jobs or lose a job. I encourage New Mexicans to go to www.bewellnm.com today to compare plans, find out how much of a subsidy they are eligible for, and sign up for health insurance."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/index.php?option=com_contentandtask=viewandid=1122andItemid=125

LOAD-DATE: October 2, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMA

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.

Congressional Documents and Publications

October 1, 2013

Lujan Statement on Government Shutdown; Rep. Ben R. **Lujan** (D-NM) News Release

SECTION: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENTS

LENGTH: 213 words

Washington, D.C. - Congressman **Ben Ray Lujan** of New Mexico's Third District released the following statement on the government shutdown.

"I am deeply disappointed that House Republicans' continued efforts to undermine the Affordable Care Act have forced a government shutdown. The Affordable Care Act is the law of the land - upheld by the Supreme Court and accepted by the American people in the last election.

"It is clear that House Republicans would rather see the government shut down, New Mexico workers furloughed, and services halted and delayed for many in our communities than allow millions of Americans access to affordable health care.

"For months, Congressional Democrats have called for a conference committee to move the budget process forward. House Republicans refused, instead wasting time while the clock ticked closer to a government shutdown. It's time for House Republicans to stop playing games, stop trying to undermine the Affordable Care Act, and pass a clean bill that funds the government. The longer the

Tea Party shutdown lasts, the longer the people of New Mexico will pay the price and the greater toll it will take on our economy."

Read this original document at: http://**lujan**.house.gov/index.php?option=com_contentandtask=viewandid=1121andItemid=125

LOAD-DATE: October 2, 2013

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Report

JOURNAL-CODE: COSHMA

Copyright 2013 Federal Information and News Dispatch, Inc.